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Taoism

1. No Government

- a. Taoism doesn't believe in government because the Warring States were wars where governments were against governments and Taoists believe that government is the root cause of the Warring States. This creates the belief of self-governing and be in charge of themselves. If you know what is right and wrong then you will be able to govern yourself. In their minds, this will lead to kind, compassionate, and good people because they aren't persuaded by the government. One quote from Lao Tzu is "good leaders reach solutions, and then stop. They do not dare to rely on force." He also said "What people loathe the most is to be orphaned, desolate, unwanted. But this is what princes and kings call themselves." These quotes show Lao Tzu's feelings on government and rulers.

2. Nature

- a. Taoism believes in the nature. They believe that you should let nature do its thing. Don't interfere with the course of the universe. Don't mess with what nature wants. But that doesn't mean don't nothing, just live with nature and do what nature would do. This idea comes from the no government and the Tao and going back to nature. An example of this belief is the Wu Wei which specifies that you shouldn't just do nothing. This will create more people being open, calm and mindful of what they are doing.

3. Harmony

- a. Taoism values harmony because of the no government philosophy. One way to govern yourself is to live in harmony with nature and submit back to our tribal or old ways of living with nature. This is represented with the Ying and Yang. The Ying and Yang represent the good and bad living in harmony together. This will lead to more people being content and happy with what they have because they will be able to find the equilibrium of their lives.

4. Tao

- a. The Tao or Dao is the harmony in the world. This is a subset of the harmony aspect and the main idea of Taoism. Taoists believe that the Tao is this energy that flows through everything and a way to be good people is to tap into the Tao in you. The Taoism reading we read calls the Tao the "way of the universe, the norm, the rhythm, the driving power" (Taoism Reading 198). This causes there to be more meditation and more mindful people.

5. Chi

- a. Chi is similar to the Tao in the sense that it is in everything but Chi is the energy that flows through you. The Chi probably came from the same thinking that the

Tao came from about reaching the harmony of nature. Many people believe that you can use the Chi in various ways, for example the main idea of acupuncture is to release some blocked Chi in an area of pain. The reason acupuncture hurts is because it unclogs that Chi so that your body can flow properly.

Buddhism

1. 4 Noble Truths

- a. The 4 Noble Truths are the way to reach enlightenment. If you first acknowledge the suffering in the world then learn where it comes from then you have completed the first two steps. The third step is learning how to distract yourself from the cravings and finally begin the eightfold path. This idea came to be because Buddha went on a spiritual journey and found enlightenment through doing these steps. He hopes that these noble truths will cause more people to become enlightened and finally be content with life. Buddha to distance himself from cravings he went and meditated by a tree and fasted until he understood.

2. Eightfold Path

- a. The eightfold path talks about wisdom, virtue, and conception. After Buddha enlightened which involved wisdom, virtue, and conception. Buddha had tried all other religions and this is the only thing that worked for him. In the Escape From The Eternal Cycle reading, it says that the eightfold path and the 4 noble truths are the only way out of the cycle of cravings and desires.

3. Don't Kill

- a. Buddhist believe strongly in the notion of not doing harm. They don't kill animals or people and they are for the most part vegetarian unless in dire circumstances. An example of someone living out this notion is Emperor Asoka. She promoted the poor, created medical centers and vets, and she made sure her servants were treated well and protected. Her acts show that all life is respected. This belief comes from the Warring States and how awful people were treated back then and how much their lives did not matter.

4. Reincarnation

- a. Buddhists believe that you are reincarnated until you find enlightenment. You can live as many lives as you want doing whatever you think will make you happy but there will come a point where you want more than the simple pleasures in life and this is the main point where Buddhism breaks off from Hinduism regarding reincarnation. One way that Buddhists prove reincarnation is through karma. They believe that karma can spread through lives so if you are a great person and have a great life but then you all of a sudden get punished for no apparent reason, Buddhists would say you did something bad in your past life. The reason this belief is part of this religion is because of Hinduism, at the time most people were Hindu and they believe in reincarnation so Buddha probably took that belief and modified it for his beliefs.

5. The Soul

- a. The idea of the soul in Buddhism is all about parts. Buddha believed that we are ever changing and never the same. There are 5 parts to every person, Physical

from, Sensations/feelings, perception/point of view, mental: their thoughts, and consciousness. The example they use to describe this, is a chariot. A chariot is made of various pieces and alone they are one thing but put together they become a chariot. If you have just a wheel, you can't call it a chariot because you are missing the other parts to make it whole. A person is the same thing, you can't just have an empty body and call it a person, you need their other 4 parts.

Confucianism

1. Naturally Ignorant

- a. People are naturally ignorant and uneducated. The only reason the Warring States happened was because people weren't educated. People going to school and learning about morals is the only thing that will make them good people. So Confucius made sure everyone was educated and informed. Confucius said "Real knowledge is to know the extent of one's ignorance." meaning to have knowledge you must first realize you are ignorant.

2. Education

- a. As I said above, people are ignorant so the only way for a society to work is for there to be good education for everyone. So school teaches morals and their place in society. Confucius believed that everyone should be educated and that is the only way for people to be good, if they know their place. School wasn't strict or super hippie but you were taught what morals were and how to be a good person. Schooling also taught respect, respect for your classmates and for your teachers. One example of this is the Hundred Schools of Thought, which is the schooling that they created to educate people.

3. Morals

- a. Morals are very important, they go hand-in-hand with education and the idea that people are born ignorant. Schools are there to teach morals and morals are what tell you what's right and what's wrong. Without morals, how are you going to know whether killing someone is good or bad? For example, Confucius once preach something similar to the Golden Rule and was teaching everyone about their morals and how to treat someone.

4. Good Ruler

- a. Having an educated, kind, strong, moderate, and helpful ruler is very important because who will people look to when they want to know how to act. Rulers should lead by example so if they are corrupt, like in the Warring States Period, then their people are going to be corrupt. You are only as good as your leader. The effect of having a good leader is that there will be good people because people look to their leader. For example, Confucius created the Great Learning which states that you must first get your affairs in order before you can govern anyone because people look to you for guidance.

5. Respect

- a. Confucianists believe in respect because they believe in morals. One way to help instill morals is through respect. This notion of respect comes straight from

schooling and education because without respect how will they be able to learn morals from their teachers. This will lead to more educated people because they know their place in the world. Confucius highlights 5 major relationships which act as an example for the people to follow, parent to child, older sibling to younger sibling, husband to wife, teacher to student, and friend to friend.

Islam-5 Pillars of Islam

1. Shahada

- a. The Shahada is the profession of faith that all Muslims say. It makes the religion easier to convert to because all you have to do is say the Shahada with full belief in the statement. This created more Muslims because it's easy. The Shahada is "There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is his messenger". This is all you have to say to be Muslim, but like I said earlier it there but be a full belief in this statement for you to become Muslim. On the BBC webpage for Shahada, it says that "reciting this statement three times in front of witnesses is all that anyone need do to become a Muslim.

2. Salat

- a. Salat is the ritual prayers you say everyday. There are 5, at sunrise, midday, afternoon, sunset, and between sunset and midnight. This act of praying 5 times a day strengthens the sense of community in the Muslim world because in majority Muslim countries there is a bell that sounds from the mosque to signify the time of prayer. This also sets the pattern for the day for everyone, well every Muslim. But "if a Muslim prays without the right attitude of mind, it is as if they hadn't bothered to pray at all" (BBC Salat).

3. Zakat

- a. The Zakat is all about giving to the poor, every year you must give 2.5% of your wealth to the poor. "The 2.5% rate only applies to cash, gold and silver, and commercial items." (BBC Zakat). You do Zakat because God wants to remind you that this wealth is God's gift and you shouldn't take it for granted. This was also created to teach you self-discipline, kindness, and also gets rid of greed and selfishness.

4. Sawm

- a. Sawm is the fasting that happens during the month of Ramadan. You fast for the whole month of Ramadan and have dinners when the sunsets which are usually a time for you and your family and friends to come together and pray. This gives people self-discipline and reminds them of the suffering that the poor go through which makes them want to do the Zakat even more. But "if an Adult does not fast [due to physical or mental illness] they should try to make up the fast at a later date, or make a donation to the poor instead" (BBC Sawm) so if you have medical reasons for not doing the Sawm it isn't the end of the world.

5. Hajj

- a. The Hajj is the final pillar and is a pilgrimage to Mecca. You travel to Mecca during the Hajj and you wear plain cotton clothes they provide for you and you

shouldn't shave, wear perfume/cologne, cover the face, or kill anything. This is to be pure because "you must be in a state of Ihram, which is a special state of ritual purity." (BBC Hajj) This ritual comes from the idea that we are all the same and equal.

Bahai

1. Group Meetings

- a. Group meetings are very important, Baha'is hold meetings in their home and often pray together. They also do a lot of teaching youth and daycares. They try and teach about peace, love and happiness. The Baha'i website says that "young people were at the forefront of effort to proclaim the message of the new faith". They are all about starting their religion with the youth and spreading it that way.

2. Community

- a. Their sense of community is very strong and prevalent. They hold the group meetings which offers a strong sense of community. If you are Bahai you probably know the other Baha'is in your community. On holy days they all come together and celebrate together. In the Day of Remembrance scripture it says "[Holy days] help to deepen the identity and foster the cohesion of the community."

3. Unity

- a. Everyone is the same and be treated equally is one of their biggest ideas. They really try and treat everyone with kindness and love. In the Tabernacle of Unity it says that "ye are the fruits of one tree and leaves of one branch." meaning that we are come from the same tree and we are all the same. There is no major difference between us. They treat others as their siblings.

4. Love

- a. This comes from the same idea as unity but treating everyone with love. Again they emphasize the idea of loving others as equals. Another saying from the Tabernacle of Unity, they want you "to foster the spirit of love and the fellowship among men." Meaning Baha'is should also keep the spirit of love in their hearts as they go about their merry lives.

5. Other Faiths

- a. Bahais believe that every faith worships the same God but they all interpret him differently. On the BBC webpage on Bahai it says that "[they] treat other faiths with friendship and peace" which is a very surprising because Baha'i u'llah was heavily persecuted by Muslims. But this is another idea branching off of the love and unity branch.