<table>
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<th>Belief System</th>
<th>Origin/Date</th>
<th>Spread</th>
<th>Tenets</th>
<th>Significance</th>
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</table>
| **Hinduism**  | ▪ Originsates w/Aryan invasions c. 1700-1500 BCE  
▪ Later groups added ideas | ▪ Originally spread t/o India & Pakistan | ▪ One Ultimate Reality, Brahma, which is formless and nameless  
▪ Rebirth (reincarnation) for spiritual progress, determined by karma  
▪ Release from cycle of rebirth (moshka) of the soul (Atman) through oneness with the Ultimate Reality  
▪ Four stages of life; student, householder, anchorite, sannyasi (holy one)  
▪ Dharma, duties and rules of conduct to be followed to achieve salvation | ▪ No founder or date of founding  
▪ Tolerant of other religions  
▪ Few formal beliefs  
▪ Dynamic; meditation & ritual  
▪ Varna, division into caste  
▪ & jatis (sub-caste) |
| **Buddhism**  | ▪ Emerged in protest to practices of Brahman-Hindu priests  
▪ Founded by Gautama Buddha c. 6th century BCE | ▪ N. India t/o Asia & SE Asia to Japan in 8th century CE | **Four Noble Truths**  
▪ Universality of suffering  
▪ Desire as the cause of suffering  
▪ Nirvana as the cessation of desire  
▪ Eightfold Path as the guide to entering nirvana; rightness of:  
▪ Knowledge of the cause of suffering  
▪ Thought  
▪ Speech  
▪ Conduct  
▪ Livelihood  
▪ Effort  
▪ Mind, and  
▪ Meditation | ▪ Strong monastic tradition  
▪ Monks & merchants spread Buddhism t/o Asia  
▪ Threatened by Hindu revival & spread of Islam in India reduces Buddhism by 1000CE  
▪ By 1st century CE split into two major branches:  
▪ Mahayana (N. Asia): delay entrance into nirvana to help others find enlightenment  
▪ Theravada (SE Asia): emphasis on seeking individual enlightenment; based more closely on teachings of Gautama Buddha  
▪ Zen Buddhism: c. 700 CE in China & c. 1200CE in Japan, sudden enlightenment through meditation.
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<tr>
<td>Confucianism</td>
<td>China/Confucius, 500s B.C.E. and Mencius, 300s B.C.E.</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Based on <em>jen</em>, the quality that relates all people to one another, sympathy</td>
<td>Philosophical and ethical system of conduct</td>
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<td>Humaneness</td>
<td>Dominant influence in Chinese government, education, and scholarship for 2,000 years</td>
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<td>Filial piety; family as the teacher of social roles; family as extension of the state; five relationships</td>
<td>Knowledge of Confucianism basis of civil service</td>
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<td>Superior man; only the educated should govern</td>
<td>Conservative influence, acceptance of the status quo</td>
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<td>Superior man; only the educated should govern</td>
<td>But the right to overthrow a ruler who did not govern for the good of the ruled, mandate form heaven</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Superior man; only the educated should govern</td>
<td>Ancestor Worship</td>
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<td>Daoism</td>
<td>Traditionally attributed to Lao-tzu/400s and 300s B.C.E.</td>
<td>China, second most influential system after Confucianism</td>
<td>Tao meaning “The Way”; indefinable but like nature, naturalness</td>
<td>Social conventions such as Confucian rituals unnatural</td>
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<td>Live in accord with one’s nature</td>
<td>Became mixed with peasant belief in spirits and over time became polytheistic religion</td>
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<td>Oneness with everything through the tao; meditation.</td>
<td>Interest in nature greatly influenced Chinese arts</td>
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<td>Interaction of <em>yin</em> and <em>yang</em>, passive and active principles, as influences on everything that happens</td>
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<td>Judaism</td>
<td>Hebrews, ancient Israelites/first historical writings between 1000 and 800 B.C.E.</td>
<td>Land of Canaan, ancient Israel; <em>Disapora</em> 130s C.E. by the Romans; Middle East, North Africa, and Europe</td>
<td>One God</td>
<td>First monotheistic religion</td>
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<td>Chosen people through a special relationship with God.</td>
<td>Greatly influenced Christianity and Islam</td>
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<td>Messiah to come</td>
<td>No widespread hierarchical structure</td>
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<td>Beliefs set forth in the <em>Torah</em>, Mosaic Law, and <em>Talmud</em>, collection of oral laws.</td>
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| Christianity | Teachings of Jesus/ 30s C.E. | From Palestine throughout the Roman world, including the Byzantine Empire and northern Europe | One God  
Jesus as the Messiah  
Through God’s grave people are saved through the gift of faith in Jesus Christ  
Through this faith sins are forgiven; receive new and eternal life.  
Gospels as main source of early teachings of Jesus.  
Large body of later writings developed to interpret and build on original teachings | Persecuted by Romans  
Legalized by Constantine in late 300s  
Strong monastic element; monks preserved much of ancient Greek and Roman learning after the breakup of the Roman Empire  
Strong missionary outreach  
Strong, universal hierarchical structure and discipline  
As Roman Catholic Church power of the papacy came to rival that of European emperors and kings |
| Islam        | Muhammad/ Early 600s C.E. | From Arabian Peninsula spread through Middle East to western India, western China, sub-Saharan Africa, and Moorish enclaves in Spain. | One God, Allah  
Muhammad as the Seal of the Prophets (Jewish Abraham and Moses; Christian Jesus; Muhammad)  
Five Basic Pillars:  
“There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is His Prophet.”  
Prayer five times a day facing Mecca  
Charity  
Fasting during Ramadam  
Pilgrimage to Kaaba, shrine in Mecca.  
Original teachings recorded in the Quran | Split into Sunni and Shi’is sects  
Sunni: modern majority, originally adherents of the Umayyad  
Shi’is: originally followers of Ali  
Development of the Sharia, legal code for many Islamic nations  
Qadi – Islamic judges  
Lack of hierarchical structure  
Generally tolerant of other religions – enforced tax (Jizya) on non-believers |
| Polytheism   | Earliest religions across all culture regions | Continued in areas that had not been evangelized by Christianity and Islam. | Belief in many gods/spirits  
Gods as personifications of nature  
Animism – assign spirits to everything (Africa) | Examples: Sumerian, Shang, Greek, Roman, Germanic, Mayan, Aztec, and African religions  
Modern religion: Hinduism |