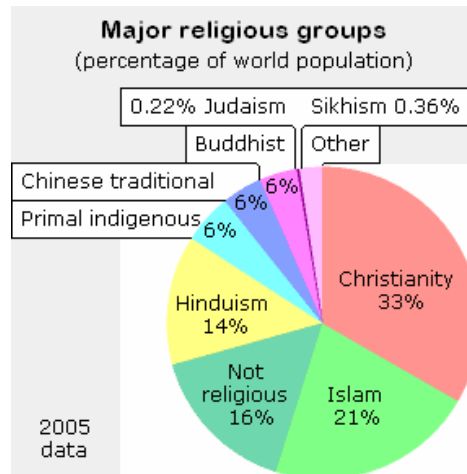


World Religions



- **Eastern Religions**
 - Hinduism
 - Confucianism
 - Buddhism

- **Western Religions**
 - Judaism
 - Catholicism
 - Islam
 - Protestantism



- **Hinduism**
 - oldest of major world religions
 - believe in a single divinity that is present in everything
 - through reincarnation, at death a soul passes from one body to another – good actions in this life lead to a better situation in the next incarnation
 - rules for diet, family, **caste** (hereditary social class), and politics
 - doctrine of non-violence, or **ahimsa**, was the basis for Mahatma Gandhi’s use of civil disobedience – some Hindus opposed Gandhi
 -
- **Confucianism**
 - Confucius (551–449 BCE) created a system of “right living” known as *ren*
 - Confucius taught rulers to act humanely toward their subjects
 - parents, teachers, and government officials were the guardians of this **civic religion** (no priests)
 - all human relationships involved defined roles and mutual obligations – a social hierarchy
 - **egalitarianism** – the promotion of equality
 - co-existed with Buddhism and Taoism well, until Mao Zedong outlawed all religions in 1949
- **Buddhism**
 - Siddhartha Gautama (ca. 563–483 BCE) preached that enlightenment was to be found in the **Middle Way**, the path that lies between indulgence and asceticism (rigid self-discipline)
 - many characteristics of Hinduism were adopted
 - a “buddha” is someone who has awakened to the true nature of universal cause and effect, and whose awareness transcends birth, suffering, and death
 - Emperor Ashoka made Buddhism the state religion of India and spread it throughout southeast Asia and the Middle East – **diaspora** of Tibetans spread it further

- **Judaism**
 - Romans destroyed the Temple of Jerusalem in 70 CE, forcing Jewish people to spread throughout the world (**diaspora**)
 - in some “host countries”, they were accepted and given much religious freedom; in others, they were viewed as outsiders and treated with hostility
 - although both Jews and Arabs are Semitic peoples, “**anti-Semitism**” has come to mean hatred of the Jewish people
 - Hitler’s **Holocaust** (1933-1945) was the most extreme example of anti-Semitic behaviour

- **Catholicism**
 - led by the pope, who is seen as the successor to Saint Peter as Christ’s representative on Earth
 - eastern and western churches evolved
 - western Christians used Catholicism to **political advantages** (carrying out the Spanish Inquisition, creating denominational schools, and discouraging divorce, abortion)
 - eastern Christians saw themselves as **Orthodox** – following the principles of the original religion
 - excommunication of two leaders in 1054 finished the schism
 - John Paul II reached out to the east, but no reconciliation

- **Islam**
 - **Islam** is an Arabic word that means “submission”
 - a follower of Islam is called a “**Muslim**,” which means “one who submits to the will of Allah”
 - Muhammad (570–632 CE) recorded the word of Allah, in the **Qur’an**, the holy book of Islam
 - there is no separation of church and state in Islamic countries – no discrimination based on race or class
 - Christians and Muslims began fighting over access to holy sites in Jerusalem
 - political violence contradicts Islam’s traditional teachings - *jihad* (holy war) is actually the ongoing *inner* struggle of conscience to be a better Muslim

- **Protestantism**
 - is the politics of dissent
 - Martin Luther (1483–1546) and the **Protestant Reformation** opposed the power of the Roman Catholic Church
 - England’s *Act of Supremacy* made the king or queen of England the head of the new Church of England
 - John Calvin, John Knox, and others appealed to the middle classes and gave rise to political democracies
 - Calvinism, Presbyterianism, and political voices of conscience such as Quakers are all forms of Protestantism

World Religions

