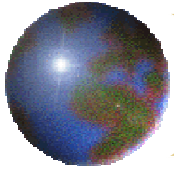


Religions and Cultures

John Hooker

Carnegie Mellon University

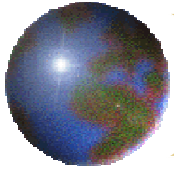
Osher Course, Spring 2013



Basic ideas

- Religions are inseparable from cultures.
 - Only Abrahamic religions distinguish the sacred & the secular.
 - We will look at how religion is embedded in the culture.
 - And see how religion gets people through the day.

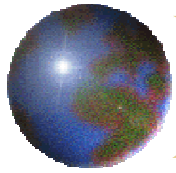




Basic ideas

- ❁ Religion makes sense of life.
 - ❁ We tend to see religion as a divisive, irrational, fanatical.
 - ❁ But “re-ligion” = re-connect.
 - ❁ Gives meaning to a crazy world.
 - ❁ Control, predictability.
 - ❁ Social order.

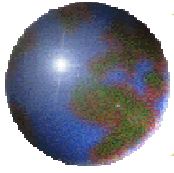




Course Outline

- Religions of the Middle East
 - Zoroastrianism
 - Islam & its roots in Judaism and Christianity
 - Islam in the Gulf States
 - Islam in Saudi Arabia
 - Islam in Turkey
 - Islam in Iran
 - Islam in Jordan (focus on Alawite sect)

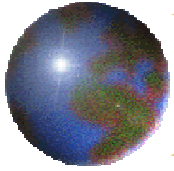




Course Outline

- Religions of South Asia
 - Background: Harappan and Aryan civilizations
 - Hindus, mysticism, and yoga
 - Parsis
 - Sikhs
 - Jains

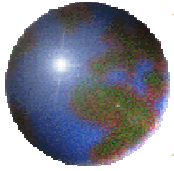




Course Outline

- Religions of East Asia
 - Confucianism
 - Daoism
 - Mahayana Buddhism in China, Japan, Vietnam
 - Theravada Buddhism in Southeast Asia

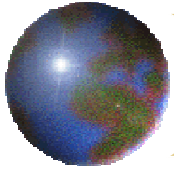




Course Outline

- Religions of Africa and the Americas
 - Rastafari movement
 - Voodoo (Vodun)
 - Candomblé (Brazil) & Santería
 - Shona religion (Zimbabwe)
 - Maya/Aztec religions & Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (Mexico)
 - Pueblo, Navajo, Hopi, and Cherokee religions
 - New religions of the U.S. (Mormonism, 7th Day Adventist, Christian Science, etc.)





Course Outline

- Current issues
 - “Religious” conflict
 - Fundamentalism
 - Revitalization cults
 - Wahhabis, Taliban, U.S. fundamentalism
 - Fundamentalism, science, and religion

