CHAPTER 7: RELIGION
KQ #3: HOW IS RELIGION SEEN IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE? (6 slides)
KQ #3: HOW IS RELIGION SEEN IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE?

• Places of worship and various religious-based architecture have always left a mark on cultural landscapes
  – Churches, chapels & cathedrals in Christianity
  – Mosques in Islam
  – Synagogues in Judaism
  – Temples in Hinduism
  – Pagodas & temples in Buddhism

• Religious symbols & icons are found everywhere
  – Cross
  – Crescent moon
  – Star of David
  – Yin-yang symbol
KQ #3: HOW IS RELIGION SEEN IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE?

• Many adherents voluntarily travel to a religious site to pay respects or participate in a ritual
  – This is called a “pilgrimage”
  – One of the five pillars of Islam---the Hajj (over 2 million make the trip each year)

• “Sacred sites” are places or spaces people infuse with religious meaning
  – None moreso than the city of Jerusalem (sacred to all monotheistic believers)
    • Most sacred site for Jews is the Western or Wailing Wall
    • To Christians, Jesus’s crucifixion took place outside the city walls
    • Muslims built the mosque called the Dome of the Rock---spot where Muhammad arrived from Mecca and then ascended into heaven
KQ #3: HOW IS RELIGION SEEN IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE?

- Hindu cultural landscapes are filled with temples & shrines
  - They build them so they do not destroy any existing building or location
  - Usually in “places of comfort”---like under a shady tree
  - Usually close to water---believe gods do not venture far from water

- The Bodhi tree is special to Buddhists
  - They believe Buddha received enlightenment sitting under one
  - A tree at a place called Bodh Gaya in India is a pilgrimage destination
KQ #3: HOW IS RELIGION SEEN IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE?

• The treatment and handling of the deceased is also seen in the cultural landscape
  – Hindus, Shintoists & some Buddhists use cremation
    • Many crematoriums exist in these areas
  – Construction of cemeteries and mausoleums are a major part of religion
    • Some famous mausoleums include the Taj Mahal & Lenin’s Tomb

• In older places, the place of worship was the focal point of the urban design
  – Famous mosques & cathedrals still exist
KQ #3: HOW IS RELIGION SEEN IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE?

- Towering minarets rise above the townscapes in Muslim cities
  - Many have bells signaling prayer times
  - All pray facing Mecca
- No mosque is more famous than the Grand Mosque at Mecca
  - Kaaba Stone in the center of the mosque is circled many times in ritualistic fashion on the hajj
KQ #3: HOW IS RELIGION SEEN IN THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE?

- In each country, different religious beliefs impact the cultural landscape
- U.S. is no different
  - Strongly Catholic in New England
  - Baptist in the South
  - Lutherans in the upper Midwest
  - Catholic in Southwest
- Many houses of worship in America were built by immigrants bringing their religion to cities
KQ #4: WHAT ROLE DOES RELIGION PLAY IN POLITICAL CONFLICTS? (7 slides)
KQ #4: WHAT ROLE DOES RELIGION PLAY IN POLITICAL CONFLICTS?

- Some countries lie entirely within a realm of a religion
- Some straddle “interfaith boundaries”—boundaries between the world’s faiths
  - These countries are subject to divisive forces
- Other countries straddle “intrafaith boundaries”—boundaries within a major faith
  - These countries have similar divisiveness
- Islam-Christianity boundary would be interfaith
- Sunni-Shiite or Catholic-Protestant boundary would be intrafaith
KQ #4: WHAT ROLE DOES RELIGION PLAY IN POLITICAL CONFLICTS?

- INTERFAITH DISPUTES
  - The Israel-Palestine issue
    • Re-study the creation of Israel & the legitimacy of the Jews & Palestinians desires for land & sovereignty
  - Many issues exist in and near the Horn of Africa too (the eastern edge near Somalia)
    • Interfaith disputes were at the heart of the Eritrea-Ethiopia civil war and split
  - Former Yugoslavia war
    • Serbs targeted the Muslims in Bosnia
KQ #4: WHAT ROLE DOES RELIGION PLAY IN POLITICAL CONFLICTS?

• INTRAFATH DISPUTES
  – Northern Ireland vs. Ireland
    • Protestant Northern Irish fought the Irish Catholics for decades
  – Sunni vs. Shiite conflict in numerous countries
    • Most evidenced in recent decades in Iraq
• In many countries today, leaders and followers are seeking a return to the basics of their faith
  – This is called “religious fundamentalism”
    • Usually happens in places where the people do not like the moral/value direction their home is headed towards
    • Hold their beliefs as nonnegotiable & uncompromisable
KQ #4: WHAT ROLE DOES RELIGION PLAY IN POLITICAL CONFLICTS?

• In many places, fundamentalism is carried to another level in the form of “religious extremism”
  – Religious extremists use violence to achieve their goals
  – Important to understand that not all fundamentalists are extremists

• Fundamentalism and/or extremism can be seen in all of the major religious beliefs
KQ #4: WHAT ROLE DOES RELIGION PLAY IN POLITICAL CONFLICTS?

- **CHRISTIANITY**
  - Catholics have rejected birth control & allowing women to participate in their religious hierarchy
  - Some Catholic churches still hold mass in Latin (considered a dead language)
  - Fundamentalist Protestants push for religion in schools, teaching of “creationism”, a strict ban on abortion and the adoption of laws that outlaw homosexual behavior
KQ #4: WHAT ROLE DOES RELIGION PLAY IN POLITICAL CONFLICTS?

- **JUDAISM**
  - Orthodox Jews are the most fundamentalist
  - They typically vote for the most fundamentalist political candidates
  - Jewish extremists exist in and near Israel
    - Many groups have been banned by the Jewish government; most are anti-Arab and attack Palestinians
KQ #4: WHAT ROLE DOES RELIGION PLAY IN POLITICAL CONFLICTS?

• ISLAM

– Not all communities ban alcohol
– Some places use sharia law (this is a fundamentalist concept)
– Iran has become much more fundamentalist since the 1979 revolution
– Extremists promote holy war, or “jihad” against certain people (including America)
  • Osama bin Laden & al-Qaeda are definitely Muslim extremists
  • Muslim extremists do not like American culture, American presence in the Middle East, the creation of Israel or the U.S. relationship with certain allies in the region (mostly Saudi Arabia’s government)
– Most Muslims are NOT fundamentalist and are NOT extremist