

# Topic 2: Religions/Belief Systems

# Belief System: Hinduism

## Region: India

- Major Beliefs/Practices:
  - Reincarnation: Belief that soul is reborn after death
  - Dharma: Ones religious duty
  - Karma: Positive or negative force of actions in your next life
  - Caste System: Rigid class structure, status determined by birth
  - Polytheism: Belief in many gods
  - Main Gods: Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva
  - Moksha – Become one with divine essence (Hindu Heaven)

- Impact of the Belief System on India
  - Caste System: Provides order and stability throughout Indian history.
    - Provides rules for social behavior. Status, career, economic status are all determined by caste.
    - Provides local control, little need for strong central govt
    - Class Divisions
  - Ganges river is sacred
  - Hindu Literature: Mahabarahta and Ramayana
  - Hindu Temples: Political, Social and Economic Centers of India

# Belief System: Confucianism

## Region: China

- Major Beliefs/Practices:
  - Filial Piety – Respect for elders/Veneration of Ancestors
  - Family and Education are MOST important
  - Lead by Example
  - Social Hierarchy – Rank people in society
  - 5 Basic Relationships
    - Mutual Obligation: People have responsibilities to others

- Impact of the Belief System on China
  - Confucian Social Structure: Provides order and stability throughout Chinese history.
    - Provides rules for social behavior.
  - Stable Government in China
    - Civil Service Exams – Measure Ability
    - Merit Based Bureaucracy: Position in government is determined by ABILITY
    - Strong Central Government-Powerful Bureaucracy
  - Importance of Family
  - People Respect elders
  - Education is IMPORTANT