

GEO 565-401  
Spring 2004  
3 credits  
Tuesday 6-845 PM; CB 305

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## GLOBALIZATION AND RELIGION

### Description

Geography is a useful perspective to examine the interfaces of religion and culture, politics, the media, and economies. In this class we will investigate various themes and topics related to religion at local, national, and global scales, including places and landscapes, identify, and globalization. This is the first time, and perhaps the only time, this geography class will be offered. This class is designed to be a learning one for all, and I expect all of us to learn from the readings, discussions, and presentations from outside visitors and from other students during the course of the term. Students are welcome from various disciplines and backgrounds, including the social sciences, history, languages and linguistics, the fine arts, architecture, media, theology, diplomacy, international studies, and interfaith education.

### Required Texts

Ira Rifkin. *Spiritual Perspectives on Globalization. Making Sense of Economic and Cultural Upheaval*. Woodstock VT: Skylight Press. 2003.

Diana L. Eck. *A New Religions America. How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation*. San Francisco: Harper/San Francisco. 2001.

*Note:* There will be additional occasional articles chapters from journals and books that I will ask you to read to supplement class readings or that address globalization and religion questions in local, national, and international contexts.

### Requirements

All class members are required to complete the following:

- Reading and being prepared to discuss each week the assigned readings, especially the two major texts. (I expect all to come to class with passages marked in some way that you found most insightful and also places where you would like to discuss specific or general points or where you have specific questions and concerns about the authors' views. Note: a well marked up book is a sign of its use and value!!)
- Attending a different worship service each week. Total of 12 during the term. By this requirement, I mean more than attending religious services of the same denomination or only other Protestant churches or only visiting a Catholic church or a Jewish synagogue, but also mosques, Buddhist and Hindu temples, and the

- religious services of other faiths. The purpose of this assignment is to broaden your understanding and appreciation of other faith and belief systems. (Note: there are more of these religious services in the Lexington area than you realize, so you need to ferret these out. We will explore with you some possibilities. I would encourage two or three to go as a small group to these services; you may wish to contact local religious leaders or friends/adherents beforehand. Please prepare for the subsequent class session a one page statement about what this experience meant to you; each person will prepare, and turn in, a separate statement. We will suggest items to look for and listen to in these experiences.) I encourage you to plan several weeks in advance the services you plan to attend.
- Interview a religious leader of a different faith or belief system than your own. We will discuss possibilities in class as well as the questions you might ask. You will turn in a 3-5 page summary of the interview, which we will also discuss in class.
  - Preparing an innovative map on some topic concerned with globalization and religion. A number of suggestions are listed below. You will need my approval before proceeding. These may be two-person map projects.
  - A final project related to some theme related to globalization and religion. Again, suggestions are provided below and I would expect many ideas will surface from your readings *and* our class discussions on specific religious and issues... You may wish to prepare a written paper, and if so, no longer than 15 double spaced typed pages of narrative, that is, excluding notes, maps, graphs, and bibliography (essential) or it may be a piece of music or art. (Note: I remain flexible in listening to class members' wishes for this part of the requirement.) I will permit groups of two (maybe three) to work on the final project; a slightly longer paper is required if two or more students are working on a topic. If some want to prepare a video or undertake an art project, that might be acceptable.
  - Presentation of the final project during the final exam session; this will be a formal presentation. You may wish to use slides, transparencies, power point, etc.
  - Attend as many as possible of the public lectures this spring (on Friday afternoons) in the Social Theory series on "Religion and Identity." I will not require you to turn in any summaries from these presentations, but let's discuss any questions you might have at our next meeting.

### **Schedule**

**Note:** At the start of each class period, we will discuss articles from newspapers, magazines, WWW, and other sources you have encountered that relate to subject matter for the class. It is important that you continually ferret out appropriate short or long articles; if you would like to share items with other class members before our class meeting, please email it to me as an attachment. I also expect to use part of each class period discussing resources (web sources, maps, atlases, etc.) one might use to examine globalization and religion. Also there will be a few selected outside speakers coming to share with us explorations into globalization and religion.

20 January Introduction to the Class: The Meanings and Measures of Globalization;

Globalization and Religion – themes, issues, etc.; What Are Important Geography Questions? Maps of World Religion;  
**Note:** Social Theory lecture this week on “Religion and Identity”

- 27 January Reading: Rifkin, “Introduction” and Eck “Introduction to a New America”
- 3 February Reading: Eck: “From Many, One”
- 10 February Reading: Rifkin: “Roman Catholicism”  
**Note:** Social Theory lecture this week on “Religion and Identity”
- 17 February Reading: Rifkin: “Protestantism”
- 24 February Reading: Rifkin: “Islam” and Eck “American Muslims”
- 2 March Reading: Rifkin: “Hinduism” and Eck: “American Hindus”  
**Note:** Social Theory lecture this week on “Religion and Identity”
- 9 March Reading: Rifkin “Judaism”
- 23 March Reading: Rifkin “Buddhism” and Eck “American Buddhists”
- 30 March Reading: Rifkin “Bahai Faith” and “Tribal and Earth-Based Religions”
- 6 April Reading: Rifkin: “NoWherian” Concerns”  
**Note:** Social Theory lecture this week on “Religion and Identity”
- 13 April Reading: Eck: “Afraid of Ourselves”
- 20 April Reading: Eck “Bridge Building”  
**Note:** Social Theory lecture this week on “Religion and Identity”
- 27 April What Our Futures Will Look Like?

**Final Class Meeting: Tuesday 4 May 6-845 PM**

**Perhaps this meeting we will also bring in important religious foods and music from various religions traditions.**

**Assignments**

Attend a different religious service each week; write up the experience(s) in one page

Interview a religious leader of another faith

Prepare an innovative map

Final project

Attend as many of the five public social theory lectures as possible:

The focus this spring is “Religion and Identity”

## UK Social Theory Lectures: Religion and Identity

**NOTE:** All will be held on Fridays at 2 PM in the President's Room, Singletary Center for the Arts, except 20 February and 5 March, which will be in the William T. Young auditorium. These are open to the public. You are advised to get there early and get a good seat.

**23 January:** Massimo Pigliucci (Department of Botany, Ecology, and Evolutionary Biology, University of Tennessee "Denying Evolution: Creationism, Scientism, and the Nature of Science")

**20 February:** Bobby Sayyid (School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds, United Kingdom) "Postcolonial Politics and Islam(ism)"

**5 March:** Ian Markham (Dean and Professor of Theology and Ethics, Hartford Seminary, Connecticut) "Religion, Social Identity, and Toleration"

**2 April:** Judith Weisenfeld (Department of Religion, Vassar College) "Pageant and Performance: Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century African American Women's Religious Drama"

**23 April:** Laennec Hurbon (Director of Research, Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique, Paris, France) "Religions and Social Bond: The Church and the Modern State in Haiti (from 1492 to Today)"

### Grading (maximum points)

<b>12 Weekly summaries of worship places visited (10 pts. each)</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Interview with a local religious leader</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Innovative map (or alternative project)</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>Final project (paper or alternative project)</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>Presentation of final project</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Class participation and contributions</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>(from readings, Social Theory lectures, etc.)</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>400</b>

### Possible Topics for Innovative Maps and Research Papers

Please obtain approval from the instructor before embarking on your map and research paper.

1. US and European Cities with mosques, Buddhists and Hindu temples
2. Global religious music (what is it? What are its origins, major themes, etc.?)
3. Global religious art and architecture (what do these imply?)
4. New missionary migrations and fields
5. Missionary radio, television, and websites: radio and tv stations, listservs, bookclubs, new magazines, electronic newsletters, etc.
6. Content of religious magazines for materials on Islam (for example)

7. Evangelical efforts and initiatives in new areas (monies spent, churches built, missionaries sent, etc.)
8. Asian religious thought in American mainstream religious
9. Zoning regulations supporting or banning constructions of mosques and temples
10. Changing content of religious magazines
11. Content of new religious magazines (those presenting global religious issues and new religions)
12. Emerging church-state issues related to globalization (educational materials, apparel, state supported schools, holidays and festivals, etc.)
13. Court/legal cases related to new religions: rights of women, religious instruction, travel, attire, medical practices and services, etc.
14. Feminism, religion, and globalization
15. Gender and globalization/religion issues
16. Environmental religion (or Green religious movements)
17. Ecofeminism, religion, and globalization
18. Religious museums with globalization exhibits
19. Interfaith conferences, workshops, pilgrimages (where held, topics, etc.)
20. New and old religious lobby groups and their globalization agendas (tax shelters, channeling resources, media influences, etc.)
21. *An Atlas of Globalization and Religion* (2-3 member project) (perhaps showing cities with concentrations of temples and mosques) or new missionary efforts)
22. Religious conflicts: (countries, cities, borders, etc.): example, Belfast, Jerusalem, East Timor, Kashmir, southern Sudan)
23. Cyberreligion and globalization (how religious faiths are using the WWW to advance their objectives, especially in new countries and regions – using different languages, etc.)
24. The World Council of Churches (WCC) as promoting ecumenicalism and globalization agendas
25. Grassroots' religions: where they begin, why, major beliefs, etc.
26. Religious political parties (in various countries): new and old; fundamental, secular, partisan, nonpartisan; areas of political strength (cities or regions)