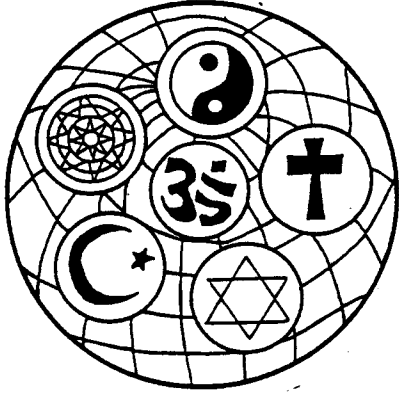


Geography of Religions & Belief Systems



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EDITOR'S NOTE

Our annual meeting is just around the corner, and as the luck of the Irish would have it, we can celebrate St. Patty's day in Chicago. This is no small blessing I would have you know. The river will flow green, not to mention those spirits that come in the guise of ale (forget the green milkshakes; it is decidedly not the same thing!). So what does all of this have to do with us? Well, we have a rich and varied program planned, and it is my fondest hope that lots and lots of you will turn out for it. You see I have no shame. To lure you with visions of green rivers, and that indisputable charm that only Chicago can offer in the middle of March (bitter winds notwithstanding), is to appeal to the child in all of us. But then, if you are above all of the hoopla generated by a holiday thoroughly drenched in American popular culture, then come to Chicago because we have some outstanding presentations planned. Details are inside the newsletter.

FUNDING FOR THIS NEWSLETTER IS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES AT SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY

REVIEW CORNER

Chris Park 1994 Sacred Worlds: An Introduction To Geography and Religion, London: Routledge, (332 pages)

by Lily Kong, *Geography-National University of Singapore*

Chris Park's Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion is a welcome addition to the literature on geography and religion, particularly for teachers seeking course reading material for students. Written precisely with that aim in mind Park's intention is to "pull together and package in a sensible framework a wealth of geographical research and writing on the theme of religion which has appeared particularly over the last decade" (xiii). As he amply illustrates, this existing literature is indeed wide and diverse, and in need of some attempt at coherence.

In Chapter One, Park achieves several notable goals. First, he provides a quick and comprehensive description of the themes characterizing existing research: geographical distribution of religions; reli-
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Association of American Geographers

Review Corner

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gious imprint on the cultural landscape; impacts of religion on lifestyle and commerce; religious taboos on food and wildlife; religion and demography; religion, politics and conflict; religion and culture; and religion and environmental attitudes. This exercise is useful as illustration of the diversity of interests, though a researcher looking for further references on certain of these themes will not find too much direction. Perhaps that was simply not the intention here, and Alan Gleason's exercise in bibliographical compilation may well be the answer.

Second, in Chapter One, Park also does well in setting existing research within the paradigms of modern human geography, divided generally as modernism and postmodernism. Written in clear and generally jargon-free language, this section is useful in providing the broader contexts of research, though positivism should have been given a place in the discussion.

In Chapter Two, Park proceeds to focus specifically on different dimensions of religion such as definitions, classifications, evolution and change. In general, this is a welcome chapter that sketches in fundamentals of religion and religious change in the modern and postmodern world. The section on religion and state (52-55) is particularly welcome, given its role in firmly anchoring religion in broader socio-political milieux. However, this situation of religion in the secular world would have benefited from some discussion of the nexus between religion and economics.

In chapters Three through Five, Park synthesizes existing studies on the distribution, diffusion and dynamics of religion. These are perhaps the least exciting chapters of the book. While such studies are useful in providing an understanding of the locations and spread of religions, and are often helpful in contextualizing further analyses of religions in specific locations, in this instance, they serve little more purpose than to illustrate the nature of detailed information regarding the distribution, diffusion

and dynamics of religion.

While Chapter Six is entitled religion and population, it deals in fact with three themes which could have been developed quite separately: the relationship between demography, development and politics. The most pertinent section, given the title of the

chapter, is that on demography, in which Park attempts to illustrate the reciprocal relationship between religion and population, for example, religion's impact on attitudes towards family planning, as well as the influence of population distribution (for example, rural-urban) on patterns of religious adherence. His second theme on religion

and development is accorded no more than three pages, which does not reflect the richness of geographical and certainly, sociological, research in the area. He does much better with the third theme in this chapter on religion and politics, highlighting the varied directions of research: on religion and political parties; persecution of religious minorities; religion and residential segregation; and religion and national identity. Unfortunately, the literature on the appropriation of religious symbols for political ends does not seem to have been given any attention by Park. Hence, Duncan's (1985; 1990) works on Kandy find no place in this chapter. Indeed, the importance of including this avenue of research on the geographical agenda is underlined by the rapid development of this arena, reflected in

the emergence of more such empirical work since Park's manuscript entered the production process (see, for example, Dwyer, 1993; Kong 1993a; 1993b).

Perhaps reflecting the volume of research to date, Chapter Seven on religion and landscape is, by far, the most substantial chapter, focusing on landscapes of worship, church distribution and dynam-

ics, landscapes of death, and the "general landscape" (in terms of settlement patterns and place

(Continued on Page 3)

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Review Corner

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names, for example). While successful in drawing together the diversity of research in this area, Park's overall frame for discussion in this section is open to debate: that "[l]andscape is a palimpsest, or a manuscript on which two or more successive texts have been written, each one being erased to make room for the next" (198). This perspective that landscape is a palimpsest implies a one-way relationship between religion and landscape rather than a dialectical one which Park is at pains to emphasize in the first chapter.

In the final chapter, Park explores the idea of sacred space and the practice of pilgrimage. Evidence can be found here of how a single phenomenon such as pilgrimage can provide the site for diverse explorations. For example, a humanistic exploration of the experiential dimensions of pilgrimage can be pursued alongside an examination of the effects of pilgrimage on transportation networks and population flows.

As Park acknowledges in the epilogue, his aim is really to provide a broad review of the work which geographers have done rather than to chart an agenda for the future. By this yardstick, Sacred Worlds is indeed a thorough and huge literature review. The strength of this work therefore does not lie in presenting new research insights but in collating existing material. It does not pursue new directions (of spirituality, cultural politics, personal experience, symbolism, for example), but is extremely competent in dealing with traditional concerns. Even though for every theme, there will clearly be other pieces of work that could have been included, the point in any such exercise is surely to be comprehensive rather than exhaustive. While it would have been personally more satisfying if some attempt had been made to explore ways forward, Park is clear that that is not on his agenda. This reader is thus left with the feeling that within the existing goalposts, Sacred Worlds does well, but that the goalposts could have been reset.

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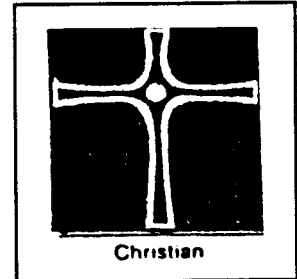
GORABS FOCUS ON:

Bruce R. Crew

Bruce Crew expects to complete his PhD in geography as this newsletter goes to press. Presently, Bruce is at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and he can be reached at 2826 N. Prospect Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53211 or

brcrew@c5d4.csd.uwm.edu.

In addition to graduate work in Wisconsin, Bruce holds a M.Div. from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and an MA in geography and history from the Insti-



tute of Holy Land Studies in Jerusalem. We can expect to see his dissertation "A Structural Framework for Christian Zionism and British Geo-Political Perceptions Toward Land as Sacred Place: The Palestine Question 1917-1939" in the very near future. Bruce is also an active member of the Geography of the Bible SG and has presented a number of papers in its organized sessions at the annual meetings and their newsletter such as, "The Negev as Part of the Territories of Edom," Biblical Geographical Newsletter 4:2-3.

APODACA SPEAKS

In collaboration with the American Indian and Biogeography SG's, we received support from the AAG special programs fund to host Ray Apodaca, key representative for the American Indian Religious Freedom Coalition -- a division of the Association on American Indian Affairs. On Wednesday evening (7:30 p.m.) he will present a keynote address on the Native American Religious Freedom Act (U.S. Senate Bill S-1021), and representatives from each of our specialty groups will respond. Richard Jackson at BYU will represent GORABS. We offer a special thanks to Joan Greendeer-Lee of the U.S. Census Bureau for her invaluable assistance in making this program possible.

You do not want to miss this!

91ST ANNUAL MEETING

CHICAGO,

MARCH 14

The following represents programs organized by GORABS, those that are collaborations with other specialty groups, and other papers and sessions of interest to our members. Note that Wednesday and Thursday are full days for us. Your attendance and participation in as many of the programs as possible will be greatly appreciated.

Wednesday, March 14th

BIOGEOGRAPHY, AMERICAN INDIANS, GORABS Specialty Groups: Plants in the Landscape: Foods, Ornaments, Symbols, and Sacred

Organizers: Darrel L. McDonald, Stephen F. Austin State University and Martha L. Henderson, University of Minnesota-Duluth Chair: Clarissa T. Kimber, Texas A&M University

3:25pm David L. Grinstead, University of Minnesota-Duluth; "Interpreting Contemporary Wild Rice Habitat in Ceded Chippewa Lands, Minnesota"

3:45pm John David Rees, CSU-Los Angeles; "Introduction of Ornamental Palms to Southern California"

4:05pm Katharine Anderson, Louisiana State University; "Biogeography to Biophilia: Live Oak Distribution and People in Louisiana"

4:25pm Lydia M. Pulsipher, University of Tennessee; "Ecological and Symbolic roles of Plants: The Case of Manioc"

4:45pm Clarissa T. Kimber, Texas A&M University and Carolyn V. Prorok, Slippery Rock University; "Hindu Temple Gardens in Trinidad, WI"

GORABS ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING

5:20pm-6:20pm (see agenda)

GORABS, BIOGEOGRAPHY AND AMERICAN INDIANS Specialty Groups: Sacred Landscapes: An American Indian Religious Dilemma

Organizers: Carolyn V. Prorok, Slippery Rock University and Darrel L. McDonald, Stephen F. Austin State University Chair: Carolyn V. Prorok, Slippery Rock University

7:30pm KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Raymond Apodaca, American Indian Religious Freedom Coalition

8:00pm PANELISTS RESPOND: Richard H. Jackson, BYU; Darrel L. McDonald, SFA University; John Allen Sims, Chadron State College

8:30pm Raymond Apodaca replies

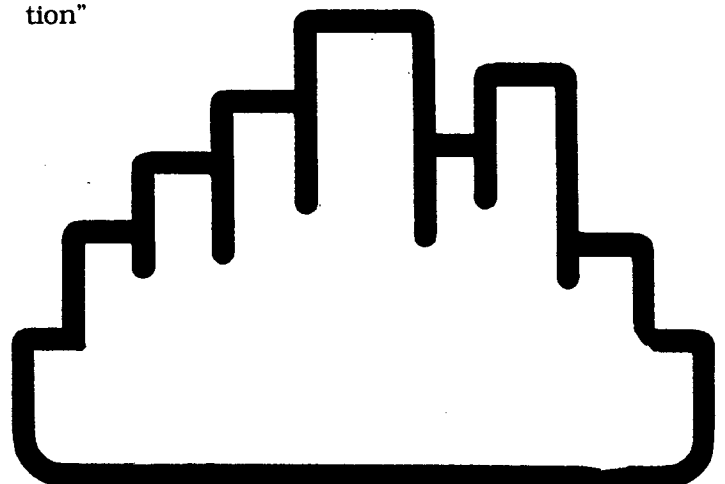
8:40 Open discussion of the issues
Other programs of interest

9:00am Site Visit: Graceland Cemetery; led by Jodi Mills-Cerny, Joliet Junior College

9:55am Cultural Geography Poster Session; several posters on religious themes

11:15am John B. Wright, New Mexico State University; "Utopia, Dystopia, and Montana's Church Universal and Triumphant"

3:25pm Maura Ann Abrahamson, University of Chicago; "Middle Eastern Jewry: A History of Migration"



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ILLINOIS

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Thursday, March 15th

GORABS: Geography of Religions in Higher Education I

Organizers: Surinder M. Bhardwaj, Kent State University and Gisbert Rinschede, Universitat Regensburg

Chairs: Richard H. Jackson, Brigham Young University and Surinder M. Bhardwaj, Kent State University

9:55am Gisbert Rinschede, Universitat Regensburg: "Basic Concepts and Theoretical Background of the Geography of Religion"

10:15am Robert H. Stoddard, University of Nebraska-Lincoln: "Religion and Politics"

10:35am Mary Lee Nolan, Oregon State University: "Pilgrimage: A World Survey"

10:55am Peter L. Halvorson, University of Connecticut and William Newman, University of Connecticut: "Measuring America's Religious Pluralism"

11:15am Carolyn V. Prorok, Slippery Rock University: "Discussant"

GORABS: Geography of Religions in Higher Education II

Organizers: Surinder M. Bhardwaj, Kent State University and Robert H. Stoddard, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Chairs: Surinder M. Bhardwaj, Kent State University and Gisbert Rinschede, Universitat Regensburg

1:30pm Richard H. Jackson, Brigham Young University: "Salt Lake City: Evolution of an American Sacred City"

1:50pm Carolyn V. Prorok, Slippery Rock University: "Religion and Modern Migration"

2:10pm Surinder M. Bhardwaj, Kent State University: "Geography, Religion and Health"

2:30pm Carolyn Gallaher, University of Kentucky: "Readin', Writin', and Refinancin' at Liberty University"

2:50pm Robert H. Stoddard, University of Nebraska-Lincoln: "Discussant"

GORABS: Changing Religious Landscapes

Organizer & Chair: Chad F. Emmett, Brigham Young University

3:25pm Chad F. Emmett, Brigham Young University: "Religion and Ethnicity in the Landscape of Chicago"

3:45pm Benjamin F. Tillman, Louisiana State University: "The Spatial Succession of Sacred Space in Chicago"

4:05pm Samuel M. Otterstrom, Louisiana State University: "The International Diffusion of the Mormon Church"

4:25pm Gail S. Sechrist, Indiana University of Pennsylvania: "The Changing Lutheran Landscape in Western Pennsylvania, 1772-1994"

4:45pm James R. Wray, TradComp Charts: "World Map in the Shape of a Cross: Then-and-Now Techniques for Choosing and Preparing a Projection for a Thematic Map"

Other programs of interest:

10:15am Martha A. Narey, University of Denver: "Porcelain Grottoes: Denver's Bathtub Shrines and Sacred Statuary"

1:50pm Kari Forbes-Boyte, Chadron State College: "The American Indian Religious Freedom Act as Cooperation Tool"

2:10pm Arundhati Ghosh, Miami University and Scott Salmon, Miami University: "Global Economy, Local Survival: The Case of the Idol and Pappad Makers in Calcutta"

Friday, March 17

GEOGRAPHY OF THE BIBLE SPECIALTY GROUP:
 Commemorative Session for Amy Mather
 Organizer and Chair: William A. Dando,
 Indiana State University

8:00am William A. Dando, Indiana State University:
 "Clouds and the Promises of God"

8:20am Michael S. DeVivo, Bloomsburg University
 of Pennsylvania: "Contemporary Environmental Issues
 and the Bible"

8:40am Ronald R. Boyce, Seattle Pacific University:
 "Exploring the Spatial Antipodes of the Holy City vs
 the "Babylon" of Scripture"

9:00am Bruce R. Crew, University of Wisconsin-
 Milwaukee: "Geographical Dimensions of the
 Nabateans and the Birth of Christianity"

9:20am Peter G. Genzinger, University of Waterloo:
 "Transforming a Wilderness: Mennonite Views of
 Nature in Nineteenth Century Waterloo, Ontario"

Other programs of interest

11:15am Michael M. Bell, Iowa State University:
 "The Ghosts of Place"

1:30pm Claire L. Dwyer, University College London:
 "Veils and Shalwar Kamiz? Questions of Representation
 for Young British Muslim Women"

4:05pm Stephen C. Jett, UC-Davis: "Modern Navajo
 Cemeteries"

Saturday, March 18

1:50pm Ira M. Sheskin, University of Miami:
 "Changes in the Geography of the Jewish Population
 of Greater Miami, 1982-1994"

2:30pm Kari Forbes-Boyte, Chadron State College:
 "The American Indian Religious Freedom Act as
 Cooperation Tool" (this paper is scheduled twice in
 the preliminary program)

2:50pm Anne K. Knowles, University of Wales: "The
 Morality of Immigration: Welsh Calvinism and the
 Sin of Pride"

3:45pm Yaser M. Najjar, Framingham State College:
 "A Socio-Cultural Profile of Muslim Communities
 in Massachusetts"

GORABS AGENDA

1995 Annual Business Meeting
 Carolyn V. Prorok, Chair
 Robert H. Stoddard, Secretary-Treasurer

Please come to the annual business meeting on
 Wednesday, March 15, and participate in the
 following decision-making:

1. Open Meeting, 5:20pm -6:20pm
2. Accept or Amend Minutes, April 1994
3. Report on SG Chair Luncheon Meeting
4. Motion to Amend the Bylaws/Terms of Office
5. Motion to establish permanent site for bank account
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Report on David E. Sopher New Scholars Award (See story below)
8. Organize SG sessions next year
9. Report on 1994-95 SG Activities
10. Other Business
11. Motion to Adjourn

David E. Sopher

New Scholars Award

The David E. Sopher Award will honor scholars for their outstanding contributions to the field of geography of religion. Award(s) will be given each year; one to a student and/or one to an untenured faculty member who presents a paper at an AAG national meeting. The committee reserves the right to not make an award in any given year. GORABS board members are ineligible the year that they are serving the organization. Awardees will be honored at the AAG awards luncheon. Deadline for application is Feb. 1, 1995. If you are a student or untenured faculty, and you are presently preparing to give a paper in Chicago -- seriously consider applying for this award. For a list of criteria and the official application, contact Carol Prorok at the above address.

GORABS ELECTION

You will be receiving a ballot this month for the next election. Please take a moment to vote for the next executive board. If you would like to serve GORABS as a board member, nominate yourself in the next election. We look forward to your active participation. Send this year's ballot to: Mary Lee Nolan, Past-Chair of GORABS, Department of Geography, Oregon State University, Corvallis, OR 97331-5506.

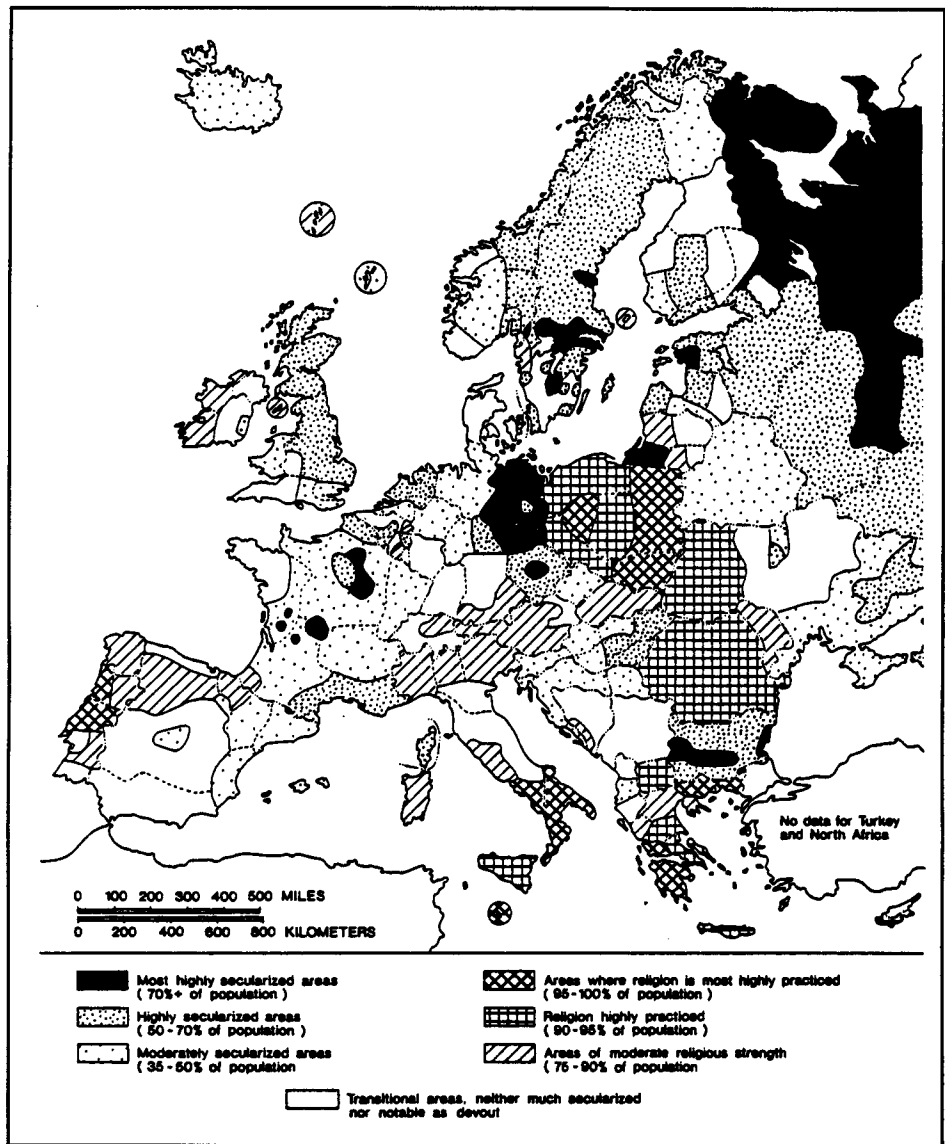
FEATURE ESSAY and MAP

A Geography of Secularization in Modern Europe

by Terry Jordan, *Geography, University of Texas at Austin*

A substantial part of the European population, about 27 percent, has become secularized. These people, some 190 million in all, usually claim atheism or agnosticism. If affiliated with churches, they declare themselves "unreligious" in surveys.

The geographical pattern of dechristianization appears quite uneven and difficult to generalize. The most disaffected areas, where over half of the population is secularized, lie in the north and east, with notable outliers in eastern Germany, Bohemia, parts of Hungary, the Netherlands, and Mediterranean France. By contrast, refuge regions of surviving Christian vitality include a belt from Poland through western Ukraine to Romania, nearly all of Greece, southern Italy, western Iberia, the Irish west, and an area overlapping parts of the Alps and Po-Veneto Plain. The decades-long persecution of the church under Communist regimes clearly helps explain the pattern, though it does not address the issue of how or why Polish Catholicism, Romanian Orthodoxy, or the Ukrainian Uniate Church so successfully resisted that oppression. Arguably, the far north never became thoroughly Christianized, lying remote from centers of church authority. Of the three main divisions of Christianity, Catholicism has clearly resisted secularization more successfully, while Protestantism has suffered the greatest losses. Some apparent dechristianization may, instead, be reaction against the established churches, particularly since these groups often have status as official state churches and are supported by tax revenues. The success of the Neoprotestant movement suggests as much. It works the other way, too. Some professed devotion



Secularization and religious vitality in Europe. "Secular" is defined as some combination of the responses "atheist," "agnostic," "unreligious," "no religious faith," and "never attend church." The belt of greatest Christian vitality stretches from the Baltic to Black Sea through Poland, Lithuania, Slovakia, western Ukraine, Romania, and Moldavia. Other Christian refuges include the Greek lands, southern Italy, western Iberia. The Protestant north and Orthodox east reveal the highest levels of secularization. (Sources: based principally upon Eurobarometer, unpublished public opinion survey carried out in both western and eastern Europe by Gallup Poll Social Survey for the Commission of the European Communities in 1991/1992; as well as upon Catholic News Service, unpublished "Religious Beliefs and Practices in Twelve Countries [1991]," Washington, DC, released June 10, 1993; unpublished survey conducted in Ukraine, 1992, by Media & Opinion Research Department of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute, Washington, DC).

to the church could be the reaction to governmental suppression, as in Poland. This map and a more elaborate discussion of secularization will appear in the forthcoming 3rd edition of *The European Culture Area: A Systematic Geography*, New York: Harper Collins, Publishers, 1995).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rana P.B. Singh of Banaras Hindu University announces that the German journal Erdkunde (Bonn) Bd. 48, #3 Sept. 1994 consists of three articles related to GORABS (one in German and two in English) dealing with the sacred structure of Varanasi, water symbolism in Hinduism, and another on the Ganga River. In addition, the Indian Society of Cultural Heritage cordially invites individuals and institutions to participate in the exchange of ideas and activities to preserve, conserve and promote the study of the cultural heritage of India--especially sacred places and religious landscapes. Promotion of reverential and sustainable development are the focus of concern. You can contact Rana at No. B 29/12 A Lanka, Varanasi, UP 221005, India.

The editors of the National Geographical Journal of India are announcing a call for papers for a special volume entitled India: Ecological-Cultural Pattern & Regional Perspective. Several sections will be devoted to GORABS themes. Contact-Rana P.B. Singh (above).

Andrew L. March is requesting information regarding e-mail lists on China, maps, and map-like concepts of nature, shape and value of earth spaces. If you can help him out, write to:
ae840@freenet.hsc.colorado.edu

Peter Halvorson, Department of Geography, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06269, announces that he and W.M. Newman just published their Atlas of Religious Change in America, 1952-1990, 1994, Glenmary Research Center, 750 Piedmont Ave., NE, Atlanta, GA 30308. Consider ordering a copy for your library.

Allan Gleason, 6430 North Strahan Rd., El Paso, Texas 79932, has recently compiled a manuscript entitled Snapshots of Religion on the Land. It is packed with maps and figures on such diverse topics as "The St. Clair River as a Religious Boundary," and "Undeeded Church Houses; A minor Appalachian phenomenon." Contact him for more information. In addition, Allan has made some suggestions to the AAG central office on improving the annual meetings which has gained notice. Ron Abler is requesting help on Allan's suggestions. If you are interested in writing about 1,000 words on one of the following topics, then contact the central office: Giving a paper at the AAG Annual Meeting, Giving a Poster Presentation at the AA Annual Meeting, When Your Student is Giving A Paper at the AAG Annual Meeting or What AAG Meetings Are All About...

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