**Worksheet 3: The Early History of Philosophy around the World**

**Name:** ………………………………………

**Skimming the text**

Read the text’s title (headings and subheadings) and

Write some of the text’s keywords in the following blanks.

................. .................. ..................... ..................

Write the names of some important people and places given in the

reading passage.

.................. .................. ..................... .....................

Read the first sentences of each paragraph. What do you think the

reading is probably about?

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**3.1 Indigenous Philosophy**

(1) When humans shift from religious answers to questions about purpose and meaning to more naturalistic and logical answers, they move from the realm of myth to reason. In Greek, this movement is described as a move from mythos to logos, where mythos signifies the supernatural stories we tell, while logos signifies the rational, logical, and scientific stories we tell. Rather than seeing a decisive break from mythological thinking to rational thinking, we should understand the transition from mythos to logos as a gradual, uneven, and zig-zagging progression.

(2) Indigenous thought has in the past been seen as wisdom lying outside the realm of academic discussion; however, recent scholarship has challenged this assumption. The philosophies of Indigenous African and North American peoples provide understandings of the self and of society that complement and challenge traditional Western ideas. The Maya possessed advanced understandings of mathematics and astronomy as well as metaphysical concepts of a solar life force. The Aztec had a highly developed epistemology that grounded truth within an understanding of an individual’s character and recognized the fundamental and total character of the universe as a godlike force or energy.

**3.2 Classical Indian Philosophy**

(3) Indian philosophical traditions are a few centuries older than the earliest European philosophical traditions.

(4) Philosophers from both Greek and India see philosophy as not just a theoretical activity but also a practical endeavor—a way of life. The earliest philosophical texts in India are the four Vedas. The Upanishads, a body of scripture added later, contain much of the philosophical core of these Hindu scriptures. According to this tradition, there is a rigid hierarchy to the cosmos that is reflected in the earthly world. Six darshanas, or schools of thought, emerged in Hindu philosophy, each pointing to a different path to seeing and being seen by a sacred being or beings.

(5) The six principal darshanas are Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Mimamsa, and Vedanta. Samkhya holds that everything is composed of puruṣa (pure, absolute consciousness) and prakriti (matter). Liberation occurs when the mind is freed from the bondage of matter. The purpose of yoga is the stopping of the movement of thought. Only then do individuals encounter their true selves. Nyaya, which can be translated as “method” or “rule,” focuses on logic and epistemology. The Vaisheshika system developed independently of Nyaya, but gradually came to share many of its core ideas. Its epistemology was simpler, allowing for only perception and inference as the forms of reliable knowledge. The Mimamsa school was one of the earliest philosophical schools of Hinduism, and it was grounded in the interpretation of the Vedic texts. It sought to investigate dharma or the duties, rituals, and norms present in society.

**3.3 Classical Chinese Philosophy**

(6) Early Chinese writings show the beginnings of the theory of yin and yang, the two fundamental forces that are characterized as male and female, dark and light, inactivity and activity. In Confucianism, the five constant virtues are benevolence (ren), righteousness (yi), propriety (li), wisdom (zhi), and trustworthiness (xin). The unifying theme among Daoist religions is a focus on a naturalistic, nontheological view of the underlying basis for morality and goodness. The general moral guidance of Daoism involves becoming aware of the dao, or the natural way of things, and ensuring that one’s actions don’t oppose those natural forces.

(7) The most central doctrine of Mohist philosophy is the principle that every human being is valued equally in the eyes of heaven (tian). In contrast to Confucius, who emphasized the importance of care with distinctions, Mozi advanced the doctrine of inclusive care, following the principle that every human being has equal value in the eyes of heaven. The doctrine of inclusive care leads directly to the doctrine of anti-aggression because the greatest threat to human well-being and care is mutual aggression and war.

**Comprehension check**

*Read each statement and decide whether it is true or false. Write “T” before true statements and “F” before false ones.*

1. In Roman, this movement is described as a move from mythos to logos, where mythos signifies the supernatural stories we tell, while logos signifies the rational, logical, and scientific stories we tell. …

2. The Aztec had a highly developed epistemology that grounded truth within an understanding of an individual’s character and recognized the fundamental and total character of the universe as a human force or energy. …

3. The earliest philosophical texts in India are the five Vedas. …

4. The purpose of yoga is the stopping of the movement of thought. …

The Mimamsa school was one of the earliest philosophical schools of Hinduism, and it was grounded in the interpretation of the Vedic texts. …

5. The unifying theme among Daoist religions is a focus on a unnaturalistic, nontheological view of the underlying basis for morality and goodness. …

6. The doctrine of inclusive care leads directly to the doctrine of aggression because the greatest threat to human well-being and care is mutual aggression and war. …

**Multiple choice questions**

*Read the reading passage carefully and select the most appropriate answer for each of the following multiple-choice test items. There can be more than one answer correct.*

**Which philosophy provides understandings of the self and of society that complement and challenge traditional Western ideas?**

1. Europeans
2. African
3. American

**What does Upanishads contain?**

1. core of Hindu scriptures
2. core of Greek scriptures
3. core of Chinese scriptures

**What are the six principal darshanas?**

1. Samkhye, Yogo, Nyeyo, Vaishashika, Mimemse, and Vedanta
2. Semkhya, Yoge, Nyeya, Voisheshika, Mimemsa, and Vadenta
3. Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Mimamsa, and Vedanta

**How can Nyaya be translated?**

1. method, focuses on logic and epistemology
2. rule, focuses on logic and epistemology
3. law, focuses on logic and epistemology

**What are the five constants in Confucianism?**

1. benevolence (xin), righteousness (zhi), propriety (li), wisdom (yi), and trustworthiness (ren)
2. benevolence (zhi), righteousness (xin), propriety (ren), wisdom (yi), and trustworthiness (li)
3. benevolence (ren), righteousness (yi), propriety (li), wisdom (zhi), and trustworthiness (xin)

**What is the most central doctrine of Mohist philosophy?**

1. the principle that every human being is valued equally in the eyes of heaven
2. the principle that every human being is valued equally in the eyes of god
3. the principle that every human being is valued equally in the eyes of universe

**Synonym finding**

*Find a single word in the passage which means:*

1. Legend (para. 1)………………

2. Action (para. 1)………………….

3. Slow (para. 1)………………….

4. Knowledge (para. 2)……………

5. Nature (para. 2)…………………..

6. Customs (para. 3)………………..

7. Strict (para. 4)………………….

8. Happens (para. 5)………………..

9. Intuition (para. 5)……………….

10. Basic (para. 6)………………….

11. Morality (para. 6)…………….

12. Deeds (para. 6)………………..

13. Principle(para. 7)………………….

**Matching**

*Match the terms with their definitions.*

1. Confucianism …

2. Dao …

3. Daoism …

4. Darshana …

5. Epistemology …

6. Ethnophilosophy …

7. Indigenous philosophy …

8. Junzi …

9. Li …

10. Logos …

11. Mohism …

12. Mythos …

13. Prakriti …

14. Purusha …

15. Ren …

16. Samkhya …

17. Skepticism …

18. Upanishads …

19. Vedas …

20. Yin and yang …

1. a dualist approach in Hindu metaphysics that views the universe as composed of pure consciousness and matter, which undergoes an evolutionary process.
2. in Confucianism, ethical principles or a path by which to live; in Daoism, the natural way of the universe and all things.
3. a belief system developed in ancient China that encourages the practice of living in accordance with the dao, the natural way of the universe and all things.
4. a way of beholding the sacred or manifestations of the divine in Hindu thought.
5. rituals and practice that develop a person’s ethical character as they interact with others.
6. the study of knowledge, involving questions such as how humans know what they know, what is the nature of true knowledge, and what are the limits to what humans can know.
7. in Hindu thought, pure, absolute consciousness; one of two elements that make up the universe.
8. the study of the philosophies of Indigenous peoples.
9. a normative moral theory developed in ancient China during the Warring States period that proposes that the development of individual character is key to the achievement of an ethical and harmonious society.
10. the ideas of Indigenous peoples pertaining to the nature of the world, human existence, ethics, ideal social and political structures, and other topics also considered by traditional academic philosophy.
11. in Confucianism, a person who is an exemplary ethical figure and lives according to the dao.
12. a way of thinking that rationally analyzes abstract concepts and phenomena independent of accepted belief systems.
13. the four oldest books within Hinduism, consisting of the Rigveda, the Samaveda, the Yajurveda, and the Atharvaveda.
14. explanation of natural phenomena through two fundamental forces, the male yin and the female yang.
15. a philosophical position that claims people do not know things they ordinarily think they know.
16. Hindu texts that contain the philosophical core of Hinduism.
17. a type of consequentialism established in ancient China by Mozi during the Warring States period.
18. a way of thinking that relies on the folk knowledge and narratives that often form part of the spiritual beliefs of a people.
19. in Hindu thought, matter; one of two elements that make up the universe.
20. a central concept in Confucianism that refers either to specific virtues or to someone with complete virtue.

**Cloze test**

*There are some missing words in the following text. Find the best choice for each blank.*

Confucius (551–479 BCE) was the founder of (1)………………..., a philosophy that has influenced society, politics, and culture in East Asia for more than 2,000 years. Confucius lived just before the beginning of what is called the Warring States period, a time in Chinese history plagued with (2)……………. and instability. Though not a member of the (3)…………………., Confucius rose from lowly positions to become the minister of justice of Lu, a province in eastern China. He challenged three powerful families that were trying to wrest (4)…………….of the government. After a clash, Confucius left his home with a small group of (5)…………….., hoping to serve as an adviser for rulers in other provinces. After 14 years, he returned to Lu and was able to provide some advice to government ministers, but he never achieved his goal of finding a leader to carry out his ideas (Huang 2013). Confucius is credited with authoring or editing the Chinese classical texts that became the core educational curriculum for hundreds of years, though it was only after his death that Emperor Wudi of the Han dynasty first adopted Confucianism as the official state (6)…………….

One measure of the immediate impact of Confucius’s success is that he spawned an entire class of scholars known as shih, who were trained in classical studies and language and were only suited for teaching and (7)……………..work. They maintained their livelihood through a system of patronage. This system has had an enduring impact in China. Contemporary exams for government officials include testing on traditional (8)……………. about classical Chinese philosophy and literature (Fung 1952).

Though Confucius was labeled an atheist and considered an innovator, he was in other ways culturally (9)………….. . He believed in a well-ordered society where rules and guidance come from the very top (the emperor or “the heavens,” as it may be). Scholars today identify Confucianism as a form of virtue ethics because it is an approach to ethics that focuses on personal virtue or character.

1 A) Confucianism B) Indigenous C) Philosophy D) Politics

2 A) war B) violence C) killing D) prosperity

3 A) royal court B) parlament C) aristocracy D) sect

4 A) control B) power C) likes D) nothing

5 A) students B) soldier C) followers D) ministers

6 A) policy B) ideology C) laws D) intelligence

7 A) home B) state C) school D) government

8 A) knowledge B) power C) love D) idea

9 A) flexible B) new C) conservative D) bad

**Source:**

Smith, N. (2022). *Introduction to Philosophy*. Houstom, Texas: OpenStax.