

A STUDY COMPANION TO INTRODUCTION
TO WORLD RELIGIONS

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FOR THE INSTRUCTOR: HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide provides many resources to supplement the rich material offered by the textbook *Introduction to World Religions*. Instructors may find the following features particularly helpful:

- ▶ At the beginning and conclusion of this book is a pre-test/post-test in multiple choice form (answers on page XX). Use the pre-test to assess your students' knowledge of world religion at the beginning of the course or before they start reading the textbook, and encourage students to take the post-test at the conclusion of the course to measure their increased knowledge.
- ▶ The *Summary* for each part provides an overview that highlights key themes and concepts. Encourage your students to read it before they read the section in the textbook and to prepare for quizzes and exams.
- ▶ *Key Personalities* are significant historical figures from the tradition; a brief biographical sketch is included for each. Additional materials are often also provided, such as quotations from primary sources or scholarly analysis of the figure's work or significance. Students can review these before or after reading a section and may find them helpful for pre-exam review or when searching for a paper topic. (Note: In chapter 3, "Indigenous Religions," an *Annotated Bibliography* replaces the Key Personalities section; its entries are all related to the topics of the chapter's case studies.)
- ▶ *Primary Source Readings* offer students further historical context and content related to the religion under discussion. You may wish to use the materials as the source of exam questions that ask the students to analyze the text in light of what they know of the faith tradition.
- ▶ *Key Terms* are important concepts and vocabulary words from the tradition, accompanied by definitions. Students should be encouraged to familiarize themselves with these terms in preparation for quizzes and exams.
- ▶ *Questions for Study and Discussion* and *Questions for Reflection* offer students the chance to test their comprehension of the topic and key concepts. They may serve as a source for homework assignments (students write their answers and turn them in), class discussion (students write their answers before coming to class), or preparation for tests (students write their responses below the questions and review them for the exam).
- ▶ *Additional Web Resources* offer a taste of online information about the topics discussed in the section. Encourage students to use the links as starting places on the web that may lead them to essay or research paper topics.

If your course requires students to write a research paper, direct them to the guide at the end of this book. It provides a step-by-step process of writing a research paper, including deciding on a topic and developing a thesis, notetaking, outlining, writing and revising a draft, ensuring proper bibliographic style (examples are included), and polishing the final paper. Also included are helpful bibliographies of online and print reference works and style manuals.

We hope you find this guide provides useful material to supplement the textbook and assists you in your effort to expand students' understanding of world religions.

FOR THE STUDENT: HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is intended to help you get the most out of *Introduction to World Religions*—to further your understanding of each of the faiths discussed in the textbook and to spark your critical thinking about a religion’s structures, values, and relationships with other social forces. The guide is organized like the textbook; each part (here referred to as “section” or “chapter”) of the guide corresponds to a section in the book and typically includes a section summary, key personalities, excerpts from related primary source material, key terms with definitions, questions for discussion and reflection, and selected online resources.

Following this introduction is the pre-test, which offers multiple choice questions for you to answer to assess your knowledge of world religions. Answers to the questions are printed on page XX[TS: please call out in first pages].

Before you begin reading a section of the textbook, or after reading it to ensure you understood the main ideas, read the *Summary*. This offers a basic overview of the section’s major themes and issues. You will notice that the chapters focusing on a single religion or closely related group of religious traditions (e.g., The Religions of East Asia) have a fairly consistent structure, with some variations: typical subsections include a historical overview, beliefs, sacred writings, worship and festivals, and the religion in the modern world. The Summary features a brief look at the principle beliefs and practices, history and development, and contemporary concerns of each religion.

Also before you read a chapter, it might be useful to note the *Key Personalities* and *Key Terms*. The Key Personalities list a selection of significant historical figures from the tradition, a brief biography for each, an excerpt from the person’s own work or a scholar’s insights into the figure’s significance, and in some cases related resources available online. Key Terms are a selected list of concepts particular to a religion or study of a religion, names of important institutions or movements, and so forth and their definitions. You will want to be at least familiar with these personalities and terms by the time you have finished reading the section.

(In chapter 3, “Indigenous Religions,” an *Annotated Bibliography* replaces the Key Personalities section found in the other chapters. The works listed there are all related to the topics of the chapter’s case studies and are helpful sources of additional information.)

The *Primary Source Readings* appearing in each part of this guide are intended to provide additional context for and insight into the faith tradition discussed in the textbook. After you read a section in the textbook, these materials can help further your understanding of the topic or act as touchstones for class discussion or essays.

Immediately after you have read a chapter in the book, you might wish to go through the related *Questions for Study and Discussion* and *Questions for Reflection*. On your own you can use these questions to test your knowledge of the basic concepts and values of the religion, while also reflecting back on the text and thinking critically about the tradition. Some of the questions are intended to focus on reading comprehension—asking you to demonstrate your understanding by using your own words to define terms, describe ideas, and summarize key points. Other questions encourage you to make comparisons, analyze the deeper meanings of a text, and return to the book to consider the illustrations, personal essays (“I am . . .”), and sidebars and what they tell you about a religion’s core beliefs and values. The questions can also be used in a class discussion group or as the basis for essay or research paper topics.

A brief list follows under the heading *Selected Web Resources*. The websites included in this guide are simply a sample of online resources related to world religions and the study of religion. Online museum exhibits, academic research sites, the texts of sacred writings, personal testimonies or perspectives on religion, and historical data are all available on the web. Use the sites offered here as a jumping-off point; when your interest is caught by a particular topic or individual mentioned in a section, you can do quick research on the web to learn more before heading to the library shelves.

Following the pre-test and the fourteen chapters corresponding to the textbook is a brief guide to writing research papers on topics in world religion. It includes bibliographies of reference works in print and electronic media, including additional online sources related to world religions; you can also learn useful research methods and tips on writing effective papers, as well as see examples of proper footnote and bibliographic citation form.

One final note: Many of the key terms and personalities listed in this guide, along with other vocabulary, are included in the “Rapid Fact-Finder” (located at the back of the book, before the index), a detailed, alphabetically organized glossary. Be sure to check out this additional resource to assist you in your understanding and further exploration of world religions.

PRE-TEST ASSESSMENT

Please circle the response that you consider is correct. Check your answers against the answer key on p. XX[TS: Please call out in first pages or just enter the actual number]. *You may want to mark your answers on a separate sheet of paper and re-take this assessment following the conclusion of your course.*

1. Sigmund Freud and his theories on the origins of religion would be considered as representing the _____ theory to the study of religion.
A. Psychological B. Anthropological C. Mythological D. Philosophical
2. The idea that people have gods, especially a “father god,” because they need protection through love was discussed in the book *Future of an Illusion* by _____.
A. Edward B. Tylor B. Sigmund Freud C. Emile Durkheim D. Carl Jung
3. The Prehistoric female figurines, sometimes called “goddesses,” could be said to “embody” certain religious sentiments such as _____.
A. reverence for nature B. fertility C. our sense of dependence on our mothers D. all of the above
4. The position that human knowledge about God is incomplete or even impossible to obtain at all is _____.
A. theism B. atheism C. agnosticism D. pantheism E. polytheism
5. A ceremony marking the transition from one stage of life to another is called _____.
A. a symbol B. a ritual C. a rite of passage D. divination
6. The movement to relocate modern Jews to Israel both before and after the Holocaust is called _____.
A. Hasidic B. Zionism C. Reform Judaism D. Reconstruction
7. Buddhism emerges out of this religion: _____.
A. Jainism B. Confucianism C. Hinduism D. Sikhism

8. Any of a variety of methods to tell the future or access information from the spiritual world by looking for signs is known as _____.
A. divination B. ancestor worship C. a rite of passage D. a symbol
9. In East Asian religions, the Wise Old Man is symbolic of a life of learning exemplified by the _____.
A. guru B. sage C. minister D. priest E. diviner
10. These religions are relevant in today's Middle East politics: _____.
A. Judaism and Christianity B. Judaism and Islam
C. Christianity and Islam D. Judaism, Islam, and Christianity
11. From Gospel accounts in the Bible, the most we know of Jesus' life and works includes _____.
A. all events in his life from his birth to death B. those events from his birth through childhood
C. those events from his later adult life to his death D. those events surrounding his final days and death
12. The founders or early teachings of these two religions taught that we have no soul that survives earthly life: _____.
A. Christianity and Judaism B. Buddhism and Judaism
C. Judaism and Islam D. Buddhism and Islam E. Christianity and Buddhism
13. There are mystics, people who seek direct experience with God or the gods, in which world religion/s? _____.
A. Eastern religions only B. Western religions only C. mostly Eastern with some Western
D. mostly Western with some Easter E. both Western and Eastern equally
14. *Mesopotamia*—or the Fertile Crescent, commonly called the cradle of civilizations—literally means _____.
A. river of life B. between the rivers C. dry rivers D. river of the gods E. fertile plain
15. These two religions originate in East Asia, though others are practiced there today: _____.
A. Confucianism and Taoism B. Confucianism and Buddhism
C. Buddhism and Taoism D. Buddhism and Hinduism E. Confucianism and Hinduism
16. Which religion(s) might have more influence in the future as China grows in global relations? _____.
A. Taoism B. Confucianism C. Hinduism D. Buddhism E. A, B, and D
17. These first two world religions emerge out of the following much older world religion: _____.
A. Christianity and Islam/Zoroastrianism B. Zoroastrianism and Islam/Judaism
C. Christianity and Islam/Judaism D. Zoroastrianism and Islam/Christianity
18. The holy books of Islam include: _____.
A. Torah, Gospels, Qur'an B. Qur'an only C. Torah and Qur'an only D. Qur'an and Gospels only
19. One of these world religions does not begin as a religious tradition with a particular man or individual founder: _____.
A. Buddhism B. Judaism C. Islam D. Hinduism E. Taoism

-
20. Religious violence has been associated with factions of which religion/s: _____.
A. Buddhism B. Judaism C. Islam D. Christianity E. all of the above
21. Withholding food from the body as a religious act of denial is called _____.
A. sin B. fasting C. sacrifice D. divination
22. This Christian group can trace its roots to African-American religious influence and is very emotional: _____.
A. Methodists B. Pentecostals C. Episcopalians D. Roman Catholics
23. When religion is a political force in society, which issues may be of greatest concern? _____.
A. land B. marriage C. food distribution D. foreign intrusion E. all of the above
24. World religions have often split into different groups over the course of time. What types of issues may cause such rifts? Pick your first choice and be prepared to justify your answer with an example: _____.
A. disagreement over scriptures B. views of women C. division of resources
D. disillusionment with the leadership E. none of the above
25. All religions have some sense of good/evil, sacred/profane, reward/punishment, and so on. How do certain Eastern religions name the cosmic justice that each person experiences? _____.
A. samsara B. moksa C. monk D. karma
26. Performing a patterned, formal, symbolic action is called a _____.
A. ceremony B. ritual C. rite of passage D. pilgrimage
27. When something is offered to the gods out of one's own wealth or material goods, we call this _____.
A. sacrifice B. spirit C. possession D. worship
28. The central feature of social organization in Hindu culture that determines most aspects of a Hindu's life is known as _____.
A. dharma B. caste C. samsara D. moksha
29. In Eastern religions, houses of worship typically are _____.
A. churches B. mosques C. temples D. synagogues
30. When a religion has numerous gods, this is referred to as _____.
A. monotheism B. animism C. pantheism D. polytheism

PRE-TEST ASSESSMENT ANSWER KEY

- A. Psychological
- B. Sigmund Freud
- D. all of the above
- C. agnosticism
- C. a rite of passage
- B. Zionism
- C. Hinduism
- A. divination
- B. sage
- D. Judaism, Islam, and Christianity
- C. events from his later adult life to his death
- B. Buddhism and Judaism
- E. both Western and Eastern equally
- B. between the rivers
- A. Confucianism and Taoism
- E. A, B, and D
- C. Christianity and Islam/Judaism
- A. Torah, Gospels, Qur'an
- D. Hinduism
- E. all of the above
- B. fasting
- B. Pentecostals
- E. all of the above
- No single answer
- D. karma
- B. ritual
- A. sacrifice
- B. caste
- C. temples
- D. polytheism

PART ONE

UNDERSTANDING RELIGION

Summary

Scholars in the past and today have focused on both the personal expression of faith and the organized institution as two major aspects of religion apparent across cultures. While many scholars emphasize the individual's beliefs as the core of religion, others look to how religion functions in a society, whether through its effects on people's behavior or in the role played by its institutions.

Phenomenology is one historical approach to the study of religion, involving a classification of the various aspects of religion, including objects, rituals, and teachings. Myths and symbols offer another doorway to understanding religion; while myths highlight significant issues and values of a given culture, symbols help believers find personal meaning within a religious tradition. Fields such as anthropology and sociology have introduced methodologies that focus on a culture's impact on the people's expression of religious beliefs and examine what people think and do as a result of their faith. Anthropologists and sociologists attempt to study a religion without judging whether it upholds their own ideas of truth or ethical norms. Studying the psychology of religion has generally meant focusing on the notion of "religious experience" from a scientific perspective.

Critical theory about religion developed in Western thought as part of a general trend that questioned notions of truth and certainty of knowledge. Post-structuralism is an example of an influential critical theory.

Finally, ritual is a key concept in the study of religion. Depending on a scholar's methodology, rituals may be analyzed for their specific roles within a religious tradition or their value within a given culture.

Key Personalities

Karl Marx (1818–1883)

German intellectual who critiqued capitalism and the function of religion in society.

"The philosopher, social scientist, historian and revolutionary, Karl Marx, is without a doubt the most

influential socialist thinker to emerge in the 19th century. Although he was largely ignored by scholars in his own lifetime, his social, economic and political ideas gained rapid acceptance in the socialist movement after his death in 1883."

Source: Steven Kreis, "Karl Marx, 1818–1883," 2000, The History Guide: Lectures on Modern European Intellectual History, <http://www.historyguide.org/intellect/marx.html>.

Religious Adherents of Major Traditions in the World

Religion	Followers in 1970	Followers in 2010	% of Population	Annual % growth 2000–2010	Followers in 2025	Followers in 2050
Christians	1,234,969,000	2,292,454,000	33.2	1.44	2,708,029,000	3,220,348,000
Roman Catholics	665,895,000	1,155,627,000	16.7	0.88	1,323,840,000	1,522,294,000
Protestants	210,986,000	419,316,000	6.1	1.85	530,485,000	671,148,000
Independents	86,018,000	369,156,000	5.3	2.69	502,211,000	655,556,000
Muslims	579,875,000	1,549,444,000	22.4	1.86	1,962,881,000	2,494,229,000
Hindus	458,845,000	948,507,000	13.7	1.53	1,098,680,000	1,241,133,000
Agnostics	542,318,000	639,852,000	9.3	−0.58	625,648,000	556,416,000
Chinese folk	231,814,000	458,316,000	6.6	0.87	504,695,000	525,183,000
Buddhists	234,028,000	468,736,000	6.8	1.46	542,372,000	570,283,000
Ethnoreligionists	165,687,000	261,429,000	3.8	1.31	267,440,000	272,450,000
Atheists	165,301,000	138,532,000	2.0	−0.11	133,320,000	132,671,000
New religionists	39,332,000	64,443,000	0.9	0.52	66,677,000	63,657,000
Sikhs	10,677,000	24,591,000	0.4	1.69	29,517,000	34,258,000
Jews	15,100,000	14,641,000	0.2	0.62	15,521,000	16,973,000
Spiritists	4,657,000	13,978,000	0.2	1.10	15,664,000	17,080,000
Daoists	1,734,000	9,017,000	0.1	3.02	13,194,000	15,018,000
Confucianists	4,759,000	6,461,000	0.1	0.22	6,698,000	6,014,000
Baha'is	2,657,000	7,447,000	0.1	1.80	10,491,000	15,113,000
Jains	2,629,000	5,749,000	0.1	1.65	6,845,000	7,943,000
Shintoists	4,175,000	2,782,000	0.0	0.16	2,674,000	2,355,000
Zoroastrians	125,000	181,000	0.0	0.05	166,000	170,000
Total population	3,698,683,000	6,906,560,000	100.0	1.24	8,010,511,000	9,191,294,000

Source: J. Gordon Melton, Martin Baumann, eds., *Religions of the World: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices*, 2nd ed. (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2010), lix.

“Marx published *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* in 1859. . . . Marx argued that the superstructure of law, politics, religion, art and philosophy was determined by economic forces. ‘It is not,’ he wrote, ‘the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness.’ This is what Friedrich Engels later called ‘false consciousness.’”

Source: John Simkin, “Karl Marx: Biography,” Spartacus Educational, n.d., <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/TUmarx.htm>.

Further resources:

- ▶ *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol. 1 (English translation of *Das Kapital*) <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/>
- ▶ Text of *The Communist Manifesto* (downloadable text file) <http://www.indepthinfo.com/communist-manifesto/text.shtml>

Émile Durkheim (1858–1917)

French scholar considered the father of sociology.

“[Since his] grandfather and great-grandfather had also been rabbis, [he] appeared destined for the rabbinate, and a part of his early education was spent in a rabbinical school. This early ambition was dismissed while he was still a schoolboy, and soon after his arrival in Paris, Durkheim would break with Judaism altogether. But he always remained the product of [a] close-knit, orthodox Jewish family, as well as that long-established Jewish community of Alsace-Lorraine that had been occupied by Prussian troops in 1870, and suffered the consequent anti-Semitism of the French citizenry. Later, Durkheim would argue that the hostility of Christianity toward Judaism had created an unusual sense of solidarity among the Jews.”

Source: Robert Alun Jones, *Emile Durkheim: An Introduction to Four Major Works*, Beverly Hills: Sage, 1986, <http://durkheim.uchicago.edu/Biography.html>.

“In 1912, Durkheim published his fourth major work, *Les Formes élémentaires de la vie religieuse* (The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life). . . . His scientific

approach to every social phenomenon had not only managed to draw the ire of the Catholic Church, some philosophers, and the Right Wing, but he had also gained quite a fair bit of power in the world of academia; his lecture courses were required curriculum for all philosophy, literature, and history students.”

Source: “Emile Durkheim Biography,” 2002, http://www.emile-durkheim.com/emile_durkheim_bio_002.htm.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (1915 edition available for online viewing or in downloadable forms) <http://www.archive.org/details/elementaryformso00durk>
- ▶ *The Rules of Sociological Method and Selected Texts on Sociology and Its Method* (portions of text available on Google Books) <http://books.google.com/books?id=dM01B9O6s8YC>

Mircea Eliade (1907–1986)

A Romanian-born philosopher and historian of religion who served thirty years as chair of the history of religions department at the University of Chicago.

“Eliade contends that the perception of time as an homogenous, linear, and unrepeatable medium is a peculiarity of modern and non-religious humanity. Archaic or religious humanity (*homo religiosus*), in comparison, perceives time as heterogeneous; that is, as divided between profane time (linear), and sacred time (cyclical and reactualizable). By means of myths and rituals which give access to this sacred time religious humanity protects itself against the ‘terror of history,’ a condition of helplessness before the absolute data of historical time, a form of existential anxiety.”

Source: Bryan Rennie, “Mircea Eliade (1907–1986),” n.d., <http://www.westminster.edu/staff/brennie/eliade/mebio.htm>.

“Eliade started to write *The Myth of the Eternal Return* in 1945, in the aftermath of World War II, when Europe was in ruins, and Communism was conquering Eastern European countries. The essay dealt with mankind’s experience of history and time, especially the conceptions of being and reality. According to

Eliade, in modern times people have lost their contact with natural cycles, known in traditional societies. Eliade saw that for human beings their inner, un-historical world, and its meanings, were crucial. Behind historical processes are archaic symbols. Belief in a linear progress of history is typical for the Christian worldview, which counters the tyranny of history with the idea of God, but in the archaic world of archetypes and repetition the tyranny of history is accepted. . . . Eliade contrasts the Western linear view of time with the Eastern cyclical world view.”

Source: Petri Liukkonen and Ari Pesonen, “Mircea Eliade (1908–1986),” 2008, <http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/eliade.htm>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ *The Sacred and the Profane* (the text of the book viewable online and in downloadable form) <http://www.scribd.com/doc/312238/Mircea-Eliade-The-Sacred-The-Profane>
- ▶ “Mircea Eliade” (an essay exploring the nature of Eliade’s association with Heidegger and right-wing politics during the Nazi era and how it affected his philosophy of religion) <http://www.friesian.com/eliade.htm>

Emmanuel Levinas (1906–1995)

Lithuanian-born philosopher, ethicist, and Talmudic commentator who influenced postmodern thinkers such as Derrida.

“Levinas’ philosophy is directly related to his experiences during World War II. His family died in the Holocaust, and, as a French citizen and soldier, Levinas himself became a prisoner of war in Germany. . . . This experience, coupled with Heidegger’s affiliation to National Socialism during the war, clearly and understandably led to a profound crisis in Levinas’ enthusiasm for Heidegger. . . . At the same time, Levinas felt that Heidegger could not simply be forgotten, but must be gotten beyond. If Heidegger is concerned with Being, Levinas is concerned with ethics, and ethics, for Levinas, is beyond being—Otherwise than Being.”

Source: Bren Dean Robbins, “Emmanuel Levinas,” *Mythos and Logos*, 2000, <http://mythosandlogos.com/Levinas.html>.

“Levinas’s second magnum opus, *Otherwise Than Being or Beyond Essence* (1974), an immensely challenging and sophisticated work that seeks to push philosophical intelligibility to the limit in an effort to lessen the inevitable concessions made to ontology and the tradition . . . is generally considered Levinas’s most important contribution to the contemporary debate surrounding the closure of metaphysical discourse, much commented upon by Jacques Derrida, for example.”

Source: Peter Atterton, “The Emmanuel Levinas Web Page,” n.d., <http://www.levinas.sdsu.edu>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ “Emmanuel Levinas,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (essay discussing Levinas’s philosophy; includes biographical outline) <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/levinas/>
- ▶ *Basic Philosophical Writings* (portions of text available on Google Books) <http://books.google.com/books?id=dmHH1Xie8Q0C>

Claude Lévi-Strauss (1908–2009)

French scholar who pioneered structural anthropology.

“The basis of the structural anthropology of Lévi-Strauss is the idea that the human brain systematically processes organised, that is to say structured, units of information that combine and recombine to create models that sometimes explain the world we live in, sometimes suggest imaginary alternatives, and sometimes give tools with which to operate in it. The task of the anthropologist, for Lévi-Strauss, is not to account for why a culture takes a particular form, but to understand and illustrate the principles of organisation that underlie the onward process of transformation that occurs as carriers of the culture solve problems that are either practical or purely intellectual.”

Source: Maurice Bloch, “Claude Lévi-Strauss Obituary,” *Guardian* [London], November 3, 2009, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2009/nov/03/claude-levi-strauss-obituary>.

“*Mythologiques*,’ his four-volume work about the structure of native mythology in the Americas,

attempts nothing less than an interpretation of the world of culture and custom, shaped by analysis of several hundred myths of little-known tribes and traditions. . . . In his analysis of myth and culture, Mr. Lévi-Strauss might contrast imagery of monkeys and jaguars; consider the differences in meaning of roasted and boiled food (cannibals, he suggested, tended to boil their friends and roast their enemies); and establish connections between weird mythological tales and ornate laws of marriage and kinship.”

Source: Edward Rothstein, “Claude Lévi-Strauss, 100, Dies; Altered Western Views of the ‘Primitive,’” *New York Times*, November 4, 2009, <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/11/04/world/europe/04levistrauss.html>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ “Library Man: On Claude Lévi-Strauss” (an in-depth review of Patrick Wilcken’s biography of Lévi-Strauss)
<http://www.thenation.com/article/157879/library-man-claude-levi-strauss>
- ▶ *The Raw and the Cooked* (vol. 1 of *Mythologiques*, portions of text available on Google Books)
<http://books.google.com/books?id=BmkKavks2P4C>

Max Weber (1864–1920)

German sociologist who used historical and economic tools to analyze capitalism and its role in society.

“Weber may have ‘spent his life having a posthumous dialogue with the ghost of Karl Marx’ (Cuff, p. 97). This dialogue concerned (i) economic determinism or the extent to which developments are rooted in the material base, and (ii) the extent to which economic factors alone can be considered at the root of social structure. . . . Many contemporary sociologists think of Weber as complementing Marx, examining issues that Marx thought less important, providing a way of thinking about the individual within a structural approach, and laying out a sociological methodology. Weber’s writing had an influence on structural functionalism, critical theory, some of the social interaction approaches, and much contemporary sociological theory, including some Marxist approaches that use ideas from Weber.”

Source: Paul Gingrich, “Notes on Max Weber,” Introduction to Social Theory, Sociology 250, University of Regina, September 30, 1999, <http://uregina.ca/~gingrich/s30f99.htm>.

“Weber suggested two sets of ethical virtues that a proper political education should teach—the ethic of conviction (*Gesinnungsethik*) and the ethic of responsibility (*Verantwortungsethik*). According to the ethic of responsibility, on the one hand, an action is given meaning only as a cause of an effect, that is, only in terms of its causal relationship to the empirical world. The virtue lies in an objective understanding of the possible causal effect of an action and the calculated reorientation of the elements of an action in such a way as to achieve a desired consequence. An ethical question is thereby reduced to a question of technically correct procedure, and free action consists of choosing the correct means. . . . According to the ethic of conviction, on the other hand, a free agent should be able to choose autonomously not only the means, but also the end. . . . In this respect, Weber’s problem arises from the recognition that the kind of rationality applied in choosing a means cannot be used in choosing an end. These two kinds of reasoning represent categorically distinct modes of rationality, a boundary further reinforced by modern value fragmentation.”

Source: Sung Ho Kim, “Max Weber,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, August 24, 2007, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/weber/>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ “Max Weber’s View of Objectivity in Social Science” (essay by Steve Hoenisch)
<http://www.criticism.com/md/weber1.html>
- ▶ *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (text of the book)
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/weber/cover.html>

William James (1842–1910)

American scholar trained in medicine who wrote on philosophy, psychology, and religion.

“In his later writings, James argued that children should be unfettered, allowed to indulge their natural impulses. Childhood, for him, was a time of ‘divine rapture’ and ‘magical light.’ The dictates of religion, which he saw as an ‘outrage to nature,’ would repress

children and ‘draw a pall over the lovely outlying world of sense.’ More important, religion asked children to defer to an inviolable authority, a cruel and hateful God, who wanted to deny the child expression of his individuality. . . . In perpetual battle with this hostile force, James said that, as a child, he could never feel pleasure or happiness without an underlying sense of fear that God would strike in retribution.”

Source: From Linda Simon, *Genuine Reality: A Life of William James* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), <http://www.des.emory.edu/mfp/jamesreal.html>.

“James oscillated between thinking that a ‘study in human nature’ such as *Varieties [of Religious Experience]* could contribute to a ‘Science of Religion’ and the belief that religious experience involves an altogether supernatural domain, somehow inaccessible to science but accessible to the individual human subject. . . . In ‘A Pluralistic Universe’ he defends the mystical and anti-pragmatic view that concepts distort rather than reveal reality, and in his influential *Pragmatism* (1907), he presents systematically a set of views about truth, knowledge, reality, religion, and philosophy that permeate his writings from the late 1870s onward.”

Source: Russell Goodman, “William James,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, October 23, 2009, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/james>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ William James Cybrary (a digital research library dedicated to Jamesian studies) <http://www.wjcybrary.net/>
- ▶ *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (entire text available on Google Books) <http://books.google.com/books?id=uX9gc4-YW9AC>

Carl Jung (1875–1961)

Swiss psychiatrist who developed the theory of the “collective unconscious” and founded the field of analytical psychology.

“The contents of the collective unconscious are called *archetypes*. Jung also called them dominants, imagos, mythological or primordial images, and a few other names, but archetypes seems to have won out over

these. An archetype is an unlearned tendency to experience things in a certain way. . . . The mother archetype is symbolized by the primordial mother or ‘earth mother’ of mythology, by Eve and Mary in western traditions, and by less personal symbols such as the church, the nation, a forest, or the ocean. According to Jung, someone whose own mother failed to satisfy the demands of the archetype may well be one that spends his or her life seeking comfort in the church, or in identification with ‘the motherland,’ or in meditating upon the figure of Mary, or in a life at sea.”

Source: C. George Boeree, “Carl Jung: 1875–1961,” *Personality Theories*, 2006, <http://webspace.ship.edu/cgboer/jung.html>.

“Jung saw myth and its meaning within the individual psyche. In spite of myths and their components being shared by all members of a society—and essentially by all mankind—their workings are strictly personal. According to Jung, man is on a quest towards self-realization, and myths serve as clues to this process. Although every person has this quest, fulfilling it in various degrees, it is a solo venture, each man for himself.”

Source: Stefan Stenudd, “Psychoanalysis of Myth: Freud’s and Jung’s Theories on Myth and Its Origin,” 2006, <http://www.stenudd.com/myth/freudjung/jung.htm>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ The Jung Page (essays, book and film reviews, lexicon, and other resources for Jungian scholarship) <http://www.cgjungpage.org/index.php>
- ▶ “Carl Gustav Jung (1875–1961)” (an essay comparing Jung’s approach to religion to the approach of philosophers like Immanuel Kant) <http://www.friesian.com/jung.htm>

Jacques Derrida (1930–2004)

Algerian-born French philosopher who proposed the theory of deconstruction.

“Derrida was famous for deconstruction, the claim that texts subtly undermine their ostensible meanings. Texts (all discourse altogether, from a transient remark to the most pondered philosophy) are open to repeated interpretation. . . . Our understanding of a word depends on other words—on an endless chain of

signifiers, pointing to nothing beyond themselves and developing out a history of usage entirely lost to us. In short, language depends on nothing, no fundamental ground of logic, science or society. . . . There is no end to interpretation, and no escaping it, says Derrida. All we can do is point to its workings.”

Source: C. John Holcombe, “Jacques Derrida,” *Text Etcetera*, 2007, <http://www.textetc.com/theory/derrida.html>.

“He drew critically on the work of Emmanuel Levinas in order to insist on the Other as one to whom an incalculable responsibility is owed, one who could never fully be ‘captured’ through social categories or designative names, one to whom a certain response is owed. This conception became the basis of his strenuous critique of apartheid in South Africa, his vigilant opposition to totalitarian regimes and forms of intellectual censorship, his theorisation of the nation-state beyond the hold of territoriality, his opposition to European racism, and his criticism of the discourse of ‘terror’ as it worked to increase governmental powers that undermine basic human rights. This political ethic can be seen at work in his defence of animal rights, in his opposition to the death penalty, and even in his queries about ‘being’ Jewish and what it means to offer hospitality to those of differing origins and language.”

Source: Judith Butler, “Jacques Derrida,” *London Review of Books*, November 4, 2004, <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v26/n21/judith-butler/jacques-derrida>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ “Jacques Derrida” (an essay on Derrida’s theories, with bibliography)
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/derrida/>
- ▶ “Jacques Derrida: Defining Deconstruction” (short excerpt from the film *Derrida* 2004)
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vgwOjjoYtco>

Mary Douglas (1921–2007)

An English anthropologist who focused on classification systems in societies and their associated use of symbols.

“Mary Douglas is a symbolic anthropologist who examines how people give meanings to their reality and how this reality is expressed by their cultural

symbols. She has believed that humans actively create meanings in their social lives in order to maintain their society. By analyzing these meanings, Douglas attempted to find universal patterns of symbolism.”

Source: Richard A. Strachan, “Mary Douglas,” EMuseum, Minnesota State University Mankato, n.d., <http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/anthropology/Douglas.html>.

“In 1966, Douglas published her most celebrated work, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. This book is best remembered for its stylish demonstration of the ways in which all schemes of classification produce anomalies: whether the pangolin for the Lele, or the God incarnate of Catholic theology. Some of this classificatory ‘matter out of place’—from humble house dust in her Highgate house to the abominations of Leviticus for the Hebrews—was polluting, but other breaches of routine classification had the capacity to renew the world symbolically.”

Source: Richard Fardon, “Dame Mary Douglas (Obituary),” *Guardian* [London], May 18, 2007, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/2007/may/18/guardianobituaries.obituaries>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ “Great Diagrams in Anthropology: Mary Douglas Edition”
<http://savageminds.org/2007/06/04/great-diagrams-in-anthropology-mary-douglas-edition/>
- ▶ “Mary Douglas: Purity and Danger (1966) Summary”
<http://www.bytrent.demon.co.uk/douglas/douglas01.html>

Victor Turner (1920–1983)

Scottish anthropologist who studied cultural symbols, especially rituals, in various societies.

“One of Turner’s famous studies is his analysis on the rituals of the Ndembu, an African tribe in Zambia. The Ndembu used several kinds of trees for young women’s ritual and they attributed various symbolic meanings to these trees. For example, one kind of tree produced white liquid and another had red, each of which were considered as milk and blood respectively. Turner argued that this ritual possessed a symbolic

means of teaching young women to accept their place as child bearers and not to challenge male gender roles. The ultimate goal of the ritual was to preserve the stability of the Ndembu society by securing women's gender roles."

Source: Richard A. Strachan, "Victor Turner," EMuseum, Minnesota State University Mankato, n.d., <http://www.mnsu.edu/emuseum/cultural/anthropology/Turner.html>.

"In rites of passage, liminal entities have no sure footing in community, and are socially without power, and are generally subjected to all kinds of taunts and torments. . . . Others may embrace liminality by rejecting a culture's values, voluntarily giving up social structure in favor of a raw structure-less communitas. . . . Communitas is characterized by spontaneity, rather than goals and decisions. Communitas exists between periods of structure, and is revealed in liminality. It is beneath structure, and in that sense is marginal and inferior to it. At the same time, because it exists where structure does not, it has a transcendental and 'holy' quality. Outside of structural states, communitas produces deep and powerful experiences."

Source: Calvin Ashmore, "Victor Turner: The Ritual Process," Icosilune, February 12, 2009, <http://www.icosilune.com/2009/02/victor-turner-the-ritual-process>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- ▶ "Victor Turner" (an essay discussing Turner's influence on the field of anthropology) <http://www.indiana.edu/~wanthro/turner.htm>
- ▶ "Ritual, Anti-Structure, and Religion: A Discussion of Victor Turner's Processual Symbolic Analysis (journal article) <http://www.cas.sc.edu/socy/faculty/deflem/zturn.htm>

Primary Source Readings

The following excerpted readings represent some of the important primary sources that are referred to in the main text. Additional primary sources are available both in print and online, and students are encouraged to contact their instructors for further information.

I.1 Wilfrid Cantwell Smith, *The Meaning and End of Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 1–14, 193–94.

"What is religion? What is religious faith? Such questions, asked either from the outside or from within, must nowadays be set in a wide context, and a rather exacting one. The modern student may look upon religion as something that other people do, or he may see and feel it as something in which also he himself is involved. . . . Many considerations, then, must be taken into account in any analysis that is to satisfy a serious modern inquirer. We may enumerate four or five as among the more weighty. First, of course, there is science. . . . It is relevant. . . . in so far as particular studies of psychology, sociology, economic history. . . . have seemed to illuminate the ostensibly religious behavior of man. . . . Second, there is the multiplicity of religious traditions. . . . Any adequate interpretation of a Christian's faith, for instance, must make room for the fact that other intelligent, devout, and moral men, including perhaps his own friends, are Buddhists, Hindus, or Muslims. . . . [Third] is the further fact of diversity within each tradition. . . . Next [fourth] may be noted that sheer fact of change. The world is in flux, and we know it. Like other aspects of human life, the religious aspect too is seen to be historical, evolving, in process. Any modern endeavor to clarify what religion is, must now include a question as to what at various stages of development religion has been. . . . Finally, we would mention the vitality of faith.

". . . For a time some thought that the onslaught of science, comparative religion, uncertainty, and the rest—in a word, the onslaught of modernity—meant or would mean the gradual decline and disappearance of the religious tradition. This no longer seems obvious. . . . This much at least is clear: that the amalgam of inner piety and outer institution that at a certain stage in their dynamic development was intellectually reified under the term 'religion' and 'religions' was conceived thus because some people fell into the habit of doing so. Once he has become aware of what has happened, man cannot escape choosing between whether or not he will continue to use these particular concepts. To me. . . they seem now clearly inadequate.

"The proposal that I am putting forward can, at one level, be formulated quite simply. It is that what men have tended to conceive as religion and especially as a religion, can more rewardingly, more truly, be conceived in terms of two factors, different in kind, both

dynamic: an historical ‘cumulative tradition,’ and the persona faith of men and women. On the verbal plane, I seriously suggest that terms such as Christianity, Buddhism, and the like must be dropped, as clearly untenable once challenged. . . . [W]e could rehabilitate perhaps the venerable term ‘piety.’”

I.2 *Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion (New York: Harcourt, 1987), 62–65.*

“We have taken our examples from different cultures and periods, in order to present at least the most important mythological constructions and ritual scenarios that are based on sacred space. For in the course of history, religious man has given different valorizations to the same fundamental experience. We need only compare the conception of the sacred space (and hence of the cosmos) discernible among the Australian Achilpa with the corresponding conceptions of the Kwakiutl, the Altaic peoples, or the Mesopotamians, to realize the differences among them. There is no need to dwell on the truism that, since the religious life of humanity is realized in history, its expressions are inevitably conditioned by the variety of historical moments and cultural styles. But for our purpose it is not the infinite variety of the religious experiences of space that concern us but, on the contrary, their elements of unity. Pointing out the contrast between the behavior of nonreligious man with respect to the space in which he lives and the behavior of religious man in respect to sacred space is enough to make the difference in structure between the two attitudes clearly apparent.

“If we should attempt to summarize the result of the descriptions that have been presented in this chapter, we could say that the experience of sacred space makes possible the “founding of the world”: where the sacred manifests itself in space, *the real unveils itself*, the world comes into existence. But the irruption of the sacred does not only project a fixed point into the formless fluidity of profane space, a center into chaos; it also effects a break in plane, that is, it opens communication between the cosmic planes (between earth and heaven) and makes possible ontological passage from one mode of being to another. . . . Hence the manifestation of the sacred in space has a cosmological valence. . . . The first conclusion we might draw would be: *the world becomes apprehensible as world, as cosmos, in the measure in which it reveals itself as a sacred world.*

“. . . [R]eligious man can live only in a sacred world, because it is only in such a world that he participates in being, that he has a *real existence*. . . . Religious man thirsts for *being*. His terror of the chaos that surrounds his inhabited world corresponds to his terror of nothingness. The unknown space that extends beyond his world, for religious man, this profane space represents absolute nonbeing. If, by some evil chance, he strays into it, he feels emptied of his ontic substance, as if he were dissolving into Chaos, and he finally dies.

“. . . The experience of sacred time will make it possible for religious man periodically to experience the cosmos as it was *in principio*, that is, at the mythical moment of creation.”

I.3 *Rudolf Otto, The Idea of the Holy, transl. by John W. Harvey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 5–11.*

“Holiness—‘the holy’—is a category of interpretation and valuation peculiar to the sphere of religion. It is, indeed, applied by transference to another sphere—that of ethics—but it is not itself derived from this. . . . The fact is we have come to use the words ‘holy’, ‘sacred’ in an entirely derivative sense, quite different from that which they originally bore. We generally take ‘holy’ as meaning ‘completely good’; it is the absolute moral attribute, denoting the consummation of moral goodness. . . . [W]e may speak of the holiness or sanctity of duty or law, meaning merely that they are imperative upon conduct and universally obligatory.

“But this common usage of the term is inaccurate. It is true that all this moral significance is contained in the word ‘holy’, but it includes in addition a clear overplus of meaning, and this is now our task to isolate. . . . It will be our endeavor to suggest this unnamed Something to the reader as far as we may, so that he may himself feel it. There is no religion in which it does not live as the real innermost core, and without it no religion would be worthy of the name. [T]o find a word to stand for this element in isolation, this ‘extra’ in the meaning of ‘holy’ above and beyond the meaning of goodness, . . . I adopt a word coined from the Latin *numen*. . . . It may perhaps help . . . if I cite a well-known example, in which the precise ‘moment’ or element of religious feeling of which we are speaking is most actively present. When Abraham ventures to plead with God for the men of Sodom, he says: ‘Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes.’ (Gen 18:27) There you

have a self-confessed ‘feeling of dependence’, which is yet at the same time far more than, and something other than, *merely* a feeling of dependence.”

I.4 Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992), 199–200.

“[T]he more autonomous nature became and the more the gods withdrew from it, the more earnestly were all expectations directed to the third function of the gods – the more did morality become their true domain. It now became the task of the gods to even out the defects and evils of civilization, to attend to the sufferings which men inflict on one another in their life together and to watch over the fulfillment of the precepts of civilization, which men obey so imperfectly. Those precepts themselves were credited with a divine origin; they were elevated beyond human society and were extended to nature and the universe.

“An thus a store of ideas is created, born from man’s need to make his helplessness tolerable and built up from material of memories of the helplessness of his own childhood and the childhood of the human race. It can clearly be seen that the possession of these ideas protects him in two directions—against the dangers of nature and Fate, and against the injuries that threaten him from human society itself. Here is the gist of the matter. Life in this world serves a higher purpose; no doubt it is not easy to guess what that purpose is, but it certainly signifies a perfecting of man’s nature. It is probably the spiritual part of man, the soul, which in the course of time has so slowly and unwillingly detached itself from the body, that is the object of this elevation and exaltation. Everything that happens in this world is an expression of the intentions of an

intelligence superior to us, which in the end, though its ways and byways are difficult to follow, orders everything for the best—that is, to make it enjoyable for us. Over each one of us there watches a benevolent Providence which is only seemingly stern and which will not suffer us to become a plaything of the overmighty and pitiless forces of nature. Death itself is not extinction, is not a return to inorganic lifelessness, but the beginning of a new kind of existence which lies on the path of development to something higher. And, looking in the other direction, this view announces that the same moral laws which our civilizations have set up govern the whole universe as well, except that they are maintained by a supreme court of justice with incomparably more power and consistency. In the end all good is rewarded and all evil punished, if not actually in this form of life then in the later existences that begin after death. In this way all the terrors, the sufferings and hardships of life are destined to be obliterated.

“[O]f the one divine being into which all the gods of antiquity have been condensed, . . . this was a return to the historical beginnings of the idea of God. Now that God was a single person, man’s relations to him could recover the intimacy and intensity of the child’s relation to his father. But if one had done so much for one’s father, one wanted to have a reward, or at least to be his only beloved child, his Chosen People. . . . [These religious ideas] are prized as the most precious possession of civilization, as the most precious thing it has to offer its participants. It is far more highly prized than all the devices for winning treasures from the earth or providing men with sustenance or preventing their illnesses, and so forth. People feel that life would not be tolerable if they did not attach to these ideas the value that is claimed for them. . . .”

Key Terms

essentialist One who believes that the essence of religion is real and nonempirical, that it must be experienced firsthand to be understood, and that the institutions and worldly trappings of religion are secondary to this essence.

functionalist One who seeks to determine the social, psychological, or political role played by forces that are called “religious.”

family resemblance definition An approach associated with the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein that assumes nothing is defined by only one essence or function; therefore, what we call religions are defined by a set of traits that they share to one degree or another.

phenomenology The attempt to classify and describe religions in terms of their objects, rituals, teachings, etc.

PART TWO

RELIGIONS OF ANTIQUITY

Summary

All we can know about the religion of prehistoric times is based on the finds of archeologists. Therefore we must proceed with caution in drawing any conclusions about our earliest ancestors' religious beliefs and practices. In general, what evidence there is about religion before 10,000 BCE points to a concern with burial, animal spirits, ensuring successful hunting and farming, and fertility. There are remains from the Neolithic period that indicate, depending on the geography, priests and temples, worship of fertility gods and goddesses, and calendars created with stone structures.

In ancient Central America, about eleven hundred years before the birth of Christ, the Olmecs, the Maya, the Aztecs, and the Incas all built temples and created complex religious institutions. The pantheon of gods among many of these people was closely linked to natural forces and celestial bodies.

In the ancient Near East the Sumerians worshipped nature-linked gods. The Akkadians left some records of Sumerian and Akkadian myths, including the famous epic of Gilgamesh. Canaanite gods, such as El and Asherah, were similar to those of the Sumerians and Babylonians—forces in the natural world, although with some human failings.

The gods of ancient Egypt seemed also to reflect concepts about nature, including the seasonal cycle, and therefore were often represented by animals. In addition, there is some evidence of a belief in some kind of supreme divine power that controls the universe, and at one point the worship of the sun, or Aten, was the only religion allowed.

Ancient Greek religion was characterized by multiple gods, endowed with superhuman powers and very human faults, who feature prominently in the heroic epics of Homer. Because of Alexander the Great's conquests, Hellenization brought Greek language, religion, and culture to the entire Mediterranean world. Syncretism followed, including the development of local cults that fused Greek gods with local deities.

The religion of the ancient Roman empire was also syncretistic, eventually incorporating the Olympian gods from the Greeks, and involved the deification of emperors, beginning with Augustus. The well-preserved remains at Pompeii give evidence of worship at shrines, both public and in the home, where household gods were the focus.

The little we know for certain about the Celts is that religious beliefs centered on local deities and the Druids were the priests who most likely performed animal sacrifices at the shrines and temples. The ancient indigenous religions of Scandinavia involved honoring warriors and shamanistic rituals. Shamanism was also a core practice of the Mongols. Slavic religions incorporated folk beliefs about vampires and werewolves, while the Baltic peoples worshipped many goddesses, including Mother Earth.

Key Personalities

Quetzalcoatl

A mythological figure in Maya and Aztec religion and also the name given to Aztec high priests. He may have been a king of a pre-Aztec civilization. He is associated with the rediscovery of the complex Mayan calendar. His name derives from the sacred Quetzal bird. In mythology he is a god of the air who descended to earth and taught humanity the arts of civilization. He opposed the practice of human sacrifice. His activities aroused the wrath of another deity, and he fled in a boat made of serpent skin. He is often symbolized by a feathered serpent.

“It is entirely correct to think of the Aztec legend Quetzalcoatl in three contexts—as historical personality, as divinity and as literary subject. In the first incarnation he is a tenth century priest-king; in the second a deity associated with progress and humanity; in the third an object of intense interest to both ancient Aztec and more contemporary European scholars.

“The historical Quetzalcoatl was probably born around AD 947. His father, Mixcoatl, was ruler of the Toltecs. . . . Quetzalcoatl proved to be a wise and progressive ruler. . . . [He] abolished human sacrifice and decreed that henceforth sacrificial objects be limited to snakes, flowers and small birds.”

Source: Jim Tuck, “The Quetzalcoatl ‘Trinity,’” *Mexconnect*, 2008, <http://www.mexconnect.com/articles/269-the-quetzal-coatl-trinity>.

Akhenaten

The name adopted by Amenophis IV (also called Amenhotep IV), king of Egypt 1353–1335 BCE, in honor of Aten (“the sun disc”), whose cult he promoted to the exclusion of all others in a short-lived reform of

Egyptian religion. He built a magnificent new capital at el-Amarna.

“The nature of Akhenaten’s revolution is well established—he overthrew Egyptian polytheism in favor of the worship of a single god, Aten—but the reason behind it is still unknown. Many people have offered theories. . . . According to John Tuthill, a professor at the University of Guam, Akhenaten’s reasons for his religious reform were political. By the time of Akhenaten’s reign, the god Amen had risen to such a high status that the priests of Amen had become even more wealthy and powerful than the pharaohs. However, Barbara Mertz argued that Akhenaten and his courtiers would not have easily perceived this. . . . The reasons for Akhenaten’s revolution still remain a mystery.”

Source: Megaera Lorenz, “Akhenaten,” *Heptune*, 2000, <http://www.heptune.com/Akhnaten.html>.

Homer

The author of the Greek epics the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which date from between the tenth and eighth centuries BCE. According to the historian Herodotus, Homer was the first to detail the characters and functions of the gods of Mount Olympus.

“The gods of Homer, it has often been noted, are magnified men; but why are they so very big and so very boisterous? Simply because they are, in part, Northerners. Vastness, formlessness, fantastic excess are not ‘Greek’ in the classical sense. Very northern are the almost Berserker rages of Zeus himself and the roughness of his divine vengeance. To wave his ambrosial locks and shake Olympus by the nodding of his brows, may be both Greek and godlike, but how about such manners as ‘pushing the other gods from their seats,’ ‘tossing them about the hall’; hurling

his son by the foot over the battlements of Olympus; beating his wife and hanging her up with anvils to her feet, suggesting that she ‘would like to eat Priam raw’? There is such magic in the words of Homer that we are apt to forget that these are not the ways of Greek gods, however primitive, but the rude pranks of irresponsible giants. The old *theoi* have been, indeed, considerably ‘tossed about’ and are none the better for the process.”

Source: Jane Harrison, *Myths of Greece and Rome*, Garden City: Doubleday, 1928), 8–9, <http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/mgr/mgr03.htm>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

- ▶ *The Iliad* by Homer (the epic as translated by Samuel Butler, available online or as a downloadable text file)
<http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/iliad.html>

Socrates (469–399 bce)

Greek philosopher and teacher and mentor of Plato. He taught by a method of question and answer which sought to elicit a consistent and rational response and hence to arrive at a universally agreed truth. He was executed in Athens for corrupting the youth and introducing strange gods.

“Socrates remains . . . an enigma, an inscrutable individual who, despite having written nothing, is considered one of the handful of philosophers who forever changed how philosophy itself was to be conceived. All our information about him is second-hand and most of it vigorously disputed, but his trial and death at the hands of the Athenian democracy is nevertheless the founding myth of the academic discipline of philosophy, and his influence has been felt far beyond philosophy itself, and in every age. . . . Socrates has been encumbered with the admiration and emulation normally reserved for founders of religious sects—Jesus or Buddha—strange for someone who tried so hard to make others do their own thinking, and for someone convicted and executed on the charge of irreverence toward the gods.”

Source: Debra Nails, “Socrates,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, November 7, 2009, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/socrates>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

- ▶ The Socrates Project (an extensive database of theses and arguments ascribed to Socrates, as well as critiques and interpretations from various commentators)
<http://www.archelogos.com/socrates/>

Augustine of Hippo (354–430 ce)

Bishop of Hippo in North Africa who was converted to Christianity from the teaching of the Manichaeans. He stressed the absolute grace of God in men and women’s salvation and the depravity of human beings through original sin.

“I heard the voice as of a boy or girl, I know not which, coming from a neighbouring house, chanting, and oft repeating, ‘Take up and read; take up and read.’ . . . I rose up, interpreting it no other way than as a command to me from Heaven to open the book, and to read the first chapter I should light upon. . . . So quickly I returned to the place where . . . I [had] put down the volume of the apostles. . . . I grasped, opened, and in silence read that paragraph on which my eyes first fell—‘Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.’ No further would I read, nor did I need; for instantly, as the sentence ended—by a light, as it were, of security infused into my heart—all the gloom of doubt vanished away.”

Source: Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 8, <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/110108.htm>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

- ▶ Augustine of Hippo (extensive collection of scholarly articles, primary source materials, images and other resources for the study of Augustine)
<http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/jod/augustine/>

Genghis Khan (died 1227 ce)

The ruler of the Mongols; he was believed by his people to be of heavenly descent.

“Genghis Khan . . . created a body of law that he was to work on throughout his life. . . . He made it law that there was to be no kidnapping of women. He declared all children legitimate, whomever the mother. He made it law that no woman would be sold into marriage. . . . Genghis Khan regulated hunting—a winter activity—improving the availability of meat for everyone. He introduced record keeping. . . . He created a supreme officer of the law, who was to collect and preserve all judicial decisions, to oversee the trials of all those charged with wrongdoing and to have the power to issue death sentences. He created order in his realm that strengthened it and his ability to expand.”

Source: Frank E. Smitha, “Genghis Khan and the Great Mongol Empire,” *MacroHistory and World Report*, n.d., <http://www.fsmitha.com/h3/h11mon.htm>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

- ▶ Genghis Khan on the Web (collection of biographies, essays, and images related to Genghis Khan)
<http://www.isidore-of-seville.com/genghis/>

Primary Source Readings

The following excerpted readings represent some of the important primary sources that are referred to in the main text. Additional primary sources are available both in print and online, and students are encouraged to contact their instructors for further information.

II.1 *From the Epic of Gilgamesh (Gilgamesh): The Babylonian Legend of the Deluge*

Source: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/eog/index.htm>.

1. Gilgamesh said unto him, to Uta-Napishtim the remote:
2. “I am looking at thee, Uta-Napishtim.
3. Thy person is not altered; even as am I so art thou.
4. Verily, nothing about thee is changed; even as am I so art thou.
5. A heart to do battle doth make thee complete,
6. Yet at rest [?] thou dost lie upon thy back.

7. How then hast thou stood the company of the gods and sought life?”
- Thereupon Uta-Napishtim related to Gilgamesh the Story of the Deluge, and the Eleventh Tablet continues thus
8. Uta-Napishtim said unto him, to Gilgamesh:
9. “I will reveal unto thee, O Gilgamesh, a hidden mystery,
10. And a secret matter of the gods I will declare unto thee.
11. Shurippak, a city which thou thyself knowest,
12. On [the bank] of the river Puratti (Euphrates) is situated,
13. That city is old; and the gods [dwelling] within it
14. Their hearts induced the great gods to make a windstorm (*a-bu-bi*),
15. There was their father Anu,
16. Their counsellor, the warrior Enlil,
17. Their messenger En-urta [and]
18. Their prince Ennugi.
19. Nin-igi-ku, Ea, was with them [in council] and
20. reported their word to a house of reeds.”

FIRST SPEECH OF EA TO UTA-NAPISHTIM, WHO IS SLEEPING IN A REED HUT.

21. O House of reeds, O House of reeds! O Wall. O Wall!
22. O House of reeds, hear! O Wall, understand!
23. O man of Shurippak, son of Ubar-Tutu,
24. Throw down the house, build a ship,
25. Forsake wealth, seek after life,
26. Hate possessions, save thy life,
27. Bring all seed of life into the ship.
28. The ship which thou shalt build,
29. The dimensions thereof shall be measured,
30. The breadth and the length thereof shall be the same.
31. Then launch it upon the ocean.

UTA-NAPISHTIM’S ANSWER TO EA.

32. I understood and I said unto Ea, my lord:
33. See, my lord, that which thou hast ordered,
34. I regard with reverence, and will perform it,
35. But what shall I say to the town, to the multitude, and to the elders?

SECOND SPEECH OF EA.

36. Ea opened his mouth and spake
37. And said unto his servant, myself,
38. Thus, man, shalt thou say unto them:

39. Ill-will hath the god Enlil formed against me,
 40. Therefore I can no longer dwell in your city,
 41. And never more will I turn my countenance
 upon-the soil of Enlil.
 42. I will descend into the ocean to dwell with my
 lord Ea.
 43. But upon you he will rain riches
 44. A catch of birds, a catch of fish
 45. . . .an [abundant] harvest,
 46. . . .the sender of . . .
 47. . . .shall make hail [to fall upon you]. . . .

THE LOADING OF THE SHIP.

81. With everything that I possessed I loaded it [i.e.,
 the ship].
 82. With everything that I possessed of silver I
 loaded it.
 83. With everything that I possessed of gold I loaded
 it.
 84. With all that I possessed of all the seed of life I
 loaded it.
 85. I made to go up into the ship all my family and
 kinsfolk,
 86. The cattle of the field, the beasts of the field, all
 handicraftsmen I made them go up into it.
 87. The god Shamash had appointed me a time
 [saying]
 88. The sender of . . . will at eventide make a hail to
 fall;
 89. Then enter into the ship and shut thy door.
 90. The appointed time drew nigh;
 91. The sender of . . . made a hail to fall at eventide.
 92. I watched the aspect of the [approaching] storm,
 93. Terror possessed me to look upon it,
 94. I went into the ship and shut my door.
 95. To the pilot of the ship, Puzur-Enlil the sailor
 96. I committed the great house [ship], together
 with the contents thereof.

THE ABUBU (CYCLONE) AND ITS EFFECTS DESCRIBED.

97. As soon as something of dawn shone in the sky
 98. A black cloud from the foundation of heaven
 came up.
 99. Inside it the god Adad thundered,
 100. The gods Nabû and Sharru [i.e., Marduk] went
 before,
 101. Marching as messengers over high land and
 plain,
 102. Irragal (Nergal) tore out the post of the ship,
 103. En-urta went on, he made the storm to descend.

104. The Anunnaki brandished their torches,
 105. With their glare they lighted up the land.
 106. The whirlwind (or, cyclone) of Adad swept up to
 heaven.
 107. Every gleam of light was turned into darkness.
 108. . . .the land . . .as if had laid it waste.
 109. A whole day long [the flood descended] . . .
 110. Swiftly it mounted up . . . [the water] reached to
 the mountains
 111. [The water] attacked the people like a battle.
 112. Brother saw not brother.
 113. Men could not be known [or: recognized] in
 heaven.
 114. The gods were terrified at the cyclone.
 115. They shrank back and went up into the heaven
 of Anu.
 116. The gods crouched like a dog and cowered by the
 wall.
 117. The goddess Ishtar cried out like a woman in
 travail.
 118. The Lady of the Gods lamented with a sweet
 voice [saying]:

ISHTAR'S LAMENT.

119. May that former day be turned into mud,
 120. Because I commanded evil among the company
 of the gods.
 121. How could I command evil among the company
 of the gods,
 122. Command battle for the destruction of my
 people?
 123. Did I of myself bring forth my people
 124. That they might fill the sea like little fishes?

UTA-NAPISHTIM'S STORY CONTINUED.

125. The gods, the Anunnaki wailed with her.
 126. The gods bowed themselves, and sat down
 weeping.
 127. Their lips were shut tight (in distress) . . .
 128. For six days and nights
 129. The wind, the storm raged, and the cyclone
 overwhelmed the land.

THE ABATING OF THE STORM.

130. When the seventh day came the cyclone ceased,
 the storm and battle
 131. which had fought like an army.
 132. The sea became quiet, the grievous wind went
 down, the cyclone ceased.
 133. I looked on the day and voices were stilled,
 134. And all mankind were turned into mud,

135. The land had been laid flat like a terrace.
 136. I opened the air-hole and the light fell upon my cheek,
 137. I bowed myself, I sat down, I cried,
 138. My tears poured down over my cheeks.
 139. I looked over the quarters of the world, (to) the limits of ocean.
 140. At twelve points islands appeared.
 141. The ship grounded on the mountain of Nisir.
 142. The mountain of Nisir held the ship, it let it not move.
 143. The first day, the second day, the mountain of Nisir held the ship and let it not move.
 144. The third day, the fourth day, the mountain of Nisir held the ship and let it not move.
 145. The fifth day, the sixth day, the mountain of Nisir held the ship and let it not move.
 146. When the seventh day had come
 147. I brought out a dove and let her go free.
 148. The dove flew away and [then] came back;
 149. Because she had no place to alight on she came back.
 150. I brought out a swallow and let her go free.
 151. The swallow flew away and [then] came back;
 152. Because she had no place to alight on she came back.
 153. I brought out a raven and let her go free.
 154. The raven flew away, she saw the sinking waters.
 155. She ate, she waded [?], she rose [?], she came not back.

UTA-NAPISHTIM LEAVES THE SHIP.

156. Then I brought out [everything] to the four winds and made a sacrifice;
 157. I set out an offering on the peak of the mountain.
 158. Seven by seven I set out the vessels,
 159. Under them I piled reeds, cedarwood and myrtle (?).
 160. The gods smelt the savour,
 161. The gods smelt the sweet savour.
 162. The gods gathered together like flies over him that sacrificed. . . .

ENLIL DEIFIES UTA-NAPISHTIM AND HIS WIFE.

198. Then the god Enlil went up into the ship,
 199. He seized me by the hand and brought me forth.
 200. He brought forth my wife and made her to kneel by my side.
 201. He touched our brows, he stood between us, he blessed us [saving],

202. Formerly Uta-Napishtim was a man merely,
 203. But now let Uta-Napishtim and his wife be like unto us gods.
 204. Uta-Napishtim shall dwell afar off, at the mouth of the rivers.

II.2 Maya Creation myth

The Popol Vuh, Book I,

Source: Lewis Spence, *The Popol Vuh, the Mythic and Heroic Sagas of the Kiches of Central America* (London: David Nutt, 1908), <http://www.sacred-texts.com/nam/pvuheng.htm>.

Over a universe wrapped in the gloom of a dense and primeval night passed the god Hurakan, the mighty wind. He called out 'earth,' and the solid land appeared. The chief gods too counsel; they were Hurakan, Gucumatz, the serpent covered with green feathers, and Xpiyacoc and Xmucane, the mother and father gods. As the result of their deliberations animals were created. But as yet man was not. To supply the deficiency the divine beings resolved to create manikins carved out of wood. But these soon incurred the displeasure of the gods, who, irritated by their lack of reverence, resolved to destroy them. Then by the will of Hurakan, the Heart of Heaven, the waters were swollen, and a great flood came upon the manikins of wood. They were drowned and a thick resin fell from heaven. The bird Xecotcovach tore out their eyes; the bird Camulatz cut off their heads; the bird Cotzbalam devoured their flesh; the bird Tecumbalam broke their bones and sinews and ground them into powder. Because they had not thought on Hurakan, therefore the face of the earth grew dark, and a pouring rain commenced, raining by day and by night. Then all sorts of beings, great and small, gathered together to abuse the men to their faces. The very household utensils and animals jeered at them, their mill-stones, their plates, their cups, their dogs, their hens. Said the dogs and hens, 'Very badly have you treated us, and you have bitten us. Now we bite you in turn.' Said the mill-stones, 'Very much were we tormented by you, and daily, daily, night and day, it was *squeak, screech, screech*, for your sake. Now you will feel our strength, and we will grind your flesh and make meal of your bodies.' ... Then ran the manikins hither and thither in despair. They climbed to the roofs of the houses, but the houses crumbled under their feet; they tried to mount to the tops of the trees, but the trees hurled them from them; they sought refuge in the caverns, but the caverns closed before them. Thus was accomplished the ruin of this race, destined

to be overthrown. And it is said that their posterity are the little monkeys who live in the woods.

II.3 Enuma Elish

Source: "The Enuma Elish," the epic of creation, trans. L. W. King (from *The Seven Tablets of Creation*, London, 1902), <http://www.sacred-texts.com/ane/enuma.htm>.

THE FIRST TABLET

When in the height heaven was not named,
 And the earth beneath did not yet bear a name,
 And the primeval Apsu, who begat them,
 And chaos, Tiamut, the mother of them both
 Their waters were mingled together,
 And no field was formed, no marsh was to be seen;
 When of the gods none had been called into being,
 And none bore a name, and no destinies were
 ordained;
 Then were created the gods in the midst of heaven,
 Lahmu and Lahamu were called into being,
 Ages increased,
 Then Ansar and Kisar were created, and over them.
 Long were the days, then there came forth
 Anu, their son,
 Ansar and Anu
 And the god Anu
 Nudimmud, whom his fathers, his begetters . . .
 Abounding in all wisdom,
 He was exceeding strong,
 He had no rival.
 Thus were established and were the great gods.
 But Tiamat and Apsu were still in confusion.
 They were troubled and in disorder.
 Apru was not diminished in might
 And Tiamat roared.
 She smote, and their deeds,
 Their way was evil.
 Then Apsu, the begetter of the great gods,
 Cried unto Mummu, his minister, and said unto him:
 "O Mummu, thou minister that rejoicest my spirit,
 Come, unto Tiamut let us go!"
 So they went and before Tiamat they lay down,
 They consulted on a plan with regard to the gods,
 their sons.
 Apsu opened his mouth and spake,
 And unto Tiamut, the glistening one, he addressed
 the word:
 "By day I cannot rest, by night I cannot lie down in
 peace.
 But I will destroy their way.

Let there be lamentation, and let us lie down again
 in peace."

When Tiamat heard these words,
 She raged and cried aloud
 She uttered a curse, and unto Apsu she spake:

"What then shall we do?
 Let their way be made difficult, and let us lie down
 again in peace."

Mummu answered, and gave counsel unto Apsu,
 and hostile to the gods was the counsel Mummu
 gave:

"Come, their way is strong, but thou shalt destroy it;
 Then by day shalt thou have rest, by night shalt thou
 lie down in peace."

Apsu harkened unto him and his countenance grew
 bright,
 Since he [Mummu] planned evil against the gods his
 sons.
 He was afraid,
 His knees became weak; they gave way beneath him,
 Because of the evil which their first-born had
 planned.

Then Ea, who knoweth all that is, went up and he
 beheld their muttering.

And Tiamat harkened unto the word of the bright
 god, and said:

"Let us wage war!"

They banded themselves together and at the side of
 Tiamat they advanced;
 They were furious; they devised mischief without
 resting night and day.
 They prepared for battle, fuming and raging;
 They joined their forces and made war,
 Ummu-Hubur [Tiamat] who formed all things,
 Made in addition weapons invincible; she spawned
 monster-serpents,
 Sharp of tooth, and merciless of fang;
 With poison, instead of blood, she filled their bodies.
 Fierce monster-vipers she clothed with terror,
 With splendor she decked them, she made them of
 lofty stature.
 Whoever beheld them, terror overcame him,
 Their bodies reared up and none could withstand
 their attack.

She set up vipers and dragons, and the monster
 Lahamu,

And hurricanes, and raging hounds, and scorpion-men,
 And mighty tempests, and fish-men, and rams;
 They bore cruel weapons, without fear of the fight.
 Her commands were mighty, none could resist them;
 After this fashion, huge of stature, she made eleven
 [kinds of] monsters.

Among the gods who were her sons, inasmuch as he
 had given her support,
 She exalted Kingu; in their midst she raised him to
 power.

To march before the forces, to lead the host,
 To give the battle-signal, to advance to the attack,
 To direct the battle, to control the fight,
 Unto him she entrusted; in costly raiment she made
 him sit, saying:

“I have uttered thy spell, in the assembly of the gods
 I have raised thee to power.
 The dominion over all the gods have I entrusted unto
 him.

Be thou exalted, thou my chosen spouse,
 May they magnify thy name over all of them the
 Anunnaki.”

She gave him the Tablets of Destiny, on his breast
 she laid them, saying:

“Thy command shall not be without avail, and the
 word of thy mouth shall be established.”

Now Kingu, thus exalted, having received the power
 of Anu,
 Decreed the fate among the gods his sons, saying:

“Let the opening of your mouth quench the Fire-god;
 Whoso is exalted in the battle, let him display his
 might!”

THE SECOND TABLET

Tiamat made weighty her handiwork,
 Evil she wrought against the gods her children.
 To avenge Apsu, Tiamat planned evil,
 But how she had collected her forces, the god unto
 Ea divulged.

Ea harkened to this thing, and
 He was grievously afflicted and he sat in sorrow.
 The days went by, and his anger was appeased,
 And to the place of Ansar his father he took his way.

He went and, standing before Ansar, the father who
 begat him,
 All that Tiamat had plotted he repeated unto him,
 Saying,

“Tiamat our mother hath conceived a hatred for us,
 With all her force she rageth, full of wrath.
 All the gods have turned to her,
 With those, whom ye created, they go at her side.
 They are banded together and at the side of Tiamat
 they advance;
 They are furious, they devise mischief without resting
 night and day.
 They prepare for battle, fuming and raging;
 They have joined their forces and are making war. . . .”

When Ansar heard how Tiamat was mightily in revolt,
 he bit his lips, his mind was not at peace,
 Ansar unto his son addressed the word:

“ . . . my mighty hero,
 Whose strength is great and whose onslaught cannot
 be withstood,
 Go and stand before Tiamat,
 That her spirit may be appeased, that her heart may
 be merciful.
 But if she will not harken unto thy word,
 Our word shalt thou speak unto her, that she may be
 pacified.”

He heard the word of his father Ansar
 And he directed his path to her, toward her he took
 the way.

Ann drew nigh, he beheld the muttering of Tiamat,
 But he could not withstand her, and he turned back.

Ansar, he spake unto him:

“Thou art my son, who maketh merciful his heart.
 to the battle shalt thou draw nigh,
 he that shall behold thee shall have peace.”

And the lord rejoiced at the word of his father,
 And he drew nigh and stood before Ansar.
 Ansar beheld him and his heart was filled with joy,
 He kissed him on the lips and his fear departed from
 him. . . .

The lord rejoiced at the word of his father,
 His heart exulted, and unto his father he spake:

“O Lord of the gods, Destiny of the great gods,
 If I, your avenger,
 Conquer Tiamat and give you life,
 Appoint an assembly, make my fate preeminent and
 proclaim it.

In Upsukkinaku seat yourself joyfully together,
 With my word in place of you will I decree fate.
 May whatsoever I do remain unaltered,
 May the word of my lips never be chanced nor made
 of no avail.” . . .

THE FOURTH TABLET

They prepared for him a lordly chamber,
 Before his fathers as prince he took his place.
 “Thou art chiefest among the great gods,
 Thy fate is unequalled, thy word is Anu!
 O Marduk, thou art chiefest among the great gods,
 Thy fate is unequalled, thy word is Anu! . . .
 O Marduk, thou art our avenger! . . .”
 They give him an invincible weaponry which over-
 whelmeth the foe.
 “Go, and cut off the life of Tiamat,
 And let the wind carry her blood into secret places.”
 After the gods his fathers had decreed for the lord
 his fate,
 They caused him to set out on a path of prosperity
 and success.
 He made ready the bow, he chose his weapon,
 He slung a spear upon him and fastened it . . .
 He raised the club, in his right hand he grasped it,
 The bow and the quiver he hung at his side.
 He set the lightning in front of him,
 With burning flame he filled his body. . . .
 Tiamat uttered wild, piercing cries,
 She trembled and shook to her very foundations.
 She recited an incantation, she pronounced her spell,
 And the gods of the battle cried out for their
 weapons.
 Then advanced Tiamat and Marduk, the counselor of
 the gods;
 To the fight they came on, to the battle they drew nigh.
 The lord spread out his net and caught her,
 And the evil wind that was behind him he let loose in
 her face.
 As Tiamat opened her mouth to its full extent,
 He drove in the evil wind, while as yet she had not
 shut her lips.
 The terrible winds filled her belly,
 And her courage was taken from her, and her mouth
 she opened wide.
 He seized the spear and burst her belly,
 He severed her inward parts, he pierced her heart.
 He overcame her and cut off her life;
 He cast down her body and stood upon it.
 When he had slain Tiamat, the leader,
 Her might was broken, her host was scattered.
 And the gods her helpers, who marched by her side,
 Trembled, and were afraid, and turned back.
 They took to flight to save their lives;
 But they were surrounded, so that they could not
 escape.
 He took them captive, he broke their weapons;

In the net they were caught and in the snare they sat
 down. . . .

THE FIFTH TABLET

He [Marduk] made the stations for the great gods;
 The stars, their images, as the stars of the Zodiac, he
 fixed.
 He ordained the year and into sections he divided it;
 For the twelve months he fixed three stars.
 After he had . . . the days of the year . . . images,
 He founded the station of Nibir [the planet Jupiter]
 to determine their bounds;
 That none might err or go astray,
 He set the station of Bel and Ea along with him.
 He opened great gates on both sides,
 He made strong the bolt on the left and on the right.
 In the midst thereof he fixed the zenith;
 The Moon-god he caused to shine forth, the night he
 entrusted to him. . . .

THE SIXTH TABLET

When Marduk heard the word of the gods,
 His heart prompted him and he devised a cunning
 plan.
 He opened his mouth and unto Ea he spake
 That which he had conceived in his heart he
 imparted unto him:
 “My blood will I take and bone will I fashion . . .
 I will create man who shall inhabit the earth,
 That the service of the gods may be established, and
 that their shrines may be built.
 But I will alter the ways of the gods, and I will
 change their paths. . . .

EPILOGUE

Let them [i.e., the names of Marduk] be held in
 remembrances and let the first man proclaim
 them;
 Let the wise and the understanding consider them
 together!
 Let the father repeat them and teach them to his son;
 Let them be in the ears of the pastor and the
 shepherd!
 Let a man rejoice in Marduk, the Lord of the gods,
 That he may cause his land to be fruitful, and that
 he himself may have prosperity!
 His word standeth fast, his command is unaltered;
 The utterance of his mouth hath no god ever
 annulled.
 He gazed in his anger, he turned not his neck;

When he is wroth, no god can withstand his indignation.
Wide is his heart, broad is his compassion. . . .

II.4 Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods

Source: <http://thriceholy.net/Texts/Cicero.html>.

I. There are many things in philosophy, my dear Brutus, which are not as yet fully explained to us, and particularly (as you very well know) that most obscure and difficult question concerning the Nature of the Gods, so extremely necessary both towards a knowledge of the human mind and the practice of true religion: concerning which the opinions of men are so various, and so different from each other, as to lead strongly to the inference that ignorance is the cause, or origin, of philosophy, and that the Academic philosophers have been prudent in refusing their assent to things uncertain: for what is more unbecoming to a wise man than to judge rashly? or what rashness is so unworthy of the gravity and stability of a philosopher as either to maintain false opinions, or, without the least hesitation, to support and defend what he has not thoroughly examined and does not clearly comprehend?

In the question now before us, the greater part of mankind have united to acknowledge that which is most probable, and which we are all by nature led to suppose, namely, that there are Gods. Protagoras doubted whether there were any. Diagoras the Melian and Theodorus of Cyrene entirely believed there were no such beings. But they who have affirmed that there are Gods, have expressed such a variety of sentiments on the subject, and the disagreement between them is so great, that it would be tiresome to enumerate their opinions; for they give us many statements respecting the forms of the Gods, and their places of abode, and the employment of their lives. And these are matters on which the philosophers differ with the most exceeding earnestness. But the most considerable part of the dispute is, whether they are wholly inactive, totally unemployed, and free from all care and administration of affairs; or, on the contrary, whether all things were made and constituted by them from the beginning; and whether they will continue to be actuated and governed by them to eternity. This is one of the greatest points in debate; and unless this is decided, mankind must necessarily remain in the greatest of errors, and ignorant of what is most important to be known.

II. For there are some philosophers, both ancient and modern, who have conceived that the Gods take not the least cognizance of human affairs. But if their doctrine be true, of what avail is piety, sanctity, or religion? for these are feelings and marks of devotion which are offered to the Gods by men with uprightness and holiness, on the ground that men are the objects of the attention of the Gods, and that many benefits are conferred by the immortal Gods on the human race. But if the Gods have neither the power nor the inclination to help us; if they take no care of us, and pay no regard to our actions; and if there is no single advantage which can possibly accrue to the life of man; then what reason can we have to pay any adoration, or any honors, or to prefer any prayers to them? Piety, like the other virtues, cannot have any connection with vain show or dissimulation; and without piety, neither sanctity nor religion can be supported; the total subversion of which must be attended with great confusion and disturbance in life.

I do not even know, if we cast off piety towards the Gods, but that faith, and all the associations of human life, and that most excellent of all virtues, justice, may perish with it.

There are other philosophers, and those, too, very great and illustrious men, who conceive the whole world to be directed and governed by the will and wisdom of the Gods; nor do they stop here, but conceive likewise that the Deities consult and provide for the preservation of mankind. For they think that the fruits, and the produce of the earth, and the seasons, and the variety of weather, and the change of climates, by which all the productions of the earth are brought to maturity, are designed by the immortal Gods for the use of man. They instance many other things, which shall be related in these books; and which would almost induce us to believe that the immortal Gods had made them all expressly and solely for the benefit and advantage of men. Against these opinions Carneades has advanced so much that what he has said should excite a desire in men who are not naturally slothful to search after truth; for there is no subject on which the learned as well as the unlearned differ so strenuously as in this; and since their opinions are so various, and so repugnant one to another, it is possible that none of them may be, and absolutely impossible that more than one should be, right.

VI. Now, to free myself from the reproach of partiality, I propose to lay before you the opinions of various philosophers concerning the nature of the Gods,

by which means all men may judge which of them are consistent with truth; and if all agree together, or if any one shall be found to have discovered what may be absolutely called truth, I will then give up the Academy as vain and arrogant. . . .

X. They who affirm the world to be an animated and intelligent being have by no means discovered the nature of the mind, nor are able to conceive in what form that essence can exist; but of that I shall speak more hereafter. At present I must express my surprise at the weakness of those who endeavor to make it out to be not only animated and immortal, but likewise happy, and round, because Plato says that is the most beautiful form; whereas I think a cylinder, a square, a cone, or a pyramid more beautiful. But what life do they attribute to that round Deity? Truly it is a being whirled about with a celerity to which nothing can be even conceived by the imagination as equal; nor can I imagine how a settled mind and happy life can consist in such motion, the least degree of which would be troublesome to us. Why, therefore, should it not be considered troublesome also to the Deity? For the earth itself, as it is part of the world, is part also of the Deity. We see vast tracts of land barren and uninhabitable; some, because they are scorched by the too near approach of the sun; others, because they are bound up with frost and snow, through the great distance which the sun is from them. Therefore, if the world is a Deity, as these are parts of the world, some of the Deity's limbs must be said to be scorched, and some frozen.

These are your doctrines, Lucilius; but what those of others are I will endeavor to ascertain by tracing them back from the earliest of ancient philosophers. Thales the Milesian, who first inquired after such subjects, asserted water to be the origin of things, and that God was that mind which formed all things from water. If the Gods can exist without corporeal sense, and if there can be a mind without a body, why did he annex a mind to water?

It was Anaximander's opinion that the Gods were born; that after a great length of time they died; and that they are innumerable worlds. But what conception can we possibly have of a Deity who is not eternal?

Anaximenes, after him, taught that the air is God, and that he was generated, and that he is immense, infinite, and always in motion; as if air, which has no form, could possibly be God; for the Deity must necessarily be not only of some form or other, but of the most beautiful form. Besides, is not everything that had a beginning subject to mortality?

XI. Anaxagoras, who received his learning from Anaximenes, was the first who affirmed the system and disposition of all things to be contrived and perfected by the power and reason of an infinite mind; in which infinity he did not perceive that there could be no conjunction of sense and motion, nor any sense in the least degree, where nature herself could feel no impulse. If he would have this mind to be a sort of animal, then there must be some more internal principle from whence that animal should receive its appellation. But what can be more internal than the mind? Let it, therefore, be clothed with an external body. But this is not agreeable to his doctrine; but we are utterly unable to conceive how a pure simple mind can exist without any substance annexed to it.

Alcmaeon of Crotona, in attributing a divinity to the sun, the moon, and the rest of the stars, and also to the mind, did not perceive that he was ascribing immortality to mortal beings. . . .

Then Xenophanes, who said that everything in the world which had any existence, with the addition of intellect, was God, is as liable to exception as the rest, especially in relation to the infinity of it, in which there can be nothing sentient, nothing composite. . . .

XII. Empedocles, who erred in many things, is most grossly mistaken in his notion of the Gods. He lays down four natures as divine, from which he thinks that all things were made. Yet it is evident that they have a beginning, that they decay, and that they are void of all sense. . . .

It would be tedious to show the uncertainty of Plato's opinion; for, in his *Timaeus*, he denies the propriety of asserting that there is one great father or creator of the world; and, in his book of *Laws*, he thinks we ought not to make too strict an inquiry into the nature of the Deity. And as for his statement when he asserts that God is a being without any body—what the Greeks call 'asomatos'—it is certainly quite unintelligible how that theory can possibly be true; for such a God must then necessarily be destitute of sense, prudence, and pleasure; all which things are comprehended in our notion of the Gods. He likewise asserts in his *Timaeus*, and in his *Laws*, that the world, the heavens, the stars, the mind, and those Gods which are delivered down to us from our ancestors, constitute the Deity. These opinions, taken separately, are apparently false; and, together, are directly inconsistent with each other. . . .

XIII. . . . Aristotle, in his third book of *Philosophy*, confounds many things together, as the rest have done;

but he does not differ from his master Plato. At one time he attributes all divinity to the mind, at another he asserts that the world is God. Soon afterward he makes some other essence preside over the world, and gives it those faculties by which, with certain revolutions, he may govern and preserve the motion of it. Then he asserts the heat of the firmament to be God; not perceiving the firmament to be part of the world, which in another place he had described as God. How can that divine sense of the firmament be preserved in so rapid a motion? And where do the multitude of Gods dwell, if heaven itself is a Deity? But when this philosopher says that God is without a body, he makes him an irrational and insensible being. Besides, how can the world move itself, if it wants a body? Or how, if it is in perpetual self-motion, can it be easy and happy? . . .

XVII. Here, then, you see the foundation of this question clearly laid; for since it is the constant and universal opinion of mankind, independent of education, custom, or law, that there are Gods, it must necessarily follow that this knowledge is implanted in our minds, or, rather, innate in us. That opinion respecting which there is a general agreement in universal nature must infallibly be true; therefore it must be allowed that there are Gods; for in this we have the concurrence, not only of almost all philosophers, but likewise of the ignorant and illiterate. It must be also confessed that the point is established that we have naturally this idea, as I said before, or prenotion, of the existence of the Gods. As new things require new names, so that prenotion was called 'prolepsis' by Epicurus; an appellation never used before. On the same principle of reasoning, we think that the Gods are happy and immortal; for that nature which hath assured us that there are Gods has likewise imprinted in our minds the knowledge of their immortality and felicity; and if so, what Epicurus hath declared in these words is true: "That which is eternally happy cannot be burdened with any labor itself, nor can it impose any labor on another; nor can it be influenced by resentment or favor: because things which are liable to such feelings must be weak and frail." We have said enough to prove that we should worship the Gods with piety, and without superstition, if that were the only question. . . .

XIX. Surely the mighty power of the Infinite Being is most worthy our great and earnest contemplation; the nature of which we must necessarily understand to be such that everything in it is made to correspond completely to some other answering part. This is called by Epicurus 'isonomia'; that is to say, an equal

distribution or even disposition of things. From hence he draws this inference, that, as there is such a vast multitude of mortals, there cannot be a less number of immortals; and if those which perish are innumerable, those which are preserved ought also to be countless. Your sect, Balbus, frequently ask us how the Gods live, and how they pass their time? Their life is the most happy, and the most abounding with all kinds of blessings, which can be conceived. They do nothing. They are embarrassed with no business; nor do they perform any work. They rejoice in the possession of their own wisdom and virtue. They are satisfied that they shall ever enjoy the fullness of eternal pleasures.

XX. . . .Or let us suppose a Deity residing in the world, who directs and governs it, who preserves the courses of the stars, the changes of the seasons, and the vicissitudes and orders of things, surveying the earth and the sea, and accommodating them to the advantage and necessities of man. Truly this Deity is embarrassed with a very troublesome and laborious office. We make a happy life to consist in a tranquility of mind, a perfect freedom from care, and an exemption from all employment. The philosopher from whom we received all our knowledge has taught us that the world was made by nature; that there was no occasion for a workhouse to frame it in; and that, though you deny the possibility of such a work without divine skill, it is so easy to her, that she has made, does make, and will make innumerable worlds. But, because you do not conceive that nature is able to produce such effects without some rational aid, you are forced, like the tragic poets, when you cannot wind up your argument in any other way, to have recourse to a Deity, whose assistance you would not seek, if you could view that vast and unbounded magnitude of regions in all parts; where the mind, extending and spreading itself, travels so far and wide that it can find no end, no extremity to stop at. In this immensity of breadth, length, and height, a most boundless company of innumerable atoms are fluttering about, which, notwithstanding the interposition of a void space, meet and cohere, and continue clinging to one another; and by this union these modifications and forms of things arise, which, in your opinions, could not possibly be made without the help of bellows and anvils. Thus you have imposed on us an eternal master, whom we must dread day and night. For who can be free from fear of a Deity who foresees, regards, and takes notice of everything; one who thinks all things his own; a curious, ever-busy God?

Key Terms

prehistoric Dating from the period before the development of writing; in the Middle East, before about 3000 BCE.

Paleolithic period The Old Stone Age, before 10,000 BCE in Europe and the Middle East.

megaliths Large stone monuments dating from the late Neolithic period. Their original function is uncertain but they mark burial mounds and temples and they may have served as a calendar of times and seasons.

Neolithic period The New Stone Age, from about 10,000 BCE until the Early Bronze Age.

divination Telling the future by reading the signs of nature in the weather, stars, or flight of birds or by the manipulation of objects such as bones or cards.

Hellenism The adoption of the Greek language, culture, philosophy and ideas, particularly around the Mediterranean, from the time of Alexander the Great (356–323 BCE). It was the dominant cultural influence during the rise of Christianity.

the mystery religions Cults based on ancient myths which flourished in Greece, in Rome and throughout the Roman empire. Initiates went through a dramatic and secret ceremony in which they identified with the divinity at the center of the myth and experienced salvation and the assurance of immortality.

shaman (1) An ecstatic priest-magician among the Tungu people of Siberia. (2) By extension, a similar figure in other indigenous religions and ancient religions. Shamans induce a trance experience in which they are believed to leave the body and visit other worlds. The shaman's role is to convey sacrifices to the gods, to escort the dead to their destination and to return with divine prophecies.

Questions for Study and Discussion

1. Prehistoric religion seems to emphasize what aspects of life?
2. Explain the significance of Quetzalcoatl and Chichen Itza to the Maya.
3. How does the design of Egyptian temples reflect their purpose?
4. Briefly summarize the epic of Gilgamesh and explain its significance to the study of religion of the ancient Near East.
5. Describe some common elements of the religions of the Ancient Near East, Greece, and so on (for example, the flood story).
6. Describe the relationship between the emperors and the gods in ancient Rome after Augustus.
7. Refer to the prayer to Marduk excerpted in the side bar on page 62. What does this prayer say about the religion of the Babylonians? What could you infer about the faith of the person who prayed it?
8. What role has human sacrifice played in ancient religions? Can you identify common themes or purposes across continents, historical periods, and cultures?

Questions for Reflection

Write your personal reflections on each of these questions in the space provided.

1. Why do you think so many ancient religions—in the Near East, Africa, Central America, Scandinavia, and so on—connected their gods and goddesses to natural forces and elements? (Think across the chapter.)

A SHORT GUIDE TO WRITING RESEARCH PAPERS ON WORLD RELIGIONS

This guide is meant to help you organize and compose a traditional academic research paper on world religions. You may find the basic sequence and resources helpful in other disciplines, too. Short or long, your research paper can be crafted in five steps: (1) choose a topic, (2) research your topic, (3) outline your argument, (4) write the first draft, and (5) refine the final paper.

1. Choose a Topic

If your topic is not chosen for you, you should aim to choose one that is (1) *interesting* to you, (2) *manageable* (with readily available sources) and *malleable* (so you can narrow in on an especially interesting or important aspect), and (3) *arguable*. Your research paper will essentially be an *argument* based in the available primary and secondary sources and authorities.

A good place to start is the chapters of *Introduction to World Religions*. Perhaps there was a topic in one of the chapters (such as an ascetic tradition or the history of a religion's sacred writings) that caught your interest. Also, look over the materials in this book. Is there a particular question or idea that sparks your interest? Check out the Selected Web Resources; perhaps a website will lead you to a good research topic. Below are some suggested topics:

Methodological Topics

What do the concepts of "cult" and "sect" mean from the perspective of the sociology of religion? How have these concepts changed during the development of the field?

How did C. G. Jung's and Sigmund Freud's theories affect the study of religion in the twentieth century?

How was Søren Kierkegaard able to integrate existentialism into his critique of Christianity and his concept of Christian theology?

What benefits and drawbacks do postmodernist theories have to offer the study of religion?

Historical Topics

What do the Vedas tell us about the Aryans' culture and worldview?

How did the Jews fare under the Ottoman Empire?

How did the Christian biblical canon come about? Was it universally adopted?

How has the role of the *Shari'a* in Muslim governments changed over time?

Interpretive or Comparative Topics

How do the religious role of the ancient Egyptian kings and that of the ancient Roman emperors compare?

How did the worship forms and styles of the Norse and the Celts reflect their views of nature?

How does the encounter between colonial powers and an indigenous people affect both the indigenous religion and that of the colonizing people?

How has Hinduism influenced the religious beliefs and structures of Jainism and Sikhism?

Resources for Choosing a Topic and Beginning a Research Paper

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.

Mann, Thomas. *The Oxford Guide to Library Research*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Preece, Roy. *Starting Research: An Introduction to Academic Research and Dissertation Writing*. London: Pinter, 1994.

2. Research Your Topic

Material about your topic may reside in a single text or an array of historical texts by one or many authors or in the conflicting opinions of contemporary scholars. In most cases, you can build your research by moving from general to specific treatments of your topic.

One caution: In your research, it is vital that you not allow your expanding knowledge of what others think about your topic to drown your own curiosities, sensibilities, and insights. Instead, as your initial questions expand and then diminish with increased knowledge from your research, your ideas, theories, and point of view should emerge and grow.

Encyclopedia articles, scholarly books, dictionaries of religions, journal articles, and other standard reference tools contain a wealth of material and

helpful bibliographies to orient you to your topic and its historical context. Look for the most authoritative and up-to-date sources. Checking cross-references will deepen your knowledge.

General Reference Works

Black, Jeremy, and Anthony Green. *Gods, Demons, and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia: An Illustrated Dictionary*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992.

Coogan, Michael D. *Eastern Religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Shinto*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Encyclopedia of Early Christianity. Ed. Everett Ferguson. 2nd ed. New York: Garland, 1998.

Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World. 2 vols. Edited by Richard C. Martin. New York: Macmillan Reference, 2004.

Encyclopedia of Religion. Edited by Lindsay Jones. 15 vols. 2nd ed. New York: Macmillan Reference, 2005.

Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature. Edited by Bron R. Taylor et al. New York: Continuum, 2008.

Encyclopedia of Religion in America. Edited by Charles H. Lippy and Peter W. Williams. Washington, DC: CQ, 2010.

Encyclopedia of Religion in Australia. Edited by James Jupp. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Encyclopedia of Religious Rites, Rituals, and Festivals. Ed. Frank A. Salamone. New York: Routledge, 2004.

The Encyclopedic Sourcebook of New Age Religions. Edited by James R. Lewis. Amherst: Prometheus, 2004.

Flood, Gavin. *An Introduction to Hinduism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Irons, Edward A. *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*. Encyclopedia of World Religions / Facts on File Library of Religion and Mythology. New York: Facts on File, 2008.

Mazur, Eric Michael. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Film*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011.

New Encyclopedia of Judaism. Edited by Geoffrey Wigoder et al. New York: New York University Press, 2002.

Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church. Edited by F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone. 3rd ed. rev. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Online Resources

Although not all internet sources meet scholarly standards, some very good reference tools do appear online. Some of them are listed here. When researching online, be sure to check on the source of a piece of information presented as fact or theory; the citation should be clear and verifiable, or the original author should be listed and should be a trusted source (for example, scholar who has published in a peer-reviewed journal).

Note: All URLs were current when this book was published.

- ▶ The Wabash Center's Internet Guide to Religion—"A selective, annotated guide to a wide variety of electronic resources of interest to those who are involved in the study and practice of religion: syllabi, electronic texts, electronic journals, web sites, bibliographies, liturgies, reference resources, software, etc."
http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/resources/guide_headings.aspx
- ▶ Religion Research Guide, Thomas Tredway Library, Augustana College—websites listed by general subject area, such as biblical studies and ethics
<http://www.augustana.edu/library/Research/Guides/religion-guide.html>
- ▶ Educypedia: Religions of the World—a wide range of websites are listed for many world religions; sites vary in quality, but many have useful information or links to other sources
<http://www.educypedia.be/education/religion.htm>
- ▶ Sacred Texts: World Religions—lists pages for all major world religions, which feature links to full texts of scriptures and other sacred writings (translated into English where relevant)
<http://www.sacred-texts.com/world.htm>
- ▶ Virtual Religion Index—covers many categories of ancient and contemporary world religions; provides links to assist in academic research and study of religion
<http://virtualreligion.net/vri>
- ▶ Religious Studies Web Guide—similar to Virtual Religion Index; also features a page with links to art of various religious traditions
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/~lipton>
- ▶ The Religious Movements Page—academic research site primarily on new religious movements with extensive listing of religions and information on origins, history, principle beliefs and practices, and additional bibliographies
<http://web.archive.org/web/20060907005952/http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/relmove/>

It's best to start listing the sources you've consulted right away in standard bibliographical format (see section 5, below, for examples of usual formats). Assigning a number to each one facilitates easy reference later in your work.

Periodical Literature

Even if you are writing on a single text (for example, an excerpt from the *Upanishads*, the Gospel of Mark, the Tao Te Ching), you'll be able to place your interpretation in contemporary context only by referring to what other scholars today are saying. Their work is largely published in academic journals and periodicals (print and online). In consulting the chief articles dealing with your topic, you'll learn where agreements, disagreements, and open questions stand; how older theories have fared; and the latest relevant tools and insights. Since you cannot consult them all, start with the most recent, looking for the best and most directly relevant articles from the last five years and then going back ten or twenty years, as ambition and time allow.

A good place to start is the *ATLA Religion Database*, which indexes articles, essays, book reviews, dissertations, theses, and even essays in collections. You can search by keywords, subjects, persons, or scripture references. Other standard indexes to periodical literature, most in print but some now available online, include:

Guide to Social Science and Religion in Periodical Literature

Religion Index One/Two

Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature (print, online)

Dissertation Abstracts International (print, microfiche)

Dissertation Abstracts Online (online only)

Catholic Periodical and Literature Index (print)

Catholic Periodical and Literature Online (online)

Humanities Index (online)

Research the Most Important Books and Primary Sources

By now you can identify the most important sources for your topic, both primary and secondary. *Primary sources* are actual historical documents or artifacts that provide data for interpretation: sacred writings (such as the Vedas, the Bible, the Qur'an, prayers, hymns, poems), interviews, and memoirs, for example. *Secondary sources* are all the articles or books that analyze or interpret primary sources. Your research topic might be in a single primary source—for example, the notion of enlightenment in the Lotus Sutra—with many secondary commentaries, analyses, or interpretations. Or your primary resources may be large—the polled opinions of thousands of people, the mystical writings of a tradition, or a body of religious law created over centuries—and may or may not have many associated secondary sources.

Apart from books you've identified through the sources you've consulted, you can find the chief works on any topic readily listed in your school library's catalog, the Library of Congress subject index (<http://catalog.loc.gov>), and other online library catalog sites. Many theological libraries and archives are linked at the "Religious Studies Web Guide": <http://www.ucalgary.ca/~lipton/catalogues.html>.

The eventual quality of your research paper rests entirely on the quality or *critical character* of your sources. The best research uses academically sound treatments by recognized authorities arguing rigorously from primary sources.

Taking Notes

With these sources on hand—whether primary or secondary, whether in books or articles or websites or polling data—you can review each source, noting down its most important or relevant facts, observations, or opinions.

One method is to create a document for each main source that includes its bibliographical (publication) information and its key points. You'll need each notable point to identify the subtopic, the main idea or direct quotation, and the page number(s). This practice will allow you to redistribute each point to wherever it is needed in your eventual outline.

While most of the notes you take will simply summarize points made in primary or secondary sources, *direct quotes* are used for (1) word-for-word transcriptions, (2) key words or phrases coined by the author, or (3) especially clear or summary formulations of an author's point of view. Remember, re-presenting another's insight or formulation without attribution is plagiarism. You should also be sure to keep separate notes about your own ideas or insights into the topic as they evolve.

When Can I Stop?

As you research your topic in books, articles, or reference works, you will find it coalescing into a unified body of knowledge or at least into a set of interrelated questions. Your topic will become more and more focused, partly because that is where the *open question* or *key insight* or *most illuminating instance* resides and partly for sheer manageability. The vast range of scholarly methods and opinions and sharply differing points of view about most religious topics (especially in the contemporary period) may force you to settle for laying out a more circumscribed topic carefully. While the sources may never dry up, your increased knowledge gradually gives you confidence that you have the most informed, authoritative, and critical sources covered in your notes.

3. Outline Your Argument

On the basis of your research findings, in this crucial step you refine or reformulate your general topic and question into a *specific question answered by a defensible thesis or hypothesis*. You then arrange or rework your supporting materials into a clear outline that will coherently and convincingly present your thesis to your reader.

First, review your research notes carefully. Some of what you initially read may now seem obvious or

irrelevant, or perhaps the whole topic is simply too massive. But as your reading and notetaking progressed, you might also have found a piece of your topic, from which a key question or problem has emerged and around which your research has gelled. Ask yourself:

- ▶ What is the subtopic or subquestion that is most interesting, enlightening, and manageable?
- ▶ What have been the most clarifying and illuminating insights I have found into the topic?
- ▶ In what ways have my findings contradicted my initial expectations? Can this serve as a clue to a new and different approach to my question?
- ▶ Can I frame my question in a clear way, and, in light of my research, do I have something new to say and defend—my thesis or hypothesis—that will answer my question and clarify my materials?

In this way you will advance from *topic* and *initial question* to *specific question* and *thesis*. For example, as you research primary and secondary sources on the role of the apocryphal scriptures in the early development of Buddhism. You might then find evidence that the *Tantras* were a particularly important factor in the spread of Buddhism in Southeast Asia. You might then advance a thesis that the elements of secrecy and magical rituals had significant appeal for non-Mahayana Buddhist cultures. So you have:

Topic: Apocryphal scriptures and Buddhism's development

Specific topic: The role of the *Tantras* in the spread of Buddhism in Southeast Asia

Specific question: What made the *Tantras* appealing to Buddhists outside the Mahayana tradition?

Thesis: The *Tantras'* focus on secrecy and magic were key factors in their spread beyond Mahayana Buddhist cultures in Southeast Asia.

You can then outline a presentation of your thesis that organizes your research materials into an orderly and convincing argument. Functionally your outline might look like this:

Introduction: Raise the key *question*, and announce your *thesis*.

Background: Present the necessary literary or historical or theological context of the question. Note

the state of the question—the main agreements and disagreements about it.

Development: Present your own insight in a clear and logical way. Present evidence to support your thesis, and develop it further by:

- ▶ offering examples from your primary sources
- ▶ citing or discussing authorities to bolster your argument
- ▶ contrasting your thesis with other treatments, either historical or contemporary
- ▶ confirming it by showing how it makes good sense of the data, answers related questions, or solves previous puzzles.

Conclusion: Restate the thesis in a way that recapitulates your argument and its consequences for the field or the contemporary religious horizon.

The more detailed your outline, the easier will be your writing. Go through your note files, reorganizing them according to your outline. Fill in the outline with the specifics from your research, right down to the topic sentences of your paragraphs. Don't hesitate to set aside any materials that now seem off-point, extraneous, or superfluous to the development of your argument.

4. Write the First Draft

You are now ready to draft your paper, essentially by putting your outline into sentence form while incorporating specifics from your research notes.

Your main task, initially, is just to get your ideas down on paper in as straightforward a way as possible. Assume your reader is intelligent but knows little or nothing about your particular topic. You can follow your outline closely, but you may find that logical presentation of your argument requires making some adjustments to the outline. As you write, weave in quotes judiciously from primary or secondary literature to clarify or punch your points. Add brief, strong headings at major junctures. Add footnotes to acknowledge ideas, attribute quotations, reinforce your key points through authorities, or refer the reader to further discussion or resources. Your draft footnotes will refer to your sources in abbreviated form based on your files; be sure to include page

numbers. You can add full publishing data once your text is firm.

5. Refine the Final Paper

Your first draft puts you within sight of your goal, but your project's real strength emerges from reworking your initial text in a series of revisions and refinements. In this final phase, for help with grammar, punctuation, bibliographic format, abbreviations, and so forth, refer to the style manual preferred by your instructor or institution, or use one listed below:

The Chicago Manual of Style. 16th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 7th ed. New York: Modern Language Association, 2009.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researches*. 7th ed. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, et al. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

Williams, Joseph M. *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace*. Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

Online, see the searchable website Guide to Grammar and Writing: <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar>.

Polishing the Prose

To check spelling and meaning of words or to help vary your prose, try Merriam-Webster Online, which contains both the Collegiate Dictionary and the Thesaurus: <http://www.m-w.com>.

Closely examine your work several times, paying attention to:

- ▶ **Structure and Argument.** Do I state my question and thesis accurately? Does my paper do what my introduction promised? (If not, adjust one or the other.) Do I argue my thesis well? Do the headings clearly guide the reader through my outline and argument? Does this sequence of topics orchestrate the insights my reader needs to understand my thesis?
- ▶ **Style.** Style here refers to writing patterns that enliven prose and engage the reader. Three simple ways to strengthen your academic prose are:
 - **Topic sentences:** Be sure each paragraph clearly states its main assertion.
 - **Active verbs:** As much as possible, avoid using the linking verb *to be*, and instead rephrase using active verbs.
 - **Sentence flow:** Above all, look for awkward sentences in your draft. Disentangle and rework them into smooth, clear sequences. To avoid boring the reader, vary the length and form of your sentences. Check to see if your paragraphs unfold with some short sentences, questions, and simple declarative sentences.

Likewise, tackle some barbarisms that frequently invade academic prose:

 - ▶ **Repetition:** Unless you need the word count, this can go.
 - ▶ **Unnecessary words:** Such filler phrases as *the fact that* and *in order to* and *there is/are* numb your reader. Similarly, such qualifiers as *somewhat*, *fairly*, *rather*, and *very* take the wind from the adjective that follows.
 - ▶ **Jargon:** Avoid technical terms when possible. Explain all technical terms that you do use. Avoid or translate foreign-language terms.
 - ▶ **Overly complex sentences:** Short sentences are best. Avoid run-on sentences. Avoid *etc.*

Along with typographical errors, look for stealth errors—the common but overlooked grammatical gaffes: subject-verb disagreement, dangling participles, mixed verb tenses, overuse and under-use of commas, incorrect semicolon use, and inconsistency in capitalization, hyphenation, italicization, and treatment of numbers.

Footnotes

Your footnotes will give credit to your sources for every direct quotation and for other people's ideas you have used. Below are samples of typical citation formats in Modern Language Association style. For a full listing of citation styles for internet sources, see "Online!: Cita-

tion Styles”: <http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/online/citex.html>.

- ▶ Basic order
Author’s full name, *Book Title*, ed., trans., series, edition, vol. number (Place: Publisher, year), pages.
- ▶ Book
Bell, Diane. *Daughters of the Dreaming*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 27.
- ▶ Book in a series
Westerkamp, Marilyn J. “Gendering Christianity.” In *Modern Christianity to 1900*, ed. Amanda Porterfield, 261–90. A People’s History of Christianity, vol. 6. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007.
- ▶ Essay or chapter in an edited book
Sallie B. King, “Human Rights in Contemporary Engaged Buddhism,” in *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars*, ed. Roger Jackson and John Makransky (London: Curzon, 2000), 294.
- ▶ Multivolume work
B. McGinn, J. J. Collins, and S. Stein, eds., *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism* (New York: Continuum, 1998), 1:85.
- ▶ Journal article
Philip J. Ivanhoe, “Thinking and Learning in Early Confucianism,” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 17 (December 1990): 473–93.
- ▶ Online journal article
Jon R. Norman, “Congregational Culture and Identity Politics in a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Synagogue: Making Inclusiveness and Religious Practice One and the Same,” *Journal of Religion and Society* 13 (2011), <http://moses.creighton.edu/JRS/2011/2011-2.html>.
- ▶ Bible
Cite in your text (not in your footnotes) by book, chapter, and verse: Gen. 1:1-2; Exod. 7:13; Rom. 5:1-8. In your bibliography list the version of the Bible you have used.
- ▶ Qur’an
Cite in your text (not in your footnotes) by *surah*, for example, *surah* 2:106.

If a footnote cites the immediately preceding source, use “Ibid.” (from the Latin *ibidem*, meaning “there”). For example:

61. Ibid., 39.

Sources cited earlier can be referred to by author or editor’s last name(s), a shorter title, and page number. For example: Koester, *Introduction*, 42.

Bibliography

Your bibliography can be any of several types:

- ▶ Works Cited: just the works—books, articles, and so on—that appear in your footnotes;
- ▶ Works Consulted: all the works you checked in your research, whether they were cited or not in the final draft; or
- ▶ Select Bibliography: primary and secondary works that, in your judgment, are the most important source materials on this topic, whether cited or not in your footnotes. Some instructors might ask for your bibliographic entries to be annotated, that is, including a comment from you on the content, import, approach, and helpfulness of each work. Bibliographic style differs somewhat from footnote style. Here are samples of typical bibliographic formats in MLA style:
 - ▶ Basic order
 - ▶ Author’s last name, first name and initial. *Book Title*. Editor. Translator. Series. Edition. Number of volumes. Place: Publisher, Year.
 - ▶ Book
Bell, Diane. *Daughters of the Dreaming*. Second edition. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993.
 - ▶ Book in a series
Westerkamp, Marilyn J. “Gendering Christianity.” In *Modern Christianity to 1900*, ed. Amanda Porterfield, 261–90. A People’s History of Christianity, vol. 6. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007.
 - ▶ Edited book
Kwam, Kristen E., Linda S. Schearing, and Valarie H. Ziegler, eds. *Eve and Adam: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Readings on Genesis and Gender*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999.

- ▶ Essay or chapter in an edited book
King, Sallie B. “Human Rights in Contemporary Engaged Buddhism.” In *Buddhist Theology: Critical Reflections by Contemporary Buddhist Scholars*, ed. Roger Jackson and John Makransky, 293–311. London: Curzon, 2000.
- ▶ Multivolume work
McGinn, B., J. J. Collins, and S. Stein, eds. *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism*. 3 vols. New York: Continuum, 1998.
- ▶ Journal article
Ivanhoe, Philip J. “Thinking and Learning in Early Confucianism.” *Journal of Chinese Philosophy* 17 (December 1990): 473–93.
- ▶ Online journal article
Norman, Jon R. “Congregational Culture and Identity Politics in a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and

Transgender Synagogue: Making Inclusiveness and Religious Practice One and the Same.” *Journal of Religion and Society* 13 (2011). <http://moses.creighton.edu/JRS/2011/2011-2.html>.

- ▶ Bible
The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

Final Steps

After incorporating the revisions and refinements into your paper, print out a fresh copy, proofread it carefully, make your last corrections to the electronic file, format it to your instructor’s or school’s specifications, and print your final paper.