

## STUDY GUIDE

# INTRODUCTION TO WORLD RELIGIONS

The purpose of the study guide is to familiarize yourself with the terms you will study in class. This study guide alone will not allow you to pass your exam. You must attend the prep-course.



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## INSTRUCTIONS:

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# RELIGION: DIMENSIONS AND APPROACHES

## BASIC DIMENSIONS OF RELIGION

**Myths:** They do not necessarily conflict with history and science, nor are they necessarily false or irrational. There are sacred stories of two kinds: 1) **historical myths** filled with hagiography and symbolism and 2) purely **symbolic myths**.

**Rituals:** Activities (usually repeated) that connect one with the sense of the sacred. (Ex. Prayers, modes of dress, pilgrimage, worship, sacrifice, harvest, bar mitzvah, etc.)

**Experiences:** Religious experiences of the sacred; a feeling of the numinous. Experiential begins with the religious experiences of the individual (ex. Buddha)

**Doctrines:** The philosophy or belief system of the religion. The belief aspect of a religious – creed, doctrines or teachings of the religion. It can come from experiential and from myths.

**Ethics:** The moral codes of the group

1. Ethics concerns what is good and bad, how one should live (ex. the ethic of love in Christianity; Covenantal ethic in Judaism)
2. Law concerns what you must do and what will happen if you don't (rules and punishments)
3. How we are to act while living in the world the "Golden Rule"

**Social Aspect:** The organizational form of the religion. It is how people's interactions are organized as part of their religion

1. Belonging to a group: ex. Parish, Congregation, Church, Monastic orders,
2. All of society itself: ex. totemism and tribes
3. Institutional and individual influences in religions -12

**Material Forms:** The sacred objects of the religion, and physical forms in which a religion is embodied

1. Structures: churches, temples, synagogues.
2. Architecture: theology, religious practices are interconnected (Ex. Shrines)
3. Representations of divine beings (ex. Statues)
4. Ritual objects and substances (ex. Cross)

## APPROACHES TO RELIGION

The **Historical approach**- deals, of necessity, with texts, whether these be the doctrinal, devotional, or ritual texts that stem from the religious community or secular documents such as statistics through which the historian attempts to reconstruct the religious life of a community. The historians may weave both types of documents together to create a rich sense of the role of religion in the life of a people as a whole.

The **Theological approach** - 'discourse about God'; when we talk about God, we are 'doing' theology. It is the study of the divine, and of the nature and implications of belief about the divine. Theologians undertake rational, philosophical analyses of religious doctrines and the nature of faith. Theology is vitally important in all religions because it is the discussion and process of deciding how to respond to issues and challenges that arise in today's society through reference to the divine

## TYPES OF THEISMS

**Theism:** The terminology that has developed in Western cultures to describe the various perceptions of spiritual ultimacies reflects a bias in favor of personal description. Belief in the existence of personal gods is called in general theism.

**Monotheism:** Belief in the existence of one all-powerful God, to the exclusion of other gods, is called monotheism. It is founded upon the idea that there is only one god, it is common for believers to also think that this god created all of reality and is totally self-sufficient, without any dependency upon any other being. ***This is what we find in the largest monotheistic religious systems: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.***

**Polytheism:** The belief in the existence of a plurality of personal gods is called polytheism. This is used where a plurality of gods are acknowledged and/or worshipped. Through the course of human history, polytheistic religions of one sort or another have been a dominant majority by far. Polytheism usually involves belief in the several gods of a particular national culture; other gods in other cultures may be acknowledged as existing but ignored, or they might be treated as different cultural manifestations of the same divinities.

**Atheism:** The rejection of belief in personal gods (and by extension spiritual reality in general) is known as atheism. It merely indicates a disbelief in God, rather than an active denial of the existence of any gods.

## PRIMAL RELIGIONS

### NATIVE NORTH AMERICAN TRADITIONS

**Inuit** - The name *Eskimo* was given to these people by neighboring Abnaki Indians and means "eaters of raw flesh." The name they call themselves is *Inuit*, or "the people." Wintertime was a period for the village to come together; men gathered in the common houses called *kashims* or *karigi*, also used for dancing. Games, song contests, wrestling, and storytelling brought the people of small villages together after hunts and during the long, dark winter months. Much of Inuit life was adapted to the extremes of summer and winter night lengths. The Inuit traditionally practiced a form of shamanism based basically on animist principles. They believed that all things had a form of spirit, just like humans, and that to some extent these spirits could be influenced by a pantheon of supernatural entities that could be appeased when one required some animal or inanimate thing to act in a certain way.

**Lakota** - members of the family of the Great Sioux Nation of North America occupying lands in both North and South Dakota have a very rich spirituality and a deep respect for all life, visible and invisible. The word Lakota means "considered friends", or "alliance of friends".

#### **Traditions:**

**Dream Catcher** - The traditional dream catcher was intended to protect the sleeping individual from negative dreams while letting positive dreams through. The positive dreams would slip through the hole in the center of the dream catcher, and glide down the feathers to the sleeping person below. The negative dreams would get caught up in the web, and expire when the first rays of the sun struck them.

**Sun Dance Ceremony- This Lakota Ceremony** has both spiritual and physical significance for the individual dancer, traditionally male but presently females are included in some tribes but do not undergo piercing, and his community. Some ceremonies include a Sweat Lodge ceremony usually the night before the dance. The dance ceremony itself lasted from eight to four days, currently, four days is the custom. Sometimes there is fasting before the dance, now this fasting from food and liquid typically occurs within the four days of the dance. The dance may be performed indoor or outdoor depending on tribal tradition. Dancers dance to drum beats and sing in a circle while facing a center pole, often a tree such as the cottonwood. This is just the physical description of the ceremony. The spiritual aspect of the Sun Dance ceremony is the most important part both for the dancer and the community. For the dancer, his participation represents a quest for spiritual power, purification, and a communion, or at least an attempted communion, with the Great Spirit.

**Hopi** - Native American tribe of the [Shoshonean](#) division of the Uto-Aztecan language family, of the [Pueblo](#) group of the [Southwest culture area](#). [The Hopi religion](#), like that of all other Pueblo peoples, includes the worship of the forces of nature, and has many ceremonies intended to invoke or influence supernatural powers. Ancestor worship plays an important role in Hopi ceremonies, and some Christian influences can be detected, particularly in the dating of ceremonies and the observance of saints' days. Private rites are held in underground ceremonial chambers called kivas, and public services and dances are commonly performed out of doors.

### **Traditions:**

**Kachina** fertility mysteries (the kachina is the spirit of an ancestor, usually representing a clan, symbolized in ceremonies by a masked and painted dancer), and the midsummer and midwinter rituals of sun and fire worship. The Hopi would be blessed with moisture and agricultural fertility. The kachinas also taught the Hopi how to heal sickness, properly discipline those "out of harmony," offer gratitude to the spiritual forces, and ask these forces for help.

**Snake Dance**, ceremony of the [Hopi](#) or Moqui people of north eastern Arizona includes the skilled handling of live snakes. The ceremony is held every two years near August 20th. The celebrants are the Snake and Antelope fraternities of the Hopi tribe. The dance, which is performed in public after eight days of secret ceremonies, **is a petition to the nature gods to bring rain**. The Hopi believe that snakes are their brothers, the children of their ancestors the Snake Maid and the Snake Hero, who were changed into snakes, and therefore have special powers of intercession.

**Butterfly Dance** - *The Butterfly dance is a traditional social dance of the Hopi. It is held after the gathering of the harvest in thanks for their corn crop.* Corn is the symbol of life for the Hopi.

## NATIVE WEST AFRICAN TRADITIONS

**Dogon** - Of the many groups that inhabit this barren environment, Mali's West African Dogon people are perhaps best known for the preservation of their native religious beliefs and customs. **The Dogons follow three principal cults, which include Awa, Lebe and the Binu.** The Dogon carve many different kinds of statues as a form of worship to the ancestors. Although statues are the concrete expression of ancestor worship, they are carefully hidden away, viewed and handled only by those in the cult of the ancestors.

A major part of Dogon religious worship is the cult of the masks, called **Awa**. All young men are instructed in the cult of the masks, but women are strictly excluded. The Awa cult is a cult of the masks or cult of the dead, the purpose of which is to place the spiritual forces in order so that the deceased souls have a safe passage in becoming ancestors. This men's society is characterized by a secret language, a strict etiquette, obligations, and interdicts. In addition, selected young men, called the *olubaru*, are given additional instruction, and will have the life-long duty of preserving the traditions of the masks. The *olubaru* are initiated in a *Sigi* ceremony, which is celebrated only once every sixty years. The masks perform every year during the four weeks which precede the sowing festival, at the *Sigi* ceremony, and during the preparation for a *dama festival*, the ceremony ending the mourning period.

**The Lebe cult is related with the agricultural cycle and its principal priest is known as a Hogon.** The hogon is the oldest direct descendant of the founder of the Dogon, and rules over the affairs of the region. He has many regulatory functions as well as many priestly duties.

The cult of **Binu** is associated to a totemic practice and it has complicated relations with the Dogon's sacred places used for ancestor worship. These prohibitions are passed down through the paternal line, and are in keeping with exogamy. The cult of Binu is also associated with the agricultural cycle, and sacrifices are offered at cult altars during this season.

The cult of the ancestors is associated with the **gina**, the family households of the Dogon. The purpose of the many religious rituals this cult performs is to maintain good relations between the living and the dead. The *gina bana* is in charge of the ancestor cult. As in most African religions, ancestor worship is very important to the Dogon. The Dogon society is gerontocratic; elders are the intermediaries in the cult of the ancestors since they are the future ancestors themselves.

**Yoruba**-Traditional Yoruba beliefs see the world made up of two connected realms. The visible world of the living is called **Aye**, and the spiritual world of the **Orishas**, the ancestors, and spirits, is called **Orun**. **Ase** is the life force that is given to everything by the Creator of the universe. Ase is in everything: plants, animals, people, prayers, songs, rocks, and rivers. Existence is dependent upon Ase because Ase is the power to make things happen and change.

The Yoruba believe in the Creator, who rules over the entire universe along with many other gods that serve underneath him. ***The Creator of the universe is called Olorun.*** Olorun lives in the sky and is considered to be the father of all the other gods. Olorun is the only god that never lived on earth. Olorun is the supreme god and has no special group of worshippers or shrines, like the other gods do.

The Yoruba people worship over four hundred different deities. These gods are called **Orisas**. Some of the Orisas are worshiped by all of the Yoruba. Other gods are only worshiped by certain towns or families. Every person is given or receives a special deity to worship. A person usually worships the god of his father, but some worship the god of their mother. Some people are contacted by a particular god in their dreams and are instructed to worship them.

# HINDUISM

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Hinduism recognizes a different path for each. Every human being possesses a talent or attribute that could be emphasized in approaching God. According to Hindu beliefs, **Brahman** is the principle source of the universe. This divine intelligence exists in all beings. Thus all the Hindu gods and goddesses are manifestations of the one Brahman. **Hinduism is based on the concept of reincarnation, in which all living beings, from plants to gods, live in a cycle of living and dying.** Through reincarnation, or successive life-embodiments of the soul, unity with God may eventually be realized. **The Ganges is the most sacred river to Hindus** and is also a lifeline to millions of Indians who live along its course and depend on it for their daily needs

Life is determined by the law of **karma**. **Karma is the moral law of cause and effect in Hinduism** According to karma, the quality of rebirth is determined by the moral behavior displayed in the previous life. In this view, life on earth is regarded as temporary and a challenge. **The goal of existence is to reach liberation from the cycle of rebirth and death and enter into an indescribable state called moksha (liberation).** The ones who reach this state no longer struggle with the cycle of life and death. **The cow is a sacred animal.**

## SACRED WRITINGS

**Mahabharata**, Sanskrit for Great Story, is one of the great epic poems of ancient India. Written between 300 BC and AD 300, it was meant to be a secular work. However, because of its many religious qualities, it has given many ideas for Hindus to live by. The *Mahabharata* focuses on a contest between two noble families for the possession of a kingdom in northern India.

**Ramayana** is the shorter of the two great Sanskrit epics of ancient India. Rich in descriptions and poetic language, the *Ramayana* consists of seven books and 24,000 couplets. Written in 3rd century BC, **the Ramayana tells the story of Rama, and his wife, Sita.** Rama and Sita are generally seen as ideal examples of great manly heroism and wifely devotion. Reciting the *Ramayana* is considered a religious act, and scenes from the epic are portrayed throughout India and Southeast Asia.

**Bhagavad-Gita** is a Sanskrit poem consisting of 700 verses divided into 18 chapters.

Most Hindus regard it as their most important text and the essence of their belief.

**Vedas** are the sacred scriptures of Hinduism written in Sanskrit. The four basic Vedic books are the **Rig-Veda**, the **Yajur-Veda**, the **Sama-Veda**, and the **Atharva-Veda**. Each of the Vedic books is divided into four parts. Each contains a section of hymns to the gods (**Mantras**), a section of ritual materials (**Brahmanas**), a section of guidance for hermits (**Aranyakas**), and a fourth section of philosophical treatises (**Upanishads**). The Mantra and Brahman sections are the oldest materials with the Aranyakas and Upanishads added later. This Vedic literature evolved during the classical period of Hinduism.

## NIRVANA

**Nirvana** is the supreme state free from suffering and individual existence. It is a state often referred to as "self-realization" or "God realization". It's the ultimate religious goal of all Hindus. The attainment of nirvana breaks the otherwise endless rebirth cycle of transmigration. Hindus call this nirvana "eternal bliss." However, no one can describe in words what nirvana is. It can only be experienced directly.

## YOGA

Yoga is one of the six classic systems of Hindu philosophy that practices certain disciplines to achieve freedom from the limitations of the flesh and lead to the fulfillment of knowledge. The goal of Yoga is not to achieve peace within, channeling, or the working of miracles, but the acquirement of knowledge. In fact, the Yoga doctrine insists that physical and mental training should be used only as a means to spiritual needs.

Yoga practice forms a ladder to perfect knowledge through eight stages: self-control, religious observance, postures, regulation of breath, restraint of the senses, steadying of the mind, meditation, and profound contemplation.

The word Yoga in Sanskrit means **union**. The union of ourselves and the union with the Divine. Yoga is the general term for spiritual disciplines in Hinduism, Buddhism, and practices throughout South Asia that are directed toward attaining higher consciousness and liberation from ignorance, suffering, and achieving rebirth. Yoga is a technique of physical and spiritual training by which the bodily and psychic energies are controlled, unified, and directed in order to attain liberation from the world. Yoga is the liberating union of the self (atman) with the Self (Brahman).

A mantra is believed to be the sound form of reality, having the power to bring into being the reality it represents. Hindu tradition in general recognizes three main kinds of yoga: Jnana yoga is the path of realization and wisdom; Bhakti yoga is the path of love and devotion to a personal God; and Karma yoga is the path of selfless action.

## DEITIES:

Hindus have a multitude of gods and goddesses that symbolize the one abstract Supreme Being or Brahman. The most fundamental of Hindu deities are the Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. But many other gods such as Ganesha, Krishna, Rama, Hanuman, and goddesses like Lakshmi, Durga, Kali and Saraswati top the popularity chart with Hindus across the world.

**Ganesha** - *Easily recognizable as the elephant deity riding a mouse*, Ganesha is arguably the most popular Hindu God, and one of the most common mnemonics for anything associated with Hinduism. The son of Shiva and Parvati, Ganesha is depicted as having a curved trunk, big ears, and a huge pot-bellied body of a human being. He is the lord of success and destroyer of evils and obstacles. He is also worshiped as the god of knowledge, wisdom, and wealth.

**Vishnu** - The peace-loving deity of the Hindu Trinity, Vishnu is the Preserver or Sustainer of life with his steadfast principles of order, righteousness and truth. When these values are under threat, Vishnu emerges out of his transcendence to restore peace and order on earth. Vishnu's earthly incarnations have 10 major avatars. Vishnu, when in one of his mortal forms is shown sleeping on a great serpent and floating on water. While in his godly form, he is seen in either black or blue. He can be seen in various colors while in mortal form. Normally, in his godly form, he is seen with four arms: One hand holds a lotus; a second holds a conch; a third holds a discus, which always returns by itself after being thrown; and the fourth carries a mace.

**Shiva** - The most powerful and fascinating deity in Hinduism, who represents death and dissolution. One of the godheads in the Hindu Trinity, Shiva is perhaps the most complex of Hindu deities. Hindus recognize this by putting his shrine in the temple separate from those of other deities and worshipping Shiva as a phallic symbol called the 'Shiva Lingam' in most temples. He is often depicted wearing a cobra around his neck and the Ganges River flowing from his head. Shiva is also the god of selflessness and meditation.

**Krishna** - The great exponent of the Gita, Krishna is the eighth and the most complete avatar of Vishnu, the Godhead of the Hindu Trinity. Of all avatars, he is the most popular and perhaps the one closest to the heart of the masses. ***This blue-skinned deity*** has influenced the Indian thought, life and culture in myriad ways - not only its religion and philosophy, but also into its mysticism and literature, painting and sculpture, dance and music, and all aspects of Indian folklore.

**Rama** - the perfect avatar of the Supreme Protector Vishnu as the seventh incarnation, is an all-time favorite among Hindu deities. The most popular symbol of chivalry and virtue, Rama is "the embodiment of truth, of morality, the ideal son, the ideal husband, and above all, the ideal king." He is widely believed to be an actual historical figure - a "tribal hero of ancient India" - whose exploits form the great Hindu epic of Ramayana or The Romance of Rama.

**Hanuman** - the mighty ape that aided Lord Rama in his expedition against evil forces, described in the epic Ramayana, is one of the most popular idols in the Hindu pantheon. Believed to be an avatar of Lord Shiva, Hanuman is worshiped as a symbol of physical strength, perseverance, and devotion. In times of trouble, it is a common faith among Hindus to chant the name of Hanuman or sing his hymn - "Hanuman Chalisa". Hanuman temples are among the most common public shrines found in India.

**Lakshmi** - Goddess Lakshmi means "Good Luck" to Hindus. The word 'Lakshmi' is derived from the Sanskrit word Lakshya, meaning 'aim' or 'goal', ***and she is the goddess of wealth and prosperity***, both material and spiritual. She is the household goddess of most Hindu families, and a favorite of women. Lakshmi is depicted as a beautiful woman of golden complexion, with four hands, sitting or standing on a full-bloomed lotus and holding a lotus bud, which stands for beauty, purity and fertility.

**Durga** - The Mother Goddess — known variously as Durga, Bhavani, Sherawali, Amba, Chandika, Gauri, Parvati, Vaishno Devi— represents the fiery powers of the gods. The name "Durga" means "inaccessible", and she is the personification of the active side of the divine "shakti" energy of Lord Shiva. ***Durga is usually portrayed as riding a lion, and carrying weapons in her many arms. She is the protector of the righteous, and destroyer of the evil.***

**Kali**, or the dark goddess, is the fearful and ferocious form of the mother goddess Durga. She is depicted as having born from the brow of Goddess Durga during one of her battles with the evil forces. Kali is represented with perhaps the fiercest features amongst all the world's deities. Her tongue protrudes from her mouth, her eyes are red, and her face and breasts are sullied with blood. She stands with one foot on the thigh, and another on the chest of her husband, Shiva.

**Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge and learning**, represents the free flow of wisdom and consciousness. She is the mother of the Vedas, and chants to her, called the 'Saraswati Vandana' often begin and end Vedic lessons. The goddess of wisdom, art and music, she is the daughter of Lord Shiva and Goddess Durga. It is believed that goddess Saraswati endows human beings with the powers of speech, wisdom, and learning.

## MAJOR THEMES

**Classical Hinduism** also produced the ethical **Code of Manu, which teaches that the caste system is divinely ordained. The first three castes (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, and Vaishyas)** are "twice-born" people while the **Shudras are "once born" manual laborers.** The only upward mobility through this caste system is by means of repeated incarnations. **Although the caste system is outlawed in contemporary India, its social influence is still strong.**

The Code of Manu also teaches the various stages through which a man is expected to pass to a successful life: student, householder, hermit, and wandering beggar. These stages are only for twice-born men. Women should stay in the home under the protection and control of the chief male in the household. The code requires the cultivation of pleasantness, patience, control of mind, non-stealing, purity, control of senses, intelligence, knowledge, truthfulness, and nonirritability. **The killing of cows is listed among the greatest of sins.**

**Modern Hinduism:** Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) is without question the most prominent, and arguably the most influential, of the figures associated with modern Hinduism. Gandhi points to one of the central tensions of modernity and Hinduism: on the one hand, Gandhi was a traditionalist, holding up the Bhagavad-Gita as the pinnacle of Hinduism, singing the praises of a return to a unified, whole, pre-colonial India; on the other hand, though, Gandhi was radically progressive, advocating the destruction of caste, the tolerance for other religions, and the elevation of women. Indeed, Gandhi was assassinated by an orthodox Hindu who felt that he was undermining the religion.

## SOCIAL DHARMA

**Dharma** means fulfilling one's duty in one's station in life, which is determined by birth not merit. Each person is born into a distinct **caste**, depending on the **karma** from the past lives. There is no crossing over or intermingling from one caste to another, as this would disrupt the social order. **Brahmins** are the highest caste because they have faithfully executed their duty in a previous life. Lower castes must have served society poorly to be born into their caste, but if they perform their duty in this life, they have hope of being reborn to a higher caste. Thus dharma focuses on maintaining social and cosmic stability. The Hindu conception of the social order is that people are different, and different people will fit well into different aspects of society. Social order or social class according to [Varna](#) forms the framework of moral duties according to personal characteristics of individuals

## CASTE SYSTEM

The traditional caste system consists of a hierarchy of four castes: **Brahmins (priests and teachers)**, **Kshatriyas (rulers and warriors)**, **Vaishyas (merchants and cultivators)**, and **Shudras** (servants). The non-Aryans who were incorporated into the Aryan society belonged to the Shudra caste. **Those who were rejected on the grounds of ritual impurity were treated as and called Untouchables because members of the four castes did not associate with them.**

# BUDDHISM

***Buddhism is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest religion after Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. Buddhism shares its roots with Hinduism.***

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

### LIFE OF BUDDHA

***Siddhartha Gautama – founder of Buddhism***, was born about 583 BCE. His father, King Sudhodana, was leader of a large clan called the Shakya. The King wanted Siddhartha to become a ruler, while other wise men predicted that he would become a Buddha. His mother, Queen Maya, died shortly after his birth. ***Siddhartha lived a palace life and wanted to see the outside world.***

### THE FOUR SIGHTS

On these journeys he was shocked by the sight of an **aged man**, then a **sick man**, and then a **corpse**. The stark realities of old age, disease, and death seized and sickened the Prince. Finally, he saw a **wandering ascetic**. It was explained that the ascetic was one who had renounced the world and sought release from fear of death and suffering. Siddhartha realized then that he could no longer be content living the life of a prince. The **Bodhisattva** (=future Buddha), started off on his journey.

That very night it became his **renunciation** and he left the palace, shaved his head, and changed his prince's clothes for a beggar's robe. Then he began his quest for enlightenment. Leaving his kingdom and loved ones behind, Siddhartha became a wandering monk. He cut off his hair to show that he had renounced the worldly lifestyle and called himself Gautama.

## ENLIGHTENMENT

**While meditating under a Bodhi tree in, the Bodhisattva experiences the Great Enlightenment**, which reveals to him the way of salvation from suffering. He spends seven weeks meditating in the vicinity of the site of the Bodhi tree and attains the status of a fully realized Buddha at the age of 35. During a short period of time, Buddha establishes a great reputation in western Hindustan by converting thousands of people to the *dhamma* (=the Buddhist teaching). People hear the *dhamma* delivered either by himself, or by the monks of his order. During this time he delivers the *fire sermon*. In the 45 years following his enlightenment, Buddha travels around Northern India to teach the tenets of Buddhism.

## OTHER FORMS OF BUDDHISM

**Theravada Buddhism** (or Southern Buddhism) maintains the importance of the community of monks. It emerged in first century BCE, and it places emphasis on the relentless effort that is required to gain enlightenment and the difficulty of that path. **Theravada Buddhists strive to become arhats**, or perfected saints who have attained enlightenment and nirvana. This is considered to only be possible for monks and nuns, who devote their entire lives to the task. The best outcome the laity can hope for is to be reborn in the monastic life.

**Mahayana Buddhism** (or Eastern Buddhism) is more liberal and open to a wider range of authoritative texts and ideas. Its scripture was recorded in Sanskrit in 3rd Century BCE and it usually develops in close relationship with the various indigenous religions it encounters, such as Confucianism in China and Shinto in Japan. Mahayana Buddhism emerged in the first century CE as a more liberal, accessible interpretation of Buddhism. As the "**Greater Vehicle**" (literally, the "Greater Ox-Cart"), Mahayana is a path available to people from all walks of life - not just monks and ascetics. Mahayana Buddhists, on the other hand, hope to become not *arhats* but **bodhisattvas, saints who have become enlightened but who unselfishly delay nirvana to help others attain it as well**, as the Buddha did.

**Vajrayana**, or "diamond vehicle", which has mystical and magical elements and uses specific techniques such as the mantra (special saying) and mandala (meditation circle). Vajrayana embodies ideas of both the [Yogachara](#) discipline, which emphasizes the ultimacy of mind, and the [Madhyamika](#) philosophy, which undermines any attempt to posit a relativistic principle as the ultimate.

Dealing with inner experiences, the Vajrayana texts use a highly symbolic language that aims at helping the followers of its disciplines to evoke within themselves experiences considered to be the most valuable available to human beings. Vajrayana thus attempts to recapture the [enlightenment](#) experience of the historical [Buddha](#).

## MAJOR THEMES

### The Four Noble Truths

#### 1. Life means suffering.

To live means to suffer, because human nature is not perfect and neither is the world we live in. During our lifetime, we inevitably have to endure physical suffering such as pain, sickness, injury, old age, and eventually death; and we have to endure psychological suffering like sadness, fear, frustration, and depression. Although there are different degrees of suffering and there are also positive experiences in life that we perceive as the opposite of suffering, such as ease, comfort and happiness, life in its totality is imperfect and incomplete, because our world is subject to impermanence. This means we are never able to keep permanently what we strive for, and just as happy moments pass us by, we ourselves and our loved ones will pass away one day, too.

#### 2. The origin of suffering is attachment.

The origin of suffering is attachment to transient things and the ignorance thereof. Transient things do not only include the physical objects that surround us, but also ideas, and in a greater sense- all objects of our perception. Ignorance is the lack of understanding of how our mind is attached to impermanent things. The reasons for suffering are desire, passion, pursuit of wealth and prestige, and fame. Since the objects of our attachment are transient, their loss is inevitable, thus suffering will necessarily follow. Objects of attachment also include the idea of a "self" which is a delusion, because there is no abiding self. What we call "self" is just an imagined entity, and we are merely a part of the ceaseless becoming of the universe.

#### 3. The end of suffering is attainable.

The end of suffering can be attained through *nirodha*. Nirodha means the unmaking of sensual craving and conceptual attachment. The third noble truth expresses the idea that suffering can be ended by attaining dispassion. Nirodha extinguishes all forms of clinging and attachment. This means that suffering can be overcome through human activity, simply by removing the cause of suffering. Attaining and perfecting dispassion is a process of many levels that ultimately results in the state of *Nirvana*.

Nirvana means freedom from all worries, troubles, complexes, fabrications and ideas. Nirvana is not comprehensible for those who have not attained it.

#### 4. **The path to the end of suffering.**

There is a path to the end of suffering - a gradual path of self-improvement, which is described more detailed in the [Eightfold Path](#). It is the middle way between the two extremes of excessive self-indulgence (hedonism) and excessive self-mortification (asceticism), and it leads to the end of the cycle of rebirth. The latter quality discerns it from other paths which are merely "wandering on the wheel of becoming" because these do not have a final object. The path to the end of suffering can extend over many lifetimes, throughout which every individual rebirth is subject to karmic conditioning. Craving, ignorance, delusions, and its effects will disappear gradually, as progress is made on the path.

## EIGHTFOLD PATH

***The Noble Eightfold Path describes the way to the end of suffering***, as it was laid out by Siddhartha Gautama. It is a practical guideline to ethical and mental development with the goal of freeing the individual from attachments and delusions, and it finally leads to understanding the truth about all things. Together with the [Four Noble Truths](#) it constitutes the gist of Buddhism. Great emphasis is put on the practical aspect because it is only through practice that one can attain a higher level of existence and finally reach Nirvana. The eight aspects of the path are not to be understood as a sequence of single steps. Instead, they are highly interdependent principles that have to be seen in relationship with each other.

### 1. **Right View**

Right view is the beginning and the end of the path, it simply means to see and to understand things as they really are and to realize the Four Noble Truth. The right view is the cognitive aspect of wisdom. It means to see things through, to grasp the impermanent and imperfect nature of worldly objects and ideas, and to understand the law of karma and karmic conditioning. Right view is not necessarily an intellectual capacity, just as wisdom is not just a matter of intelligence. Instead, right view is attained, sustained, and enhanced through all capacities of mind. It begins with the intuitive insight that all beings are subject to suffering, and it ends with complete understanding of the true nature of all things. Since our view of the world forms our thoughts and our actions, right view yields right thoughts and right actions.

## 2. Right Intention

While right view refers to the cognitive aspect of wisdom, right intention refers to the volitional aspect, i.e. the kind of mental energy that controls our actions. Right intention can be described best as a *commitment* to ethical and mental self-improvement. Buddha distinguishes three types of right intentions:

1. The intention of renunciation, which means resistance to the pull of desire.
2. The intention of good will, meaning resistance to feelings of anger and aversion.
3. The intention of harmlessness, meaning not to think or act cruelly, violently, or aggressively, and to develop compassion.

## 3. Right Speech

Right speech is the first principle of ethical conduct in the eightfold path. Ethical conduct is viewed as a guideline to *moral discipline*, which supports the other principles of the path. This aspect is not self-sufficient, however, essential because mental purification can only be achieved through the cultivation of ethical conduct. The importance of speech in the context of Buddhist ethics is obvious: words can break or save lives, make enemies or friends, start a war or create peace. Buddha explained right speech as follows:

1. To abstain from false speech, especially not to tell deliberate lies and not to speak deceitfully.
2. To abstain from slanderous speech and not to use words maliciously against others.
3. To abstain from harsh words that offend or hurt others.
4. To abstain from idle chatter that lacks purpose or depth.

Positively phrased, this means to tell the truth, to speak friendly, warm, and gently and to talk only when necessary.

## 4. Right Action

The second ethical principle, right action, involves the body as natural means of expression, as it refers to deeds that involve bodily actions. Unwholesome actions lead to unsound states of mind while wholesome actions lead to sound states of mind. Again, the principle is explained in terms of abstinence: right action means:

1. To abstain from harming sentient beings, especially to abstain from taking life (including suicide) and doing harm intentionally or delinquently.
2. To abstain from taking what is not given, which includes stealing, robbery, fraud, deceitfulness, and dishonesty.
3. To abstain from sexual misconduct.

Positively formulated, right action means to act kindly and compassionately, to be honest, to respect the belongings of others, and to keep sexual relationships harmless to others.

### 5. Right Livelihood

Right livelihood means that one should earn one's living in a righteous way and that wealth should be gained legally and peacefully. The Buddha mentions four specific activities that harm other beings and that one should avoid for this reason:

1. Dealing in weapons.
2. Dealing in living beings (including raising animals for slaughter as well as slave trade and prostitution).
3. Working in meat production and butchery.
4. Selling intoxicants and poisons, such as alcohol and drugs.

Furthermore, any other occupation that would violate the principles of right speech and right action should be avoided.

### 6. Right Effort

Right effort can be seen as a prerequisite for the other principles of the path. Without effort, which is in itself an act of will, nothing can be achieved, whereas misguided effort distracts the mind from its task, and confusion will be the consequence. Mental energy is the force behind right effort; it can occur in either wholesome or unwholesome states. The same type of energy that fuels desire, envy, aggression, and violence can on the other side fuel self-discipline, honesty, benevolence, and kindness. Right effort is detailed in four types of endeavors that rank in ascending order of perfection:

1. To prevent the arising of unarisen unwholesome states.
2. To abandon unwholesome states that have already arisen.
3. To arouse wholesome states that have not yet arisen.
4. To maintain and perfect wholesome states already arisen.

### 7. Right Mindfulness

Right mindfulness is the controlled and perfected faculty of cognition. It is the mental ability to see things as they are, with clear consciousness. Usually, the cognitive process begins with an impression induced by perception, or by a thought, but then it does not stay with the mere impression. Instead, we almost always conceptualize sense impressions and thoughts immediately. We interpret them and set them in relation to other thoughts and experiences, which naturally go beyond the facticity of the original impression.

The mind then posits concepts, joins concepts into constructs, and weaves those constructs into complex interpretative schemes. All this happens only half consciously, and as a result we often see things obscured. Right mindfulness is anchored in clear perception, and it penetrates impressions without getting carried away. Right mindfulness enables us to be aware of the process of conceptualization in a way that we actively observe and control the way our thoughts go. Buddha accounted for this as the *four foundations of mindfulness*:

1. Contemplation of the body.
2. Contemplation of feeling (repulsive, attractive, or neutral).
3. Contemplation of the state of mind.
4. Contemplation of the phenomena.

### 8. Right Concentration

The eighth principle of the path, right concentration, refers to the development of a mental force that occurs in natural consciousness, although at a relatively low level of intensity, namely concentration. Concentration in this context is described as one-pointedness of mind, meaning a state where all mental faculties are unified and directed onto one particular object. Right concentration for the purpose of the eightfold path means *wholesome concentration*, i.e. concentration on wholesome thoughts and actions. The Buddhist method of choice to develop right concentration is through the practice of meditation. The meditating mind focuses on a selected object. It first directs itself onto it, then sustains concentration, and finally intensifies concentration step by step. Through this practice, it becomes natural to apply elevated levels concentration also in everyday situations.

# CONFUCIANISM

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS

**Confucius** (551-479 BCE) was a famous sage and social philosopher of China whose teachings have deeply influenced East Asia for 2400 years. **He lived during the Warring States Period.** Confucianism is a complex system of moral, social, political, and religious thought which had tremendous influence on the history of Chinese civilization up to the 21st century. His teachings are foundational to Asian cultures. **Confucius' primary concern lay in social relations, proper conduct, and social harmony.**

**Confucius defined five cardinal relationships:**

- 1. Between ruler and ruled,**
- 2. Between husband and wife,**
- 3. Between parents and children,**
- 4. Between older and younger brothers,**
- 5. Between friends.**

Except for the last case, all of the defined relationships are between superiors and inferiors. He emphasized the complete obedience and loyalty of the inferior to the superior but also mentioned the benevolence of the superior to the inferior.

The ideal Confucian family was an extended one of three or four generations, in which authority rested with the elderly male members. Filial piety (obedience to parents) was one of the most important virtues emphasized by later Confucians.

Confucius sought a way to restore the cultural-political order. He believed that reform would come through educating the leaders in the classics and in his philosophy. He, therefore, sought a political position of influence, from which he could implement his principles.

Confucius avoided spiritual issues. He can be categorized as an agnostic who believed in spirits and the supernatural but was not interested in them. He was humanistic and rationalistic in his outlook.

In the Confucian system, a divine being does not have a significant role; his philosophy is man-centered and relies on self-effort. Man is sufficient to attain the ideal character through education, self-effort, and self-reflection. The goal of life was to live a good moral life. After his death, Confucianism evolved, combining with Chinese traditional religions and Buddhism to add a spiritual component.

## RELATIONSHIPS

One theme central to Confucianism is that of relationships, and the differing duties arising from the different status one held in relation to others. Individuals are held to simultaneously stand in different degrees of relationship with different people, namely, as a junior in relation to their parents and elders, and as a senior in relation to their children, younger siblings, students, and others. While juniors are considered in Confucianism to owe strong duties of reverence and service to their seniors, seniors also have duties of benevolence and concern toward juniors.

## CORE CONFUCIAN TEXTS

The development of Confucianism is traced through the development of its canon. It is, therefore, helpful to first list the main Confucian texts. The orthodox canon of Confucian texts, as eventually formulated by Zhu Xi, is the so-called "**Four Books and Five Classics**". These are:

### THE FOUR BOOKS

The Great Learning  
 The Doctrine of the Mean  
 The Analects of Confucius  
 The Mencius

### THE FIVE CLASSICS

The Classic of Poetry  
 The Classic of History  
 The Classic of Rites  
 The Classic of Changes  
 The Spring and Autumn Annals  
 A sixth book, the Classic of Music is referred to but was lost by the time of the Han Dynasty

## MAJOR THEMES

### The Ethics of Confucius – key principles in his teachings

1. The term **Li** has several meanings, often translated as propriety, reverence, courtesy ritual or the ideal standard of conduct. It is what Confucius believed to be the ideal standard of religious, moral, propriety and social conduct.
2. The second key concept is the Principle of **Jen**. It is the fundamental virtue of Confucian teaching. Jen is the virtue of goodness and benevolence. It is expressed through recognition of value and concern for others, no matter their rank or class. Li provides the structure for social interaction. Jen makes it a moral system.
3. The third important concept is **Chun-Tzu, the idea of the true gentleman or gentlemanliness**. It is the man who lives according to the highest ethical standards. The gentleman displays five virtues: self-respect, generosity, sincerity, persistence, and benevolence. His relationships are described as the following: as a son, he is always loyal; as a father, he is just and kind; as an official, he is loyal and faithful; as a husband, he is righteous and just; and as a friend, he is faithful and tactful.
4. Another important concept is **Te**. The word *te* literally means "power," but the concept has a far wider meaning. The power needed to rule, according to Confucius, consists of more than mere physical might. It is necessary that the leaders be men of virtue who can inspire their subjects to obedience through example.
5. The concept of **Wen** refers to the arts of peace, which Confucius held in high esteem. These include music, poetry, and art. Confucius felt that these arts of peace were symbols of virtue that should be manifest throughout society.

# TAOISM

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Taoism originated in China. **The root of Tao is defined as the way of the universe, nature, balance, it is a reality that cannot be grasped in language, or thought.** The **Yin and Yang** symbol, also referred to as the Tai Chi disk, **is expressed as everything consisting of a balance, it constitutes reality.**

## MAJOR THEMES

The goal of life is to conform human lives in the way of the universe, “being itself is a state of being”. Taoism is also known as the nameless philosophy. Its main themes are intuition, simplicity, spontaneity, and the way of nature. The **Tao-Te Ching** or The Way and its Power, is the doctrine of Taoism that is thought to be written by Lao-Tzu.

The key concepts of Taoism are: **Wu Wei-** action-less action, **Te** the flowing power, living simply, **Ch’i**, cosmic energy, and finally, **Feng-Shui**, winds, and waters.

## PHILOSOPHERS

The creation of Tao is associated with two main philosophers:

1. **The first is Lao Tzu**, who is thought to have lived between the sixth and third century BCE. He is regarded as the creator for the foundation of the Taoist philosophy. According to a Chinese legend, Lao Tzu was immaculately conceived by a shooting star and born as an eighty-two year old man. He lived as a scholar of the Yin-Yang school of philosophy. It is believed that after his retirement he wanted to live the rest of his days living out a simple life in the mountains, but was forced by a guard to write down his life’s wisdom. After two days he returned to the guard with a short manuscript; the *Tao Te Ching*. In the *Tao Te Ching*, Lao Tzu stated that “people should return to the original condition of nature...complete personal tranquility”. It is believed that he was not the only writer of the book, but rather several teachers wrote it together. However, it remains to this day as the basic text of Taoist thought and credit is generally given to him.

2. The second philosopher is **Chuang Tzu** who lived from 369-286 BCE. He wrote a self-titled book that reflects the same teaching of the Tao Te Ching, however it is more mystical and complex in its outlook. Shamanism is another important root of Taoism. It has many unknown contributors, but is important non-the less. **Shamans** are religious persons who perform a number of different services. The Taoist Shaman was associated with the spiritual world, they were healers and destroyers of evil spirits. Both men and women were shamans. Women were more dominantly shamans, they performed exorcisms at certain times of the year, usually in times of trouble, like drought for example. The association of women is significant because the Taoist's ideal society is deeply connected with matriarchy and femininity, this is obvious as women represent the yin element of nature. It was the Shamans that made Taoism more of a religious thought than a philosophical one.

## THREE SENSES OF TAO

The Tao Te Ching is more or less the “bible” of Taoism. The basis for following the **Tao** or “way” is given in three senses of the Tao.

1. The first is the **way of ultimate reality**. Tao in this sense cannot be defined, perceived, or clearly conceived. Tao is the root of all things, but all things are not Tao. To be Tao is to be unlimited, undefined or unformed. Tao is all the same, the ground of everything that follows. The Tao is also transcendent and immanent.
2. In the second sense it is the **way of the universe**; the norm, the rhythm, and the force behind and in all of nature. It is spirit not matter. It is inexhaustible energy that flows stronger the more it is drawn upon. It is good and gives life to all things, it is the “Mother of the World.”
3. Finally, in the third sense, Tao is the **way of human life** as it meshes with the Tao of the universe. The goal of Taoists is to attain harmony with the Tao. This attainment of harmony with the Tao is also seen as living in accord with nature. Taoism is profound in its naturalism. Nature is something that should not be exploited and abused, it should be befriended not conquered. The ideal man in Taoism is one who through the naturalness of his existence became self-sufficient and not dependent upon wealth or social realms. It was this way that true happiness could be found. To achieve mental discipline, all thoughts must respond only to

Tao, the openness of the universe. The method behind achieving lasting peace and harmony in life is waking with persistence to reach the spiritual level. Tao is the potency of the universe, it includes all gods, deities, divine beings, spirits and souls. The deep root of all things has Tao. To embrace Tao is to become Tao. Tao is the source of everything, but everything is not Tao.

## ENLIGHTENMENT

For a Taoist, the objective of their human existence is to reach and maintain harmony with the **Tao**. When this harmony is reached enlightenment has been achieved. Enlightenment is when they accept the plainness of their life. It cannot be found in a doctrine, rather it is found when one's energy is balanced and one's mind is clear. When spirit is the directing energy in life, then the desires and impulses are balanced and harmonious and fulfill their natural function as expressions of the positive, creative, and constructive nature of the universe. Taoism is the romantic philosophy of China. It praises spontaneity and naturalness and connects the human to what transcends it. Taoism in its purest definition promotes simplicity, openness, and wisdom. **One who has reached the enlightenment of the Tao is referred to as a sage.** A sage is said to have the following characteristics: openness to life, tranquility, simplicity, unity, geniuses and reserve. They lack arrogance, do not discriminate between opposites and are indifferent to worldly affairs.

## PRACTICE EXAM

1. The types of Theisms include Monotheism, Atheism and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Multitheism
  - b. Polytheism
  - c. Hexatheism
  - d. Bitheism
  
2. Which Hopi Native American tradition is held after the gathering of the harvest in thanks for their corn crop?
  - a. Dream Catcher
  - b. Butterfly Dance
  - c. Sun Dance Ceremony
  - d. Alligator Dance
  
3. What is the most sacred river to the Hindus?
  - a. Ganges
  - b. Amazon
  - c. Indus
  - d. Brahmaputra
  
4. In the ethics of the teachings of Confucius, Chun-Tzu is the \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Concept of a true gentleman
  - b. Concept of power
  - c. Concept of arts and peace
  - d. Concept of goodness and benevolence
  
5. \_\_\_\_\_ categorized the priests, scholars, and philosophers in the caste system in Hinduism.
  - a. The Shudras
  - b. The Vaishyas
  - c. The Untouchables
  - d. The Brahmins
  
6. \_\_\_\_\_ is the peace-loving deity of the Hindu Trinity.
  - a. Vishnu
  - b. Ganesha
  - c. Brahma
  - d. Rama

7. Ganesha is easily recognizable as the \_\_\_\_\_ deity riding a mouse.
  - a. Elephant
  - b. Tiger
  - c. Snake
  - d. Ape
  
8. The goal of existence is to reach liberation from the cycle of rebirth and death and enter into an indescribable state called \_\_\_\_\_?
  - a. Mantra
  - b. Nirvana
  - c. Moksha
  - d. Vedas
  
9. Which Hindu deity is the goddess of knowledge and learning?
  - a. Shiva
  - b. Kali
  - c. Lakshmi
  - d. Saraswati
  
10. The Mahabharata, Ramayana, and the Bhagavad-Gita are examples of \_\_\_\_\_?
  - a. Caste System
  - b. Sacred Writings
  - c. Sacred Rituals
  - d. Deities
  
11. Who was the founder of Buddhism?
  - a. Vaishyas
  - b. Siddhartha Gautama
  - c. Mahatma Gandhi
  - d. Ashoka
  
12. Buddhism shares its roots with what other major world religion?
  - a. Christianity
  - b. Hinduism
  - c. Taoism
  - d. Daoism

13. The Buddhists believe in a path to the end of suffering. How many fold is this path?
- Eight
  - Ten
  - Five
  - Eleven
14. While Siddhartha Gautama meditated under a Bodhi tree, he reached \_\_\_\_\_.
- Exhaustion
  - Enlightenment
  - Confucianism
  - Social Dharma
15. Core Confucian texts about Confucianism include \_\_\_\_\_.
- Four Books and Five Classics
  - Three Books and Four Classics
  - Four Books and Four Classics
  - Four Books and Three Classics
16. What name was the era in which Confucius lived?
- Chinese Civil War
  - Warring Provinces Era
  - Warring States Period
  - None of these
17. What is the color of Krishna's skin in most avatars?
- Red
  - Green
  - Blue
  - Yellow
18. In Mahayana Buddhism, it is the title given to one who can unselfishly delay enlightenment for the sake of helping others realize themselves.
- Arhats
  - Bodhisattva
  - Yoga Chara
  - Dharma

19. The path indicated by the four noble truths which includes right view, right speech, right mindfulness and right livelihood is called the \_\_\_\_\_?
- The Eightfold Path
  - The Vajrayana Path
  - The Theravada Path
  - The Bodhisattva Path
20. It is the form of Buddhism that has becoming *arhats* as its goal.
- Theravada
  - Mahayana
  - Vajrayana
  - Mantrayana
21. Which of the following is not a concept of Taoism?
- Wu-Wei
  - Te
  - Kafei
  - Yin and Yang
22. What is the moral law of cause and effect in Hinduism?
- Karma
  - Ganesh
  - Moksha
  - Shiva
23. What is an Olorun in the Yoruba Language?
- Spiritual World
  - Universe
  - Ritual Dance
  - Creator
24. This Hopi dance tradition is performed in public after eight days of secret ceremonies.
- Butterfly Dance
  - Snake Dance
  - Coyote Dance
  - Hawk Dance

25. According to the Yoruba Traditions, the *Olorun* is the creator of the \_\_\_\_\_.
- Seas
  - Universe
  - Forests
  - Spirits
26. The senses of Tao include; the way of ultimate reality, the way of the universe and \_\_\_\_\_.
- The way of survival
  - The way of dharma
  - The way of human life
  - The way of suffering
27. Who is a philosopher associated with Taoism?
- Confucius
  - Lao Tzu
  - Chun-Tzu
  - Siddhartha Gautama
28. This symbol shows that everything consists of a balance \_\_\_\_\_.
- Yin and Yang
  - Sage
  - Lao Tzu
  - Wu-Wei
29. A person who has reached enlightenment of the Tao is referred to as a \_\_\_\_\_.
- Chun-Tzu
  - Sage
  - Wen
  - Jen
30. There are 3 principal cults among the Dogon West African people; the Awa, Lebe, and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Binu
  - Betu
  - Kananga
  - Walu

31. The Native American tradition, the Sun Dance Ceremony comes from the \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. Lakota  
b. Hopi  
c. Mojave  
d. Yuma
32. The Lebe cult's chief priest is the \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. Olubaru  
b. Hogon  
c. Olorun  
d. Gina
33. The Code of Manu includes the caste system of Brahmins, Vaishyas, and \_\_\_\_\_.  
a. Saraswati  
b. Rama  
c. Shudras  
d. Kali
34. The largest religions include Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and \_\_\_\_\_?  
a. Taoism  
b. Buddhism  
c. Judaism  
d. Confucianism
35. Confucius defined \_\_\_\_\_ cardinal relationships.  
a. Four  
b. Three  
c. Five  
d. Six
36. Which is **not** one of Confucius' cardinal relationships?  
a. Between husband and wife  
b. Between parents and children  
c. Between teachers and students  
d. Between friends

37. The belief that all living beings, from plants to gods, live in a cycle of living and dying.
- Moksha
  - Karma
  - Reincarnation
  - Hinduism
38. The types of people who did not associate with the four castes are called \_\_\_\_\_.
- Untouchables
  - Peasants
  - Serfs
  - Dwellers
39. A cow is a sacred animal in what religion?
- Hinduism
  - Buddhism
  - Taoism
  - Confucianism
40. The Caste System in Hinduism is a \_\_\_\_\_.
- Writing
  - Type of government
  - School
  - Social ranking system
41. The role of Kshatriyas in the caste system is \_\_\_\_\_.
- Rulers
  - Scholars
  - Merchants
  - Dwellers
42. The Vaishyas in Hinduism are \_\_\_\_\_.
- Untouchables
  - Scholars
  - Merchants
  - Servants

43. Who is usually portrayed as riding a lion, and carrying weapons in her many arms?
- Lakshmi
  - Kali
  - Durga
  - Rama
44. Who is the goddess of wealth?
- Lakshmi
  - Hanuman
  - Saraswati
  - Shiva
45. In his teachings, Confucius hope to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Draw people closer to heaven
  - Gain more followers in China
  - Produce virtuous people and create a harmonious society
  - Give more offerings to the ancestors.
46. What sacred writing is about the devotion to his wife Sita?
- Ramayana
  - Mahabharata
  - Bhagavad-Gita
  - Code of Manu
47. Buddha was born into \_\_\_\_\_?
- Poverty
  - Priesthood
  - Royal Family
  - Caste system
48. Judaism, Christianity and Islam are \_\_\_\_\_ religious systems.
- Monotheism
  - Polytheism
  - Atheism
  - Multitheism

49. The ke dance is a ritual for the Native Americans to try to get the gods to bring\_\_\_\_\_.
- a. Fertility
  - b. Wealth
  - c. Sun
  - d. Rain
50. \_\_\_\_\_ are the written and teaching philosophy and/or belief system of a religion.
- a. Myths
  - b. Rituals
  - c. Doctrines
  - d. Material Forms

## ANSWER KEY

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. B) Polytheism                    | 27. B) Lao Tzu   |
| 2. B) Butterfly Dance               | 28. A. Yin and Yang  |
| 3. A) Ganges River                  | 29. B) Sage  |
| 4. A) Concept of a true gentleman   | 30. A) Binu  |
| 5. D) The Brahmins                  | 31. A) Lakota  |
| 6. A) Vishnu                        | 32. B) Hogon   |
| 7. A) Elephant                      | 33. C) Shudras   |
| 8. C) Moksha                        | 34. B) Buddhism  |
| 9. D) Saraswati                     | 35. C) Five  |
| 10. B) Sacred Writings              | 36. C) Between teachers and students                           |
| 11. B) Siddhartha Gautama           | 37. C) Reincarnation   |
| 12. B) Hinduism                     | 38. A) Untouchables  |
| 13. A) Eight                        | 39. A) Hinduism  |
| 14. B) Enlightenment                | 40. D) Social ranking system                                   |
| 15. A) Four Books and Five Classics | 41. A) Rulers  |
| 16. C) Warring States Period        | 42. C) Merchants   |
| 17. C) Blue                         | 43. C) Durga   |
| 18. B) Bodhisattva                  | 44. A) Lakshmi   |
| 19. A) The Eightfold Path           | 45. C) Produce virtuous people and create a harmonious society |
| 20. A) Theravada                    | 46. A) Ramayana  |
| 21. C) Kafei                        | 47. C) Royal Family  |
| 22. A) Karma                        | 48. A) Monotheism  |
| 23. D) Creator                      | 49. D) Rain  |
| 24. B) Snake Dance                  | 50. C) Doctrine  |
| 25. B) Universe                     |  |
| 26. C) The way of human life        |  |

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