

Thematic Timelines:

Religion and Syncretism

Period 1 – Period 2

Period 1 – Post-Classical Era – 1200 CE - 1450 CE

- **Islam** emerged from the beliefs of **Muhammad Ali** in the 7th century, and spread via Arab conquest from Muhammad, the **Four Caliphs**, the **Umayyad Caliphate**, and lastly the **Abbasid Caliphate** from the 7th to 13th centuries
- Islam profoundly influenced by the pilgrimage of **Arab theology**, and the monotheistic and good vs. evil, heaven and hell, of Judaism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism
- Turkic conquest by Turkic tribes and later the **Ottoman Empire** continued the spread of Islam into Europe and Central Asia
- Islam also spread rapidly along the **Indian Ocean Trade Network** through Muslim merchant diasporas to Southeast Asia, Indonesia, East Africa, and to West Africa through the **Sub-Saharan Trade Network**, changing as it spread
- Persia upper-class head scarves adopted by Arabs and implemented into Islamic tradition
- **Sufism**, originating around local customs and mysticism, popularized Islam in West Africa and throughout the Indian Ocean region with spiritual practices, dances, and customs

Period 2 – Early Modern Era – 1450 CE – 1750 CE

- **Sikhism** started under the teachings of **Guru Nanak** in the Punjab region of India / Pakistan as a blend of Hindu and Islamic beliefs
- **Protestant Reformation** occurs in Europe during the early 16th century, causing decades of conflict and division in Early Modern Europe, as well as new brands of Christianity (**Lutheranism**, **Calvinism**, **Anglican Church**, **Anabaptism**, etc)
- Christianity imposed on Native Americans by force by Europeans, most notably the Catholic missionaries and states of Portugal and Spain, and missionaries spread to China and Japan

Thematic Timelines:

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Period 3 – Period 4

- Protestant missionaries far less active, but still present in the **New World**
- A more peaceful Catholic missionary approach taken by the French in Canada
- Native American and African communities maintain their beliefs through syncretizing with the veneration of saints in Latin America and altars and candles in Vodun
- Differences in the validity of leadership after Muhammad create a violent rift in Islam, with the Sunni sect predominant in the Ottoman Empire's territory and **Shi'a Islam** prominent in the Persian Safavid Empire
- The political rivalry and war between the Ottomans and Safavid Empires intensified the split between Sunni and Shi'a Islamic identities for their respective regions
- The practice of Christianity continued to spread throughout the world and was increasingly diversified by the process of diffusion and the **Reformation** (Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans, Anabaptists, etc.).
- **Vodun** developed in Caribbean in the context of interactions between Christianity and African religions, adopting Christian candles, altars, and saints.
- **Sikhism** developed in South Asia in the context of interactions between Hinduism and Islam

Period 3 – Modern Era – 1750 CE – 1900 CE

- **Enlightenment skepticism** resulted in a decline in the role of religion in the West, and the beginnings of atheism and agnosticism

Period 4 – Contemporary Era – 1900 CE - Present

- The **Second Vatican Council** created a more tolerant **Catholic Church** that accepted other religions and focused on combating poverty and lack of education throughout the developing world