



**Saraswati---Goddess of illumination**



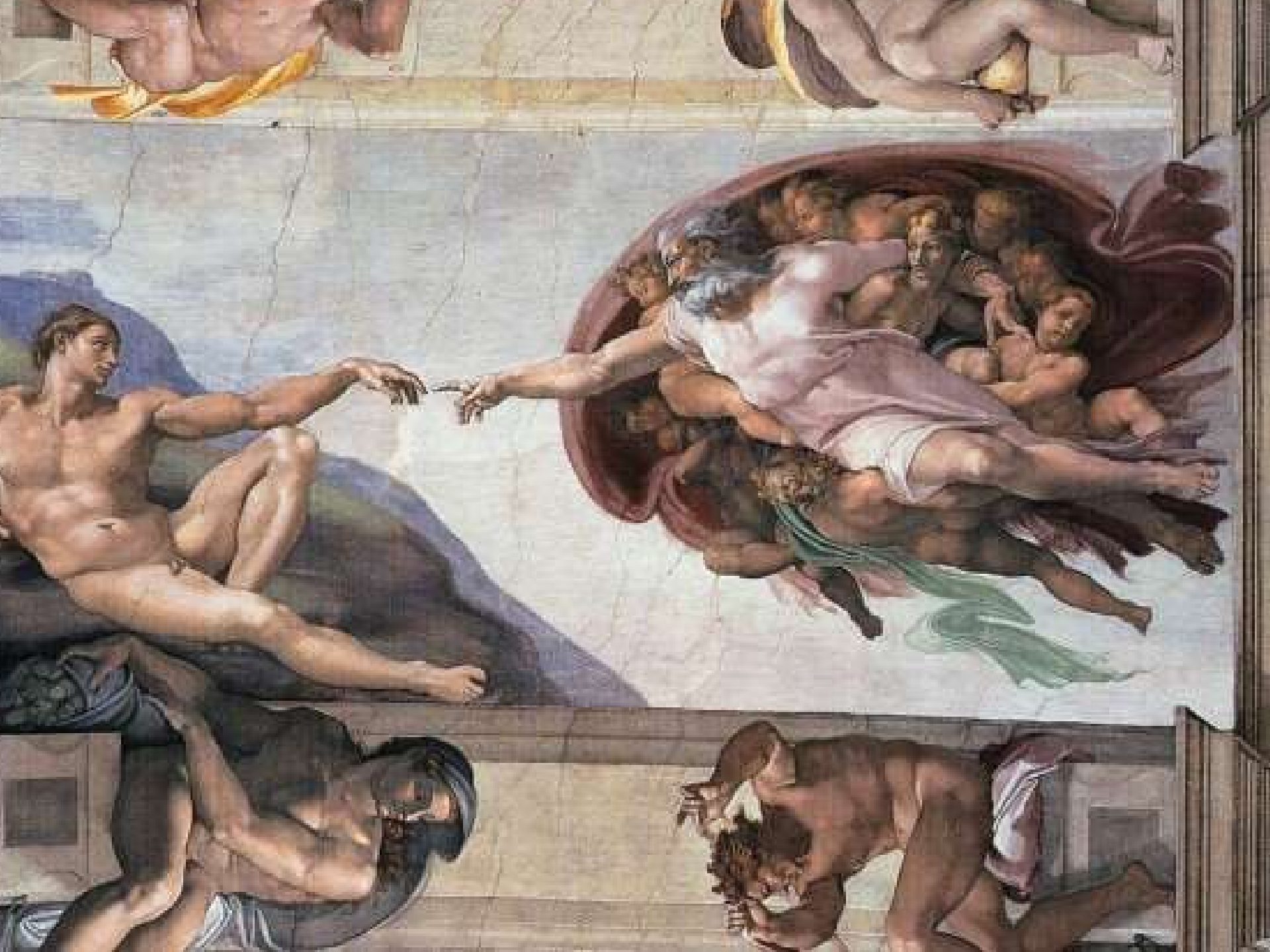
Map data













Rama and Sita





# Lakshmi



# Hindu Spiritual Teachings

- ▶ **GOD**
- ▶ Hindus worship God as One Reality, One Consciousness.
- ▶ The One Reality is beyond number, count and gender. They taught that this Reality is seen in the cave of one's heart.
- ▶ Behind the diversity of existence, there is Unity; behind individual souls, there is the Self.

# They described God as *Sat, Chit, Ananda.*

- ▶ **Sat:** Sat is absolute, primal existence.
- ▶ **Chit:** The One Reality is fully Conscious Power. It possesses all knowledge. It is the eye of the eye and the ear of the ear.
- ▶ **Ananda (Bliss):** The One Reality lacks nothing; it contains all. As it lacks nothing and possesses all, its nature is one of delight.

# CREATION

1. God is complete in Himself/Herself. He/she lacks nothing. God is not compelled to create. God creates for joy.
2. God fulfills himself in his creation, just as an artist fulfills himself in his creative work.
3. God dwells in each article of his creation He is in us, and we are in Him.
4. Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita that the universe is strung around his neck like pearls on



# Krishna :

1. “By me is this entire universe pervaded. All things are in Me, and I in them.
2. “Know that as the mighty wind blowing everywhere rests in the sky, all created beings rest in Me.
3. “I am the Father, the Mother, the Supporter and the Grandsire of the universe. “
4. God is not diminished by his creation. He is full and complete before creation and full and complete after creation.

## ▶ Is creation accidental?

- ▶ Material scientists would have us believe that creation is an accident or the work of chance.
- ▶ Hinduism teaches that creation is the work of a Mighty hand. It is not a machine that somehow got started without purpose or goal. Creation is not an illusion or Maya. It is not a dream.
- ▶ Sri Aurobindo (1872–1950) writes:

This world was not made with random bricks of chance,

A blind god is not destiny's architect,

A conscious power has drawn the plan of life,

There is meaning in each curve and line.

- ▶ A similar statement: “Your very hair are numbered.”

## ONENESS

1. A fundamental Hindu principle is one of Unity of all created beings. Behind diversity, there is unity.
2. Not only human life but all created life including animal life is a unity. We spring from one source. Differences and divisions are unreal.
3. By its very nature, Hinduism is not a religion of a chosen people or an appointed community.
4. It rejects the approach which divides humanity into believers and non-believers, kafirs and

heads

# Vegetarianism

1. Hinduism's reach is not limited to humanity; its compassion reaches out to all, human and animal.
2. All life is manifested from one source, and hence all life is sacred.
3. Widespread vegetarianism among Hindus is a practical expression of this belief.



# Vegetarianism is on the rise in the US

1. Some 20 million Americans are vegetarian.
2. Women constitute the large majority of vegetarians in the US.
3. Vegetarianism among Hindus and Buddhists is for “ethical and spiritual reasons.”
4. Among Americans, it is more so for “health and ecological reasons.”

# Hinduism and Buddhism are related

- ▶ Buddha was born a Hindu.
- ▶ Karma and reincarnation common to both.

From India Buddhism spread to many countries in Asia.

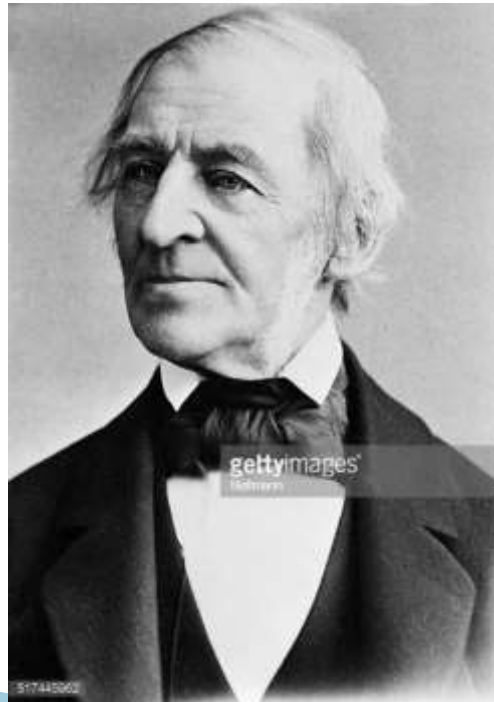


# Hindu teachings have gained broad acceptance in USA

1. Jesus: “I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me.”
2. Americans are no longer buying it– 65% now believe that many religions can lead to eternal life, not only Christianity.
3. Thirty percent of Americans call themselves "spiritual, not religious."

# Ralph Waldo Emerson

- ▶ Emerson is rightly regarded as a founding father of Unitarianism in the US.
- ▶ Emerson was influenced by his reading of certain Hindu religious texts.

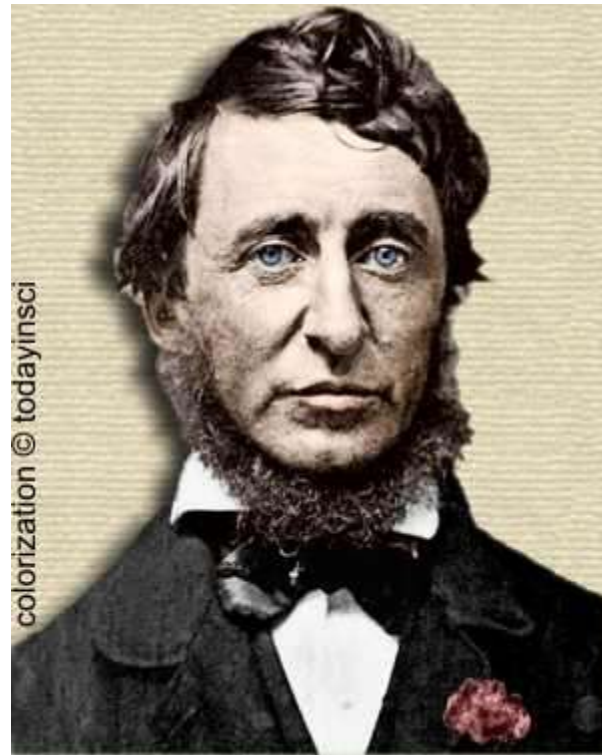




## Emerson writes:

1. I owed a magnificent day to the Bhagavad Gita. It was the first of books;
2. it was as if an empire spoke to us,
3. nothing small or unworthy, but large, serene, consistent,
4. the voice of an old intelligence,
5. which in another age and climate had pondered and thus disposed of the same questions which exercise us.

Henry David Thoreau wrote the famous 'Walden Pond'.





**Walden Pond**



## Thoreau writes:

1. In the morning I bathe my intellect in the stupendous philosophy of the **Bhagavat Gita**,
2. in comparison with which our modern world and its literature seem puny and trivial.
3. I lay down the book and go to my well for water;
4. the pure Walden water is mingled with the sacred water of the Ganges.



# Transcendentalism

1. Emerson and Thoreau were called “transcendentalists.”
2. The transcendentalists influenced UU.
3. The Massachusetts group was called “Boston Brahmins.”

- ▶ The Concord Transcendental community also adopted in part a vegetarian diet, after Hindu reverence for all life.
- ▶ Thoreau said that he practiced Bhakti yoga, the yoga of meditation and prayer.



# Hindu teachings have gained a broad acceptance among liberal thinkers

1. Americans are increasingly pluralistic– 65% now believe that many religions can lead to eternal life, not only Christianity.
2. Thirty percent of Americans call themselves "spiritual, not religious."

# Reincarnation and karma

- ▶ 24% of Americans now believe in reincarnation—2008 Harris poll

# Cremation v. Burial

- ▶ 40% choose cremation over burial, up from 6 percent in 1975.
- ▶ This is another Hindu–Buddhist practice that has caught on.

# Yoga and Meditation

- ▶ Millions now practice Yoga and Meditation for health and spiritual growth.



# Pluralism and multiculturalism in India

- ▶ US prides itself on being pluralistic and multicultural.
- ▶ In particular, we here at UU celebrate diversity. Every Sunday, we recite pluralism.
- ▶ India has been multicultural, multi-religious from ancient times.

# Some persecuted minorities found home in ancient India

- ▶ Jews of Cochin
- ▶ Christians from Syria
- ▶ Parsees from Persia
- ▶ Prophet Muhammad's family
- ▶ Dalai Lama and Buddhists from Tibet
- ▶ Now Rohingyas from Myanmar (Burma)

# Hinduism is not a religion in the Western sense

- ▶ No single founder of Hinduism. It has evolved over centuries.
- ▶ There is no hierarchy. No Pope or Calif.
- ▶ Some worship male God Vishnu or Brahma or Shiva. Others worship the female Deity.
- ▶ Socially, people are divided by caste and occupation

# Jews in India

1. Small groups of Jews have lived in India for some 2,000 years.
2. Dr. Nathan Katz: “The Indian chapter is one of the happiest of the Jewish Diaspora.”
3. “Indian Jews lived as all Jews should have been allowed to live: free, proud, observant, creative and prosperous, self-realized, full contributors to the host community.”
4. “The word anti-Semitism does not exist in the Hindu dictionary.”

# Interreligious couple



# Parsees of India

- ▶ Parsees, fled from Persia (modern day Iran) 1,400 years ago, to escape persecution under Islam.
- ▶ Parsees have flourished in India. They are the richest community.
- ▶ The community now faces extinction—low birth-rates and intermarriages.





# Tibetans persecuted in China have found a home in India





**Saraswati--Goddess of illumination**

Supplementary slides, time  
permitting



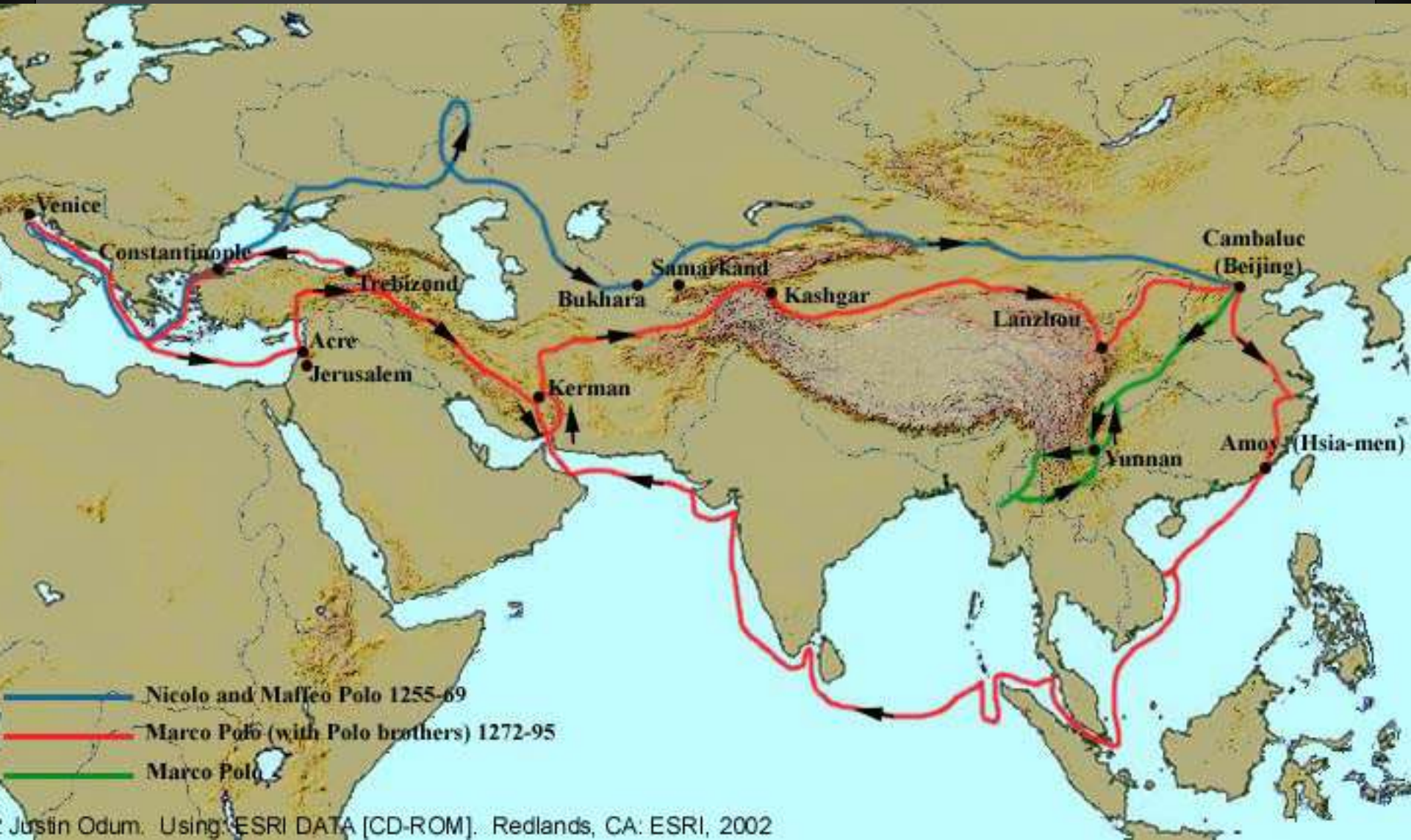
# Decline of civilizations

- ▶ Civilizations rise and fall.
- ▶ Many civilization have declined over the centuries, or disappeared altogether.
- ▶ India once was rich. Today it is poor.
- ▶ 500 years of Islamic tyranny and 200 years of British colonial rule decimated it.



# Marco Polo, 1295, writes:

1. "India is the richest and most splendid province in the world."
2. "Together with Ceylon, India produces most of the pearls and gems that are to be found in the world."
3. Shiploads of cargo from India travel Westward.









INDIAN OCEAN

SRI LANKA

Map not to Scale

Copyright © 2017 www.mapsofindia.com
















# Will Durant, the famous historian summed it up like this:

"The Islamic conquest of India is probably the bloodiest story in history.

- ▶ It is a discouraging tale, for its evident moral is that civilization is a precious good,
- ▶ whose delicate complex of order and freedom, culture and peace, can at any moment be overthrown by barbarians invading from without or multiplying within."

# Are all Religions the same?

1. Many preachers, pundits and professors fashionably declare: “All religions in basic principles are the same.
  2. One can reach the mountain top by taking one of the several paths.”
  3. This patently is not so. We need religious harmony.
  4. We must acknowledge honestly the differences and then respect one another.
- 

- ▶ Om tat sat
- ▶ Thank you ladies and gentlemen







**Saraswati---Goddess of illumination**

- ▶ The following slides were not shown at UU for lack of time. The service allows only 30 min presentation.





- ▶ Religious conflict in the world has multiplied.
- ▶ Why?



# Are all Religions the same?

1. Many preachers, pundits and professors fashionably declare: “All religions in basic principles are the same. One can reach the mountain top by taking one of the several paths.”
2. After Ft Hood massacre in 2009 by Army Major Hasan, Obama said this:  
“all religions are the same in that they seek peace. No religion condones the death of innocent civilians.”

# Is God One?

1. God is not one. Different religions conceive of God differently. Religions may converge to some extent on ethics. But on everything else they differ.
2. Faith in the unity of religions is just that: mere faith. We pretend that all religions make up one big, happy family.
3. The sentiment is “dangerous, disrespectful and untrue. We have followed scholars and sages down the rabbit hole into a fantasy world.” (Prothero)
4. I can discuss similarities and differences among world religions and also describe why there is so much religious violence in the world today.

# Monotheism versus Polytheism

- ▶ The three Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam may be regarded as **monotheistic**.
- ▶ Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism and various native traditions may be regarded as **polytheistic**.

Jonathan Kirsch writes (*God Against the Gods*, 2006, p.2):

1. At the heart of monotheism, is the sure conviction that only a single god exists, a tendency to regard one's own rituals and practices as the only proper way to worship the one true god. . . .
2. At the heart of polytheism is an open-minded and easygoing approach to religion, . . .  
a willingness to entertain the idea that there are many gods and many ways to worship

# 9/11 suicide bombers

Jonathan Kirsch, *God against the Gods*, writes:  
The 9/11 suicide bombers “had embraced the simple but terrifying logic that lies at the heart of monotheism:

“if there is only one god, if there is only one right way to worship that god, then there is only one fitting punishment for failing to do so—  
death.”



# Religion has inspired much violence in history

1. History of violence under Christianity: Crusades (1092–1290), Inquisition (1400–1600), Conquistadors (1500–1700)
2. Presently, violence is predominant in most Muslim countries.
3. Religion–inspired violence has increased. All are guilty to a greater or lesser extent.



## Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi (44) heads the ISIS.

He has a doctorate in Islamic studies. He is a passionate. He was radicalized while being a prisoner under the Americans. Most prisoners held by the US were radicalized”—Bruce Riedel.







Yazidi girls enslaved by ISIS



## Imam Anwar al-Awlaki >>

Killed by American drones in Yemen in 2011.

# Imam Anwar al-Awlaki

1. Jihad is permanent till the judgment day. It is the duty of all good Muslims to join Jihad.
2. A Muslim is a friend of another Muslim and enemy of kafirs. Present Islamic rulers are stooges.
3. America is the head of the Satan. When the head is cut off, the Satan will die.
4. The Muslim community, the Ummah must come together as one nation. Borders are artificial.
5. Sharia is God's law. You cannot change that with laws.



## Obama, Kerry, McCain, Graham are misguided

- ▶ Obama: “The ISIL speaks for no religion. . . Their victims are overwhelmingly Muslim. No faith teaches people to massacre innocents.”
- ▶ John Kerry, NYT 2/3/16: “ISIS members are apostates, not true Muslims.”
- ▶ John McCain and Lindsay Graham NYT op ed 8-2015: ISIS is a military threat; it must be opposed militarily, not ideologically.



Goddess of illumination

