

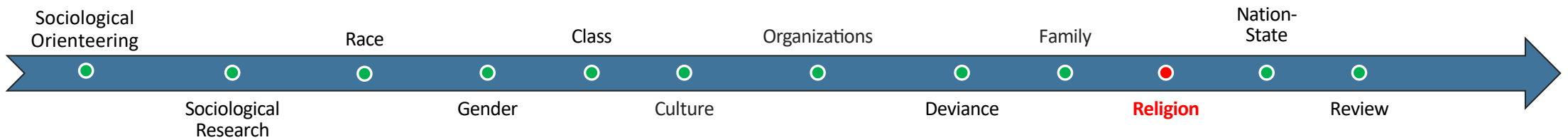
WEEK 10

Religion

religion and connection to power/nation
state

- mandate of heaven

Dr Lou Antolihao
SC1101E Making Sense of Society



Religion and Sports



https://youtu.be/ozhygznQP_w

Losing and Finding Faith

- ❑ People are **losing faith in institutions** (not only in religion, but also in one's employers, gov't., family, etc.).
- ❑ Sports as **civic religion**
 - a reminder of people's interconnectedness and dependency
 - fandom as religious worship
- ❑ “collective effervescence” (Durkheim)
 - Chaos as a rare moment of social order
 - Spontaneous solidarity, uninhibited integration

ritual



Singing of the National Anthem
Dallas Mavericks

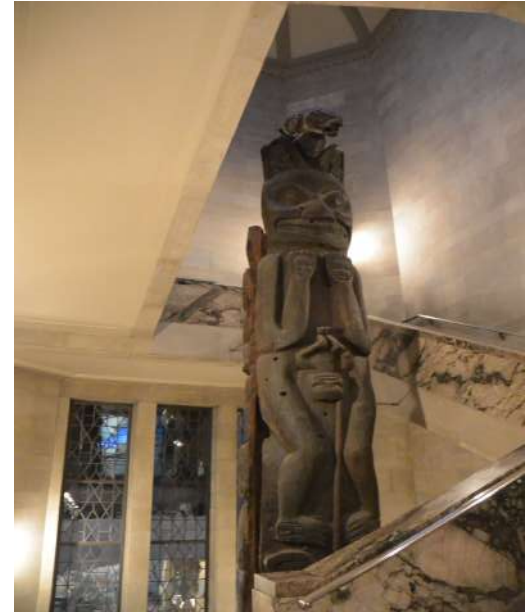
Just How Much is Sports Like Religion? (Serazio 2013)

❑ Teams as **Totems**

- symbols of greater entities that communities gather around for identity and unity (Durkheim).

❑ **Members** of each clan try to give themselves the external appearance of their totem.

❑ Whenever a society worships a divine form, it is also, simultaneously, worshipping itself.



Totem Pole of Kw'axsuu
Royal Ontario Museum
Toronto, Canada

What is Religion?

❑ **Religion** is a social institution that binds people together through a system of beliefs and practices that are based on some sacred or supernatural realm.

- **Spirituality** – a deeper self-awareness and sense of connection with the outside world.
- Types of religion: 1. simple supernaturalism (magical and mystical forces), 2. animism (spirits inhabit objects/places), 3. theism (belief in god/diety), 4. transcendent idealism (sacred principles)

❑ Essential Characteristics of Religion

- **G – Group** (community of worshippers)
- **O – Observance** (rituals and celebrations)
- **D – Divine** (belief in a sacred power)



Karen Tribe Totems
Huay Pu Keng
Mae Hong Son, Thailand

Who Am I?

Why I am here?

How should I live?

What happens when I die?



Religion and Modernity

❑ Secularization -the process by which religious beliefs, practices, and institutions lose their significance in society.

- Disenchantment (Weber)
- Opiate of the masses (Marx)
- **Totemism**: a society worships itself (Durkheim)

❑ Secularization and the End of Religion

- traditional roles of religion were taken over by secular institutions.
- e.g., education, state (**civil religion**)

art & music to reflect religion



Wat Rong Khun (White Temple)
A private Buddhist temple
Chiang Rai, Thailand

Civil Religion

- ❑ the institutional set of beliefs based on myths, historical events, and teachings that take on a sacred character and elicit a deep feeling of awe and inspiration.
 - Values (multiculturalism, **resilience**)
 - **Symbols** (flag, national anthem)
 - **Rituals** (national day celebration)
- ❑ Even in the face of division, national beliefs and rituals can inspire awe, respect, and reverence for the country.
- ❑ These sentiments are most evident during times of crisis and war, national holidays, and in the presence of national monuments.

Singapore's response (to COVID-19) has received international accolades. Underlying this is the social and psychological **resilience** of our people.

What makes Singapore different from other countries is that we have confidence in each other, we feel that we are all in this together, and we don't leave anyone behind.

This is SG United.

PM Lee Hsien Loong
Address on COVID-19 Situation
12 March 2020

Civic Religion vs Civil Religion

- ❑ Civic religion is originally used in the context of **medieval villages and towns**, emphasizing the role of religion as a set of cultural relations (e.g., festivals, hospitals, social interactions) through which people pursue not only spirituality but also economic, political, and social goals.
- ❑ On the other hand, civil religion focuses on the role of **the nation-state** as the most dominant institution in modern society. Nationalism includes a set of beliefs (e.g., resilience) and rituals (e.g., National Day celebration) "that take on a sacred quality and elicit feelings of patriotism (literally similar to worshipping the nation).
- ❑ Thus, civic religion largely exists in a **real community** while civil religion is about "**an imagined community**".

Globalization and the End of Religion?

❑ The Rise of Fundamentalism

- **Fundamentalism** is a social movement that advocates for strict adherence to the core of teachings and early traditions of a religious belief.
- not limited to Islam
- a **reaction** to modernity's **secularizing tendencies**

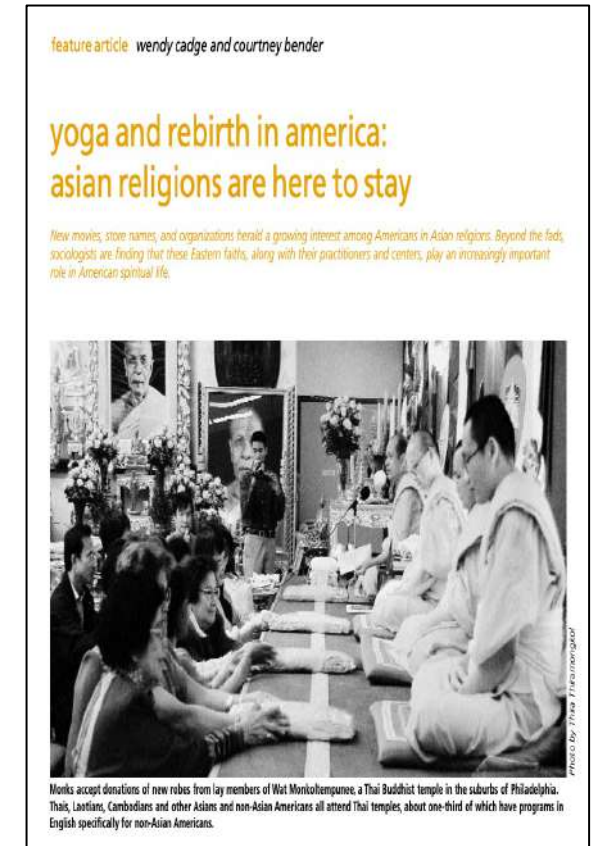
❑ “Religion” is a Western idea. The spread of this concept is part of **imperialism**.

- For instance, Hinduism & “Chinese religions” are not religions (but are imperial constructs).
- de-emphasis on their “religious” connotations has led to the growth of a global, hybrid religiosity as a form of New Age popular culture.
- **Yoga and Rebirth in America**



Interesting mural
Swayambhunath Temple
Kathmandu, Nepal

- ❑ Asian religions are a growing component of the American religious landscape.
 - no longer solely practiced by Asian immigrants
 - no longer popular only among White counter-culturalist (hippies, Hare Krishnas, etc.)
- ❑ Factors contributing to the rise of Asian religions
 - increasing immigration
 - widening global networks
 - **reorganization**: changes in American religion (decline of Protestantism, continuing influence of spiritual seekers)
 - **reorientation**: changes in American healthcare (alternative medicine)
- ❑ yoga: both a devotional and a fitness practice
 - spirituality as the mastery of one's body (e.g., meditation)
 - physical enhancement as spiritual growth



The End of Religion?

Pluralism, Individualization, and “Rebirth”

□ Religious Pluralism

- every individual in a religiously diverse society has the freedom, safety, and rights to practice or not to practice a religion.
- 1) dictates a “principle of neutrality,” 2) migration brought a variety of religious practices, 3) differences are not politicized, 4) organizations work to promote positive interaction and foster a tolerant society.

□ Religious Individualization

- a greater agency accorded to each person in choosing a religious group and in crafting their own religious life
- shift from religiosity (organizations) to spirituality (individuals)



Bukit Kasih (Hill of Love), a spiritual center where people of different faiths can worship together.
North Sulawesi, Indonesia

Travel and Spirituality



<https://vimeo.com/224157559>

Conclusion



globalization has ushered in the rise
of fundamentalism and pluralism



from dwellers to seekers
shift from religiosity (organizations) to
spirituality (individuals)