



Unit 3 – Stories, Myths, Religion, and Ethics

Day 2

RELIGION: LET'S GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO FIGHT ABOUT

Objectives

- **Recognize the importance of religion in anthropology**
- **Identify certain key terms related to most religions**
- **Discuss how religion connects to our “stories”**
- **Terms: →**
- **Religion**
- **Supernatural**
- **Ritual**
- **Prayer**
- **Scripture**
- **Prophet**
- **Cult**
- **Monotheist**
- **Polytheist**
- **Atheist**
- **Agnostic**

Remind Me...

- **What is folklore?**
- **What types of “stories” are part of it?**
- **How do those stories affect our beliefs?**
- **Today we look at the way stories both define and refine our beliefs, and also become both part of them and illustrate them**

Losing My Religion

- **How would YOU define “religion”?**
- **In anthropology, religion may be defined as...**
- **Religion**
 - **Set of beliefs and practices**
 - **Explain supernatural,**
 - **Provide morals, ethics, and meaning of life**



Supernatural Selection

◦ Supernatural

- **Things outside of nature** (or “natural laws”)
- **Unexplained phenomenon** – anything from ghosts to gods.
- **Religious beliefs generally deal with matters thought to be sacred or spiritual.**
- **They include ideas about the nature of the world and the place of human beings in it.**
- **Often used to EXPLAIN THE WORLD OR OUR PLACE IN IT!**



Thoughts and Prayers

- **Though there are as many religions as there are cultures, there are also certain things that most have in common, like myths, but also...**
- **Ritual**
 - **Symbolic Actions**
- **Prayer**
 - **An expression towards an object of worship**



Maximum Prophet

- **In addition, there are the ways religion is passed along and lead...**
- **Scripture**
 - **Sacred writings to a religion**
 - **The Bible, The Quran, the Book of Mormon, the Bhagvad Gita, Torah, etc.**
- **Prophet**
 - **Person believed to have authority to speak for the divine**
 - **Often leaders, or modifiers, of religion**
 - **Moses, Buddha, Muhammad, Confucius, Joseph Smith, Dalai Lama, etc.**

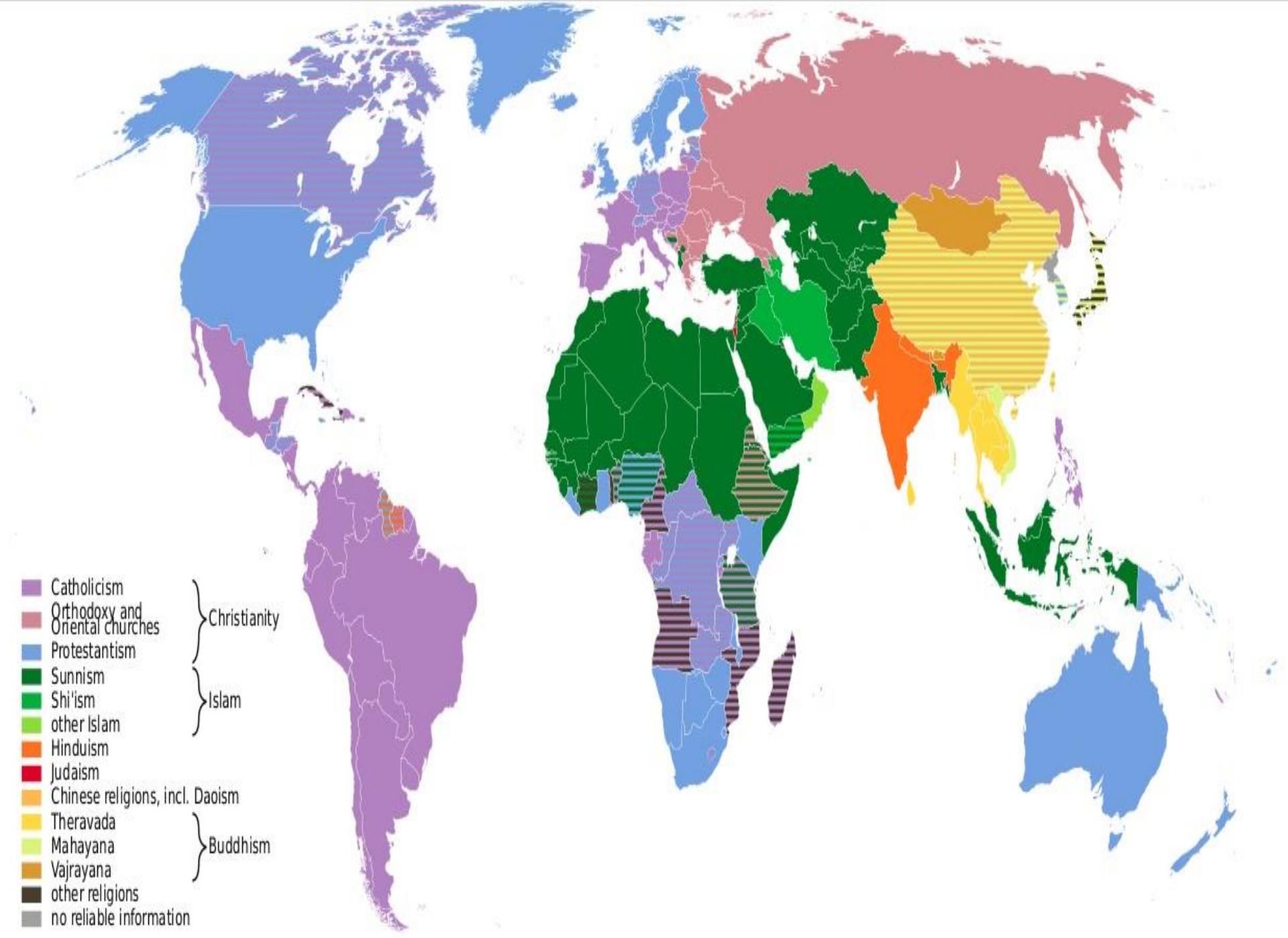


Put On Your Winter Cult

- There are many examples of World Religions (those practiced by millions), the “Big Five” being Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam
- But what about the smaller ones?
- Cult
 - Relatively small group of people having religious beliefs
 - Often regarded by others as strange
 - So... didn't most religions start as “cults”? And are there those who would call something a cult, and others a religion?

Religiosity

- 33% are some type of Christian
- 24% are Muslims
- 13% are Hindus
- 9% practice shamanism, animism, or other folk religions
- 6% are Buddhists
- 2% belong to other world religions: Baha'i, Confucianism, Shintoism, Sikhism, Jainism, or Taoism
- 1% is Jewish
- 15% are non-religious



Don't be such a Theist!

- “Theo” in Latin means “god” and many terms to separate types of religions come from that...
- **Monotheist**
 - Believe in a singular God / higher power
 - Christianity, Islam, Judaism, etc.
- **Polytheist**
 - Believe in multiple gods / higher powers
 - Buddhism, Hinduism, Norse, etc.

Don't be such a Theist!

- **Atheist**

- **Don't believe in the existence of a God / higher power**

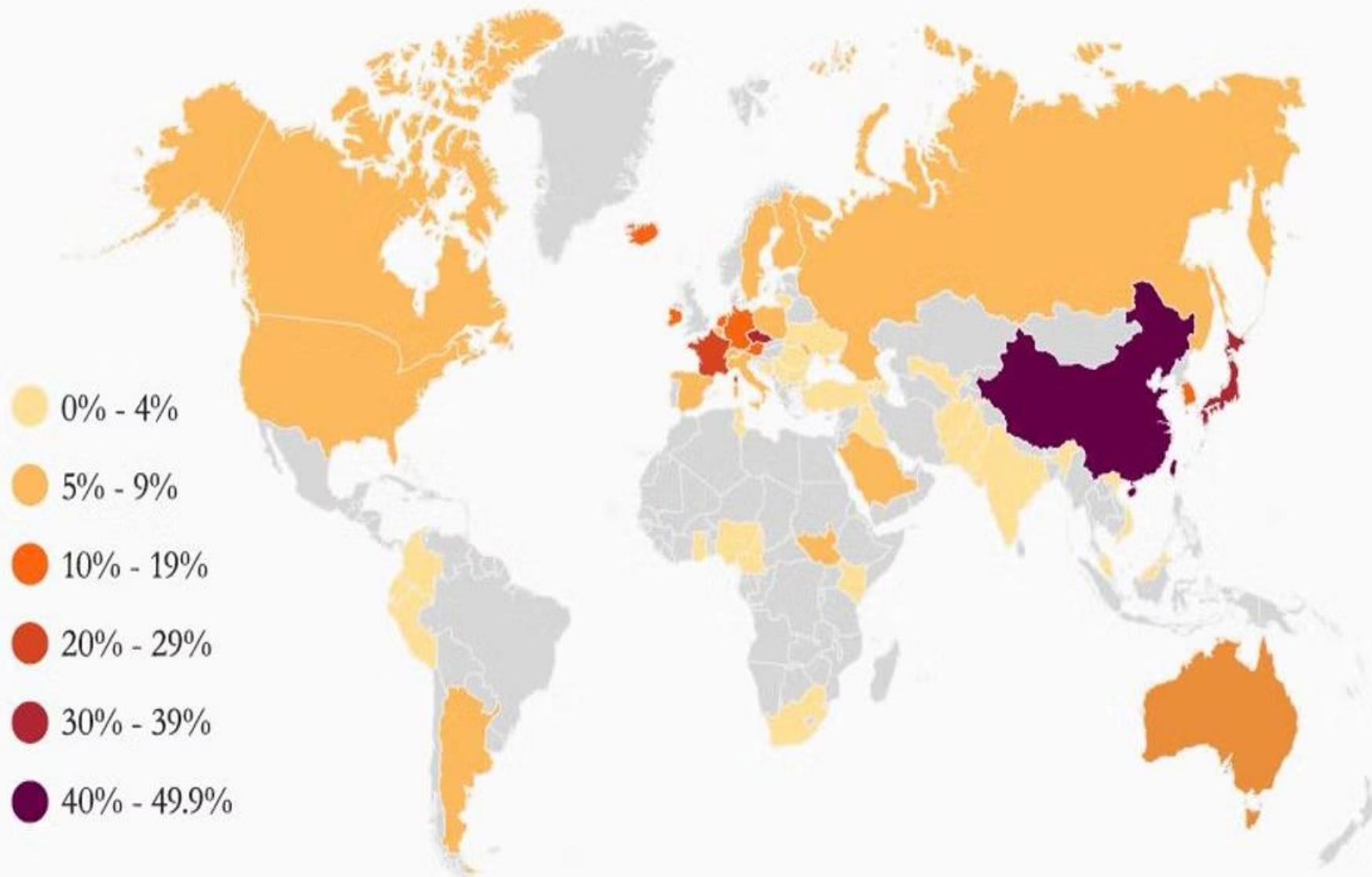
- **Agnostic**

- **A person who believes nothing can be known about deity (God) or divine**

- **Often referred to as “don't know, don't care”**

Where the world's atheists live

Share of people who say they consider themselves "a convinced atheist"



So What?

- Religion is one of the universals of human culture.
- It explains the unknown and helps people cope with stressful events, and for many gives their life purpose, meaning, and direction.
- Most religions share certain things in common, including myths, supernatural beings, religious practices such as rituals, and ideas about right and wrong.
- Like other aspects of culture, religion can change.

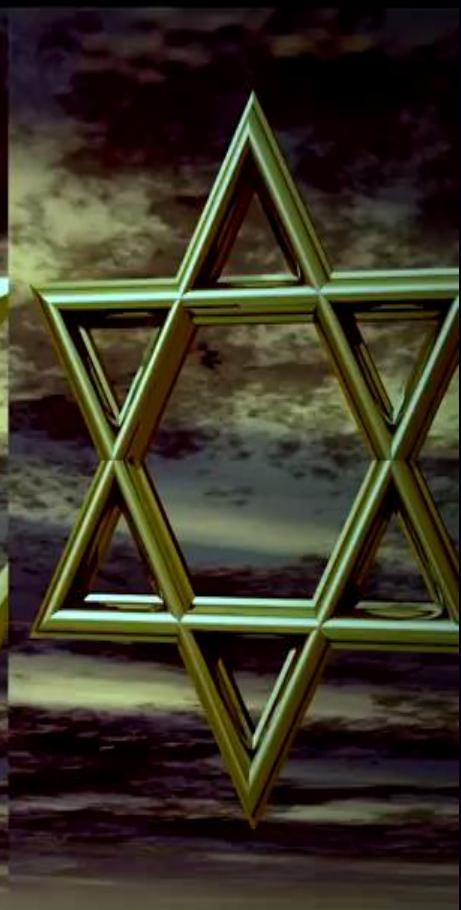
BUDDHISM

CHRISTIANITY

HINDUISM

ISLAM

JUDAISM



Objectives

- **Recognize the importance of religion in anthropology**
- **Identify certain key terms related to most religions**
- **Discuss how religion connects to our “stories”**
- **Terms: →**
- **Religion**
- **Supernatural**
- **Ritual**
- **Prayer**
- **Scripture**
- **Prophet**
- **Cult**
- **Monotheist**
- **Polytheist**
- **Atheist**
- **Agnostic**