

Religion Exam Notes

NATURE OF RELIGION

Religion: The belief in or worship of a superhuman controlling power

Worldview

- The way one perceives the world
- Past experiences + Present environment
- Personal and Communal
- Types:
 - Cosmocentric: World / Nature
 - Anthropocentric: Human
 - Christian: created in God's image
 - Scientific: science is humanity's greatest achievement - humans are highest beings on earth
 - Secular: live the best life as long as we don't hurt anyone
 - Secular: Society (current/present)
 - Secular ---> Latin: "Saeculum": "Of the time"
 - Theocentric
 - One God - all meaning and life comes from God
 - Atheistic: No-God

Ecumensm: movement of promoting unity amongs Christian religions

Interfaith Dialogue: to discuss world issues and respond with a united religious front

4 Ground Rules for Interfaith Dialogue:

- Respect: have respect for other religions
- No Neutral Stance: can't remain neutral
- Importance of Other Religions: must know the importance of your religion
- Truth in Other Religions: know the truth of other religions

Agnostic: the position of believing that knowledge of the existence of non-existence of God is impossible.

Atheist: does not believe in God

Monotheism: belief in one God

Polytheism: belief in more than one God

Pantheism: belief that God is in all

Objective Reality: That which is presented to our sense. What is really the case. It is an observable reality.

Subjective Reality: Our interpretation of the world presented to our senses or observed.

Objective Reality	Subjective Reality
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Religion	Faith
Science	Interpretation
Deductive reasoning	Inductive reasoning
Practice	Theory
Knowledge	Belief / Wisdom
Reality	Perception

ABORIGINALS

Shaman: Aboriginal spiritual leader

Medicine Wheel: consists of the four directions, all the cycles through nature. Colours: red, yellow, black and white.

Sweat Lodge: mainly used for communal prayer purposes, provides necessary ceremonial setting for spiritual healing, purification, and fasting. Can only be entered in the presence of an Elder.

Sundance: perceived as a replay of the original creation. It is meant to give thanks to the creator, pray for the renewal of the people and earth, socialize and renew friend groups, promote health and etc.

Rituals:

- Smudging: involves the burning of sweetgrass to bring about the power of Grand Mother Earth to help purify oneself and one's community in a similar way that water is used in blessings.
- Powwow: gathering that includes many elements. It has the playful side in the form of dance and the serious side in the meaning of the drums as the heartbeat of the Earth.
- Potlatch: giveaways (land/in kind) on special festivities a child is born, someone dies, or when a chief takes office
- Spirit quest: once a person has reached a certain age, they are sent out on a vision quest to find a purpose in their life and find a spirit guide. (Coming of age ritual)
- Naming: naming a child takes a lot of time, the elder has to go through many steps, such as fasting, to come up with a name for the new child.

JUDAISM

Name of God: Yahweh

Creed: Sh'ma

"Listen o Israel, the Lord is your God, the Lord alone"

Symbol: Star of David - the six points symbolize God's rule over the universe in all six directions

Torah/Pentateuch: entire body of the Jewish teachings (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy)

Shabbat: The Jewish Sabbath, a day of rest and spiritual enrichment

Kiddush: prayer said to welcome the shabbat

Talmud: most significant collection of the Jewish oral tradition interpreting the torah

Shalom: peace, but can also be used as a greeting

Shiva: a week long mourning period when a family member dies

Patriarchs: line of men God used to establish nation of Israel; Abraham→ Isaac→ Jacob...etc

Rabbi: a teacher of qualified to render decisions in the Jewish law

Kashruth Law: list of Jewish dietary laws, cannot mix dairy and meat

Kosher: the laws of Kashrut are the Jewish dietary laws, food that is approved through this law

Synagogue: place of religious worship; building where a Jewish assembly held

Covenant: refers to solemn agreements made between God and the children of Israel in the Hebrew Bible. The foundation of the Torah is the belief God chose the Children of Israel, in His wisdom and His purposes, and made His covenant with them.

Types:

- Orthodox: very true to their religion and are very strict with what they do
- Conservative: strict with some areas of their religion but are also lenient with other rules
- Reform: not strict with religious rules, practices some things of the religion

Rituals:

- Rosh Hashanah: Jewish New Year, marks the day that God will decide for what's going to happen in the new year
- Yom Kippur: The Day of Anointment, Jews believe that God will decide our fate and whether we live, die or prosper
- Sukkot: The Feast of Tabernacles. Commemorates the days that the Israelite's spent travelling in the desert
- Hanukkah: "The miracle of the oil." It is celebrated throughout eight days, and each day they lite one candle on the nine branched menorah called the chanukkiya. The Jews lite an extra candle. They will say prayers and eat oily foods to remind them of the oil that kept the Maccabees keep a temple in Jerusalem lit during eight days. Gifts are also exchanged during this time, such as chocolate and money.

- Passover (Pesach): The Jewish people remember the story of the Israelites liberation from slavery in Egypt. There are blessings and prayers, and also food that the Jews eat that will symbolize parts of the story.
- Brit Milah: The covenant of circumcision. The Jewish boys are circumcised on the eighth day after birth.
- Bar Mitzvah - For Jewish boys that become 13 years old. Bat Mitzvah - For Jewish girls that become 12 years old. To be considered an adult in the Jewish religion and responsible for observing all the laws/commandments. They must study and prepare for the ceremony by attending Hebrew Torah classes at the synagogue. During the ceremony they must read from the Torah, lead a portion of the service, and say a speech called d'var Torah ("word of Torah").

Objects:

- Menorah - 7 branched candelabrum
- Chanukiah - 9 branched candelabrum used in Hanukkah
- Tallit - shawl with long fringe worn during morning services (has fringe to remind them of the commandments)
- Kippah (Yarmulke) - a hound hat that is worn by men in the synagogue or during prayer
- Mezuzah - mounted on the doorstep in a Jewish home, contains a scroll with passages of scripture
- Tefillin - two small black boxes made of leather
- Shofar: ancient musical horn made out of a ram's horn

Enlightenment: 17th century (Western Europe): intellectual freedom and began questioning and reasoning

Holocaust (Shoah): mass genocide of European Jews during WW2; program of systematic state-sponsored extermination by the Nazi Party

Modern Day Israel (Zionism): persecution in Europe fueled desire to return to homeland, 1947 - divided palestine into Arab and Jewish state; Jerusalem under international control. May 14 1948 - Jews proclaimed independent state of Israel. Arab nations invaded to destroy new Jewish state. 8 months later - Israel took half Arab state and their own & rest annexed arab neighbors million palestine arabs expelled.

Diaspora - Jews in Christian Europe

->Sephardina - "Hispanic Jews"->Mediterranean

->Ashkenazim- "German Jews"->North, Central and eastern Europe

CHRISTIANITY

Creed: Nicene Creed / Apostles Creed

Mentions everything that they believe in, such as Jesus coming back

St. Paul is the saint of the gentiles, was known as Saul first, wrote letters.

Incarnation: a person who embodies in the flesh a deity, spirit or abstract quality

Bishop: religious leader, ordained minister who holds the fullness of the sacrament of holy orders and is responsible for teaching doctrine, governing Catholics in his jurisdiction, sanctifying the world and representing the church

Great Schism: the division between Orthodox and Catholics

Reformation: schism from the Roman Catholic church initiated by Martin Luther and then continued by John Calvin

Evangelicalism: religious salvation can be achieved through committing to the word of God (Bible), being born again

Pentecostalism: faith must be powerfully experiential, and not something found merely through ritual or thinking

Anglicanism: main belief is through the book of common prayer

King Henry VIII wanted to divorce his wife so he founded Anglicanism

Lutheranism: believe that humans are saved from their sin through God's grace alone

Martin Luther was an Augustinian monk, wrote 95 theses, did not like the practice that John Tetzel was doing in Germany

Calvinism: Christian life meant trusting in God with emphasis that humans are saved by faith alone, founded by John Calvin who rebelled like Martin Luther

Council of Nicea: first ecumenical council of the Christian church

Council of Jerusalem: the apostle Peter was the first to take the gospel specifically to the Gentiles, and many received Christ as Savior. In Acts chapters 13—14, Paul and Barnabas had a very fruitful ministry among the Gentiles. All of these Gentiles turning to faith in Christ caused concern among the Jewish believers, and the issues that caused concern were ultimately decided upon at the Jerusalem Council. The issues centered on two questions: Do Gentiles first have to become Jews before they can become Christians? Do Gentiles have to observe the Mosaic Law after they become Christians?

Crusades: were the series of religious wars sanctioned by the Latin Church in the medieval period

Jerusalem: Place where Jesus died, dead sea, pilgrimage site for Jews, Christians, and Muslims

Rome: Vatican city is the headquarters of the Roman Catholic church, pope, St. Peter's Basilica, Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel

ISLAM

Name of God: Allah

Symbol: Crescent Moon and Star

Founder: Muhammad

Creed: The Shahadah

“There is no God except Allah; Muhammad is the messenger of Allah”

Qu’ran: message revealed from Allah to the Angel Gabriel and then said to Muhammad

Prophet Isa: Jesus

Imam: Muslim leader, teacher

Jihad: a struggle or fight against the enemies of Islam

Umma: muslim community

Abu Baker: was a senior companion and is the Muhammad’s father in law

Mecca: Muhammad’s hometown and the location of the Kaaba

Medina: In the city center, the vast Al-Masjid an-Nabawi (Prophet's Mosque) is a major Islamic pilgrimage site. Its striking Green Dome rises above the tombs of the Prophet Muhammad and early Islamic leaders Abu Bakr and Umar.

Hijra - the flight of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina to escape persecution 622 AD known as the beginning of the

Muslim Era

Al-Hijra: Islamic New Year, celebrates Hijra

Ramadan: period of fasting

3 Branches/Sects of Islam:

- Sunni - leaders need to be Muhammad’s descendant
 - Extremists are usually Sunni
- Shi'a/Shi'ite - leaders are democratically elected
- Sufi - monostatic branch

Five Pillars of Islam:

1. Shahada - Creed, Faith
2. Salat - Prayer, five times a day
3. Zakat - Charity
4. Sawm - Fasting, Ramadan
5. Hajj - Pilgrimage, Mecca

HINDUISM

Symbol: Aum

Vedas: large body of knowledge texts originating in the ancient Indian subcontinent

Rig Vedas: an ancient Indian collection of Vedic Sanskrit hymns. It is one of the four canonical sacred texts of Hinduism known as the Vedas

Sanskrit: primary liturgical language of Hinduism

Mandir: referred to a place where Hindus go to worship God in the form of various deities

Brahma: creator

Vishnu: the preserver

Shiva: the destroyer

Lakshmi: goddess of wealth

Mohandas Gandhi: fought for ahimsa

Ahimsa: non-violence

Caste system: divides Hindus into four main categories (Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, and Shudras)

Moksha: release from the cycle of rebirth impelled by the law of karma

Enlightenment: freedom

Brahman: the concept of the transcendental and immanent ultimate reality

Reincarnation: to be reborn in a new deity

Nirvana: transcendent state in which there is neither suffering, desire, nor sense of self, and the subject is released from the effects of Karma and the cycle of death and rebirth. Represents the final goal of Buddhism

Samsara: cycle of death and rebirth to which life in the material world is bound

Atman: part of the universal brahman, with which it can commune or even fuse

Maya: the supernatural power wielded by Gods and demons to produce illusions

Bhagavad-Gita: sacred text song of the Lord

Puja: the act of worship

Middle way/path: of moderation between the extremes of sensual indulgence and self-mortification

Three Passing Sights: old man, sick man, and corpse

Mantra: repeated saying

Mandala: geometric figure representing the universe

Yoga: physical meditation

Guru: teacher

Dharma: duty

BUDDHISM

Symbol: The Dharma Wheel

Founder: Siddhartha Gautama

Bodhi Tree: a fig tree native to India and Southwest Asia, regarded as sacred by Buddhist

Zen Buddhism: a Japanese school of Mahayana Buddhism emphasizing the value of meditation and intuition

Tripitaka: or Pali canon, the traditional term for the Buddhist scriptures.

Sangha: the Buddhist community of monks, nuns, novices and laity

Four Noble Truths: the four central beliefs containing the essence of Buddhist teaching

1. Dukkha - truth of suffering
2. Samudaya - truth of the origin of suffering
3. Nirodha - truth of cessation of suffering
4. Magga - truth of the path to the cessation of suffering

Noble Eightfold Path:

1. right view
2. right aspiration
3. right speech
4. right action
5. right livelihood
6. right effort
7. right mindfulness
8. right concentration

Two Major Traditions:

Theravada: the more conservative traditions of Buddhism, and a school of Hinayana Buddhism

Mahayana: now practiced in a variety of forms especially China, Tibet, Japan, and Korea. The tradition emerged around the 1st century AD and this typically concerned with altruistically oriented spiritual practice as embodied in the ideal of the bodhisattva