

World Religions

Religions of China & Japan

Ross Arnold, Summer 2015

World Religion Lectures

- August 21 – *Introduction: A Universal Human Experience*
- August 28 – *Hinduism*
- September 4 – *Judaism*
- **September 18 – *Religions of China & Japan (Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto)***
- September 25 – *Christianity*
- October 2 – *Islam*
- October 9 – *Animism, New Age, Atheism, Secularism*

Today's World Religions by Date of Founding

	<u>Pop. (000s)</u>	<u>% of World</u>	<u>Founded (c.)</u>	<u>Where</u>
Hinduism	1,100,000	12.65%	4000-2500BC	Indus Valley
Judaism	14,000	0.20%	2000 BC	Palestine
Buddhism	488,000	5.29%	560-490 BC	India
Chinese Trad. ¹	394,000	5.54%	500 BC	China
Shinto	4,000	0.06%	500 BC	Japan
Jainism	4,200	0.06%	500 BC	India
Christianity	2,200,000	29.52%	30 AD	Palestine
Islam	1,600,000	21.09%	622 AD	Arabia
Sikhism	28,000	0.32%	1499 AD	India
Bah'aism	7,300	0.10%	1863 AD	Persia
Other ²	690,000	9.70%		
Non-relig. ³	1,100,000	15.46%		

¹ Includes Confucianism, Taoism, Shamanism

² Includes all other smaller religious affiliations identified

³ Includes secular, non-religious, agnostic and atheist

Families of Religions

1. **Abrahamic** monotheisms of Judaism, Christianity & Islam.
2. **Dharmic** religions that began in India, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism & Sikhism.
3. **Taoic** religions of the Far East, especially China and Japan, including Taoism, Confucianism and Shinto (*along with versions of Buddhism*).

And sometimes also ...

4. **Iranian** religions that predate Islam, including Zoroastrianism, Madaeism and the Kurdish Yazdanism faiths (Yazidi, Alevi, etc.).

Today's World Religions by Date of Founding

	<u>Pop. (000s)</u>	<u>% of World</u>	<u>Founded (c.)</u>	<u>Where</u>
Hinduism	1,100,000	12.65%	4000-2500BC	Indus Valley
Judaism	14,000	0.20%	2000 BC	Palestine
Buddhism	488,000	5.29%	560-490 BC	India
Chinese Trad. ¹	394,000	5.54%	500 BC	China
Shinto	4,000	0.06%	500 BC	Japan
Jainism	4,200	0.06%	500 BC	India
Christianity	2,200,000	29.52%	30 AD	Palestine
Islam	1,600,000	21.09%	622 AD	Arabia
Sikhism	28,000	0.32%	1499 AD	India
Bah'aism	7,300	0.10%	1863 AD	Persia
Other ²	690,000	9.70%		
Non-relig. ³	1,100,000	15.46%		

¹ Includes Confucianism, Taoism, Shamanism

² Includes all other smaller religious affiliations identified

³ Includes secular, non-religious, agnostic and atheist

The Vinegar Tasters,
representing Buddhists,
Taoists and Confucianists.



“Confucius presents a
young Buddha to Laozi”

Far Eastern Religions

(also “East Asian Religions” or “Taoic Religions”)

1. Taoism, or Daoism
2. Confucianism
3. Shinto
4. Buddhism (primarily Mahayana & Zen)
5. Shamanic folk religions
6. New religious movements (Caodaism, Cheondoism, I-Kuan Tao, etc.)

Far Eastern Religions may be polytheistic, monotheistic, henotheistic, pantheistic, panentheistic, nontheistic or agnostic.

Far Eastern Religions

(also “East Asian Religions” or “Taoic Religions”)



Common Themes in Taoic Religions

- 1. Tao, or Dao** – literally “The Way, Path, or Route;” the “flow” of the universe; the force behind the natural order of things; the influence that keeps the universe in balance and ordered.
- 2. Qi, or Ch’i, or Ki** (*Japanese*) – the active principle forming part of any living thing, breath, air, life force, energy flow...
- 3. De, or Te** – moral character, integrity, virtue, morality, quality, merit, virtuous deeds...



Taoism

- **Founder:** Laozi (or Lao-Tzu)
- **Taoism** is better understood as a way of life than as a religion, emphasizing the unity of the universe, of the material world, of the spiritual world, and of the past, present and future. Taoist theology focuses on doctrines of relativism, spontaneity, and emptiness.





Taoism Doctrines

1. **Tao and Te** – the "flow of the universe," and the active expression of Tao resulting from an individual living and cultivating the Tao.
2. ***Wu Wei*** – "nonaction", "effortless action" or "action without intent." *Wei* refers to deliberated action, while *wu* means "there is no ..."
3. **Naturalness (*ziran*)** – the central value in Taoism describing the "primordial state" of all things, and is usually associated with spontaneity and creativity.
4. ***Yin Yang*** – how opposite or contrary forces are complementary and interdependent, giving rise to each other as they interrelate.



Taoism Terms & Texts

1. ***I Ching*** -- a divination system that had its origins around 1150 BC, requiring Taoists to reflect on an appropriate course in a given circumstance.
2. ***Tao Te Ching*** – fundamental text for religious and philosophical Taoism, which strongly influenced Confucianism, Chinese Buddhism & other schools.
3. ***Zhuangzi*** – ancient Chinese text from late 3rd cent. BC, containing stories & anecdotes that exemplify the carefree nature of the ideal Taoist sage.
4. ***Daozang*** – the “Taoist Canon,” containing almost 1500 texts of core Taoist teaching, collected c. 400 AD by Taoist monks of the period.



Confucianism (or “Ruism”)

- **Founder:** Confucius

Confucianism is a complex system of moral, social, political, and religious thought, and includes a complicated system governing duties and etiquette in relationships. Confucian ethics focus on familial duty, loyalty and humaneness.





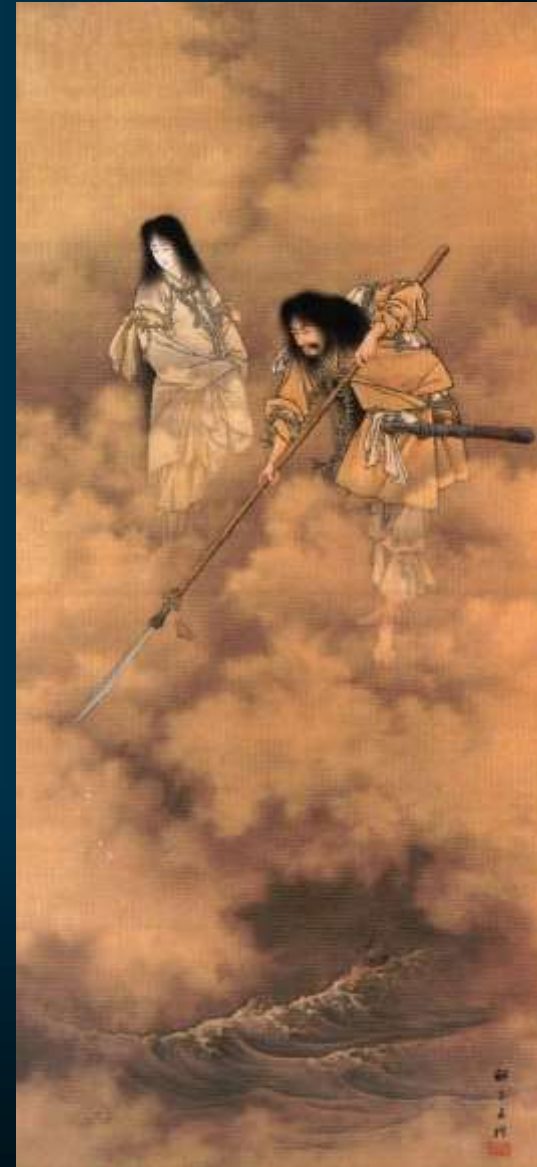
Confucianism Texts & Terms

- **The Five Classics** (*Wujing*) – I Ching, Classic of Poetry, Book of Documents, Book of Rites, Spring & Autumn Annals.
- ***Tian*** – “heaven” or the divine (similar to the Tao), the goal being to unite self with *Tian*.
- **The Five Constants** – humaneness, justice, proper ritual, knowledge, integrity.
- **The Four Virtues** – loyalty, filial piety, reliability, righteousness.



Shinto (or *kami-no-michi*)

- **Shinto**, which literally means "the way of the gods," is an animistic folk religion from Japan, focused on ritual practices to establish a connection between present-day Japan and its ancient past. Shinto and Asian Buddhism are inextricably linked in Japan; many Japanese Shintoists also identify themselves as Buddhists.





Types of Shinto

- **Shrine Shinto** – most common, involves worship and events at local public shrines.
- **Imperial Household Shinto** – rites exclusive to the royal family at imperial shrines.
- **Folk Shinto** – fragmented folk beliefs in deities and spirits.
- **Sect Shinto** – private, local religious communities/shrines (vs. public shrines).
- **Koshinto** – literally “Old Shinto,” seeks to restore Shinto to pre-Buddhist times.



Shinto Theology

- ***Kami*** – “god,” “spirit,” the spiritual essence that inhabits all things, animate or not.
- ***Kannagara*** – meaning “way of the *kami*,” refers to the natural order of things.
- ***Amenominakanushi*** – “Heavenly Ancestral God of the Originating Heart of the Universe”— the first *kami*.
- **Creation** –the Japanese islands came to be from two gods: Izanagi (“He-who-invites”) and Izanami (“She-who-is-invited”).

