



NEW CANADIAN MEDIA

THE PULSE OF IMMIGRANT CANADA

Ethnic Media & Diversity Style Guide



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INTRODUCTION

Editorial style is like any other style – not merely a set of rules but a statement of philosophy and technique. Reading a style guide closely will tell you a lot about a media organization’s objectives and how it wants to achieve them.

Editorial style guides have another crucial goal: consistency. As time pressure and the potential for distraction grow, so does the need to hold the reader’s attention. Anything slightly off -- a misplaced comma, incorrect or variant spellings, baffling references, a judgment open to question -- can lead to an early page exit. Too much of this, and trust begins to erode.

Both new and established contributors to New Canadian Media should read this guide as soon as possible, and re-read it periodically as a refresher. The point is not to memorize it but rather to understand where potential pitfalls lie. This will help you go straight to the relevant section when you have doubts about spelling, capitalization or appropriate wording.

Like NCM itself, this style guide has special significance for Canadian journalism. It pays particular attention to language that has the potential to be socially and culturally charged. It seeks to provide global context to help contributors choose the right words and avoid incorrect or insensitive terms. And it’s a style statement for Canada’s most recently established voices, adding a rich new layer to our national discourse. All writers and editors, not only those affiliated with NCM, should find it useful.

Paul Knox
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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

It is an honour for me – an immigrant to Canada – to present to you Canada's first "Ethnic Media and Diversity Style Guide."

New Canadian Media undertook this project, with funding support from the Government of Canada's Interaction program, to build on the creditable work Canadian Press has been doing via its CP Style Guide for many years. It's on every journalist's bookshelf.

Our hope is that this guide will speak to the new Canada that is being shaped by the millions who arrive in this country every decade. We are truly a microcosm of the world. These newcomers change our lexicon and our understanding of the world around us.

This guide is meant to make it easier for journalists to report on diverse communities, with diligence and sensitivity. It offers a practical tool to avoid the innumerable pitfalls that confront reporters and writers in a multicultural society: ignorance is no defence for sloppy journalism.

I am grateful to its authors, Amira Elghawaby and Marina Giannitsos, who have spared no effort to research and consult widely – both journalists and community voices. While the guide is definitive in the advice it provides, it is not intended to be the last word on the wide range of topics that it deals with.

The language we use as Canadians will inevitably be ever-evolving. New Canadian Media hopes to keep pace through revised editions in the coming years.

Sincerely,



Publisher
New Canadian Media
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Ottawa, January 25, 2016

Purpose of the NCM Ethnic Media & Diversity Style Guide Project:

THIS GUIDE'S PRIMARY AIM IS TO PROVIDE MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS WITH CLEAR AND STANDARDIZED SPELLINGS AND DEFINITIONS FOR SPECIFIC TERMS USED IN CANADA'S DIVERSE COMMUNITIES.

NCM'S GOAL IS THAT THIS GUIDE WILL SERVE AS A SOURCE THAT HELPS CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROMOTION OF MORE ACCURATE AND INCLUSIVE REPORTING WHEN REFERENCING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES IN THE MEDIA.

DISCLAIMERS: Like most style guides and dictionaries, NCM's Ethnic Media & Diversity Style Guide will remain a work in progress.

In compiling terms from a range of sources and through community feedback, NCM understands that terms and meanings may change from time to time, and/or there may be different interpretations or understandings within communities. Wherever possible, NCM will do its utmost to provide terms and definitions that are generally accepted by the majority of community members. However, we always seek input and will weigh submissions and clarifications carefully and exercise our due diligence to ensure accuracy and fairness.

While we clearly source the origin of terms and definitions, NCM has and will continue to modify terms based on community feedback to better reflect the Canadian context.

CALL FOR CONTINUED CONTRIBUTIONS FOR NEXT EDITION: This is the first edition of the NCM Ethnic Media & Diversity Style Guide and our hope is to expand the breadth of this guide with each new edition. Therefore, we welcome continuous contributions and feedback from media organizations, ethnic and cultural communities and experts to make this style guide as inclusive and in-depth as possible.

For inquiries, ideas or feedback about the **New Canadian Media Ethnic Media & Diversity Style Guide** please email production@newcanadianmedia.ca.

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MAJOR ONLINE & STYLE GUIDE SOURCES

(SEE REFERENCES FOR MORE)



A REPORTER'S GLOSSARY OF LOADED LANGUAGE IN THE ISRAELI-PALESTINIAN CONFLICT

<http://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/assets/docs/197/150/4d96ac5-55a3396.pdf>

ASIAN AMERICAN JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION HANDBOOK

<http://www.aaja.org/aajahandbook/>

CANADIAN PRESS STYLEBOOK

<http://www.thecanadianpress.com/books.aspx?id=182>

CITIZENSHIP & IMMIGRATION CANADA GLOSSARY

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/helpcentre/glossary.asp>

DIVERSITY REPORTING HANDBOOK

<http://tinyurl.com/jzc4jy4>

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BLACK JOURNALISTS STYLEBOOK

<http://www.nabj.org/?styleguide>

NEWS WATCH BY SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY CENTRE FOR INTEGRATION & IMPROVEMENT OF JOURNALISM

http://www.cijj.org/publications_media/20111205-95034.pdf

RELIGION LINK: RELIGION STYLEBOOK & REPORTING GUIDES

<http://religionstylebook.com/>

REPORTING IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

<http://www.riic.ca/the-guide/>

SABAR: KEY TERMINOLOGY GUIDEBOOK FOR REPORTING ON ABORIGINAL TOPICS

<http://www.sabar.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/SABAR-Glossary-English-Final.pdf>

SOUTH ASIAN JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION STYLE GUIDE

<http://tinyurl.com/gpwrnhy>

TERRORISM, CRIME, AND PUBLIC POLICY

<http://tinyurl.com/znyavfb>

WORDS MAKE WORLDS: TERRORISM & LANGUAGE (RCMP)

http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2012/grc-rcmp/PS64-98-2007-eng.pdf

IMMIGRATION TERMS & RESOURCES



IMMIGRATION & ETHNICITY IN CANADA:

According to the 2011 National Household Survey,

- Canada has a foreign-born population of about 6,775,800 people. They represent 20.6% of the total population of Canada - the highest proportion among G8 countries.
- Nearly 6,264,800 people identify themselves a member of the visible minority population. This represents 19.1% of Canada's total population about 1 in every 5 people.
- People in Canada come from more than 200 different ethnic origins with 13 of those ethnic groups having surpassed the 1-million mark in population.

CITIZENSHIP:

State-recognized nationality and the duties, rights, responsibilities and privileges that come with it. To be a citizen of a country means that a person was either born in that country (in most cases) or has been granted citizenship by that country.

PERMANENT RESIDENT:

A person who has legally immigrated to Canada but is not yet a Canadian citizen. Previously known as 'landed immigrant'.

STUDY PERMIT:

A document issued by CIC that authorizes a foreign national to study at an educational institution in Canada for the duration of the program of study. It sets out conditions for the student such as whether their travel within Canada is restricted and when they have to leave.

TEMPORARY RESIDENT VISA (AKA VISITOR VISA):

An official counterfoil document issued by a visa office abroad that is placed in a person's passport to show that he or she has met the requirements for admission to Canada as a temporary resident (a visitor, student or worker). A counterfoil is a specially designed sticker on which missions abroad print visa information. Informally known as a visitor or tourist visa, the TRV may be issued for single or multiple entries to Canada. It is important to note that not every visitor needs a temporary resident visa to visit Canada. To find out which passport holders will need a visa [click here](#).

WORK PERMIT:

A document issued by CIC that authorizes a person to work legally in Canada. It sets out conditions for the worker such as the type of work they can do, the employer they can work for, where they can work, and how long they can work.

REFUGEE:

A person who is outside of their home country or country where they normally live and fears returning to that country because of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.

TEMPORARY RESIDENT:

A foreign national who is in Canada legally for a short period. Temporary residents include students, foreign workers and visitors, such as tourists.

SOURCE: Citizenship and Immigration Canada

REPORTING ON ETHNICITY: RULES & TIPS



CANADIAN PRESS STYLE GUIDELINES IN REGARDS TO RACE & ETHNICITY:

Canadian Press reporting should reflect the ethnic diversity of the country in a natural way, free of explicit or unconscious racism.

Identify a person by race, colour, national origin or immigration status only when it is truly pertinent. A full description, including, but not limited to colour, may be used if a person wanted by police is at large.

The appearance of racial minorities in news reports should not be confined to accounts of cultural events, racial tensions or crime. Comments on subjects that are a matter of public interest should come from a wide variety of people of different backgrounds.

Race and ethnicity are pertinent when it motivates an incident or when it helps explain the emotions of those in confrontation. Thus references to race or ethnic background are relevant in reports of racial controversy, immigration difficulties, language discussions and so on.

Race is pertinent in reporting an accomplishment unusual in a particular race. Ex. If a Canadian of Chinese origin is named to the Canadian Football Hall of Fame.

Beware of playing up inflammatory statements at the expense of the main story. Be certain that a spokesman indeed speaks for a community or organization, and

give a brief description of that organization, its aims and number of members.

Don't always turn to the same minority spokespeople and organizations for reaction. This can give unwarranted standing to groups that don't necessarily reflect the full range of views of their communities.

Arguing that humour was intended is no defense for a racial slur.

Use racially derogatory terms like "Paki" and "Nigger" only when part of a direct quotation and when essential to the story.

NAMES OF RACES:

1. Capitalize the proper names of nationalities, peoples, races and tribes. Ex. Aboriginal peoples, Arab, Caucasian, French-Canadian, Inuit, Jew, Latin, Negro, Asian, Cree.
2. Note that black and white do not name races and are therefore lowercase.
3. There is usually no need to use hyphenated descriptions such as Polish-Canadian or Jamaican-Canadian, given they may put an inappropriate emphasis on the person's ethnic back-ground. But these descriptions can be used if the individual prefers it and it is relevant.

SOURCE: The Canadian Press Stylebook 15th Edition

HOW TO CONDUCT CROSS-CULTURAL REPORTING:

The same principles of journalism apply, including striving to be accurate, fair, and contextual.

QUESTIONS JOURNALISTS SHOULD ASK THEMSELVES WHEN REPORTING ON DIVERSE COMMUNITIES:

- Am I reporting on all aspects of various communities, including both positive and negative?
- Am I aware of the power of perceptions that I create with my reporting and whether I am avoiding further imposition of stereotypes?
- Am I looking for and discovering different perspectives when doing interviews, regardless of the subject of the story?
- Are the “labels” that I am using to describe people appropriate and necessary?
- Am I aware of hidden agendas and divisions among members of an ethnic community and the danger of assuming that leaders of one faction speak for all?
- Did I consult with colleagues and editors when in doubt about the tone of the story?

TIPS FOR REPORTING ON ETHNIC COMMUNITIES:

- Avoid headlines and articles, which may overemphasize the effect of a problem or phenomenon in society. This can lead to distorted, even an inaccurate picture of what’s happening.
- The activities of individuals should not be connected to the entire ethnic group.
- If mentioning the ethnicity of a person or community interviewed, always ask the subjects for how and what terms they would like to be identified with. Ex. Does the person identify as Chinese, Asian-Canadian, or just Canadian?
- Do not associate ethnic communities with appalling events and trends in society. Make a distinction between acts of individuals and the general picture for the groups to which they belong.
- All terms, including derogatory and outdated terms, can technically be used when in direct quotes, however, the relevance of these terms should be essential to the story, otherwise they should be avoided and left out.

SOURCE: Diversity Reporting Handbook

ETHNO- CULTURAL TERMS (A-Z)



A

ABORIGINAL:

The most inclusive term (in general usage in Canada today) to refer to the descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. The Canadian Constitution recognizes three groups of Aboriginal people – First Nations (still referenced as ‘Indian’ in the Constitution), Métis and Inuit. These are three separate peoples (in the case of Indians, it is inclusive of several dozen or more peoples) with unique heritages, languages, cultural practices and spiritual beliefs. See “Indigenous”.

ACTION: Caution using this term as many don’t identify with it – best to ask for personal preference when interviewing. Caution with using the term “Aboriginal people” as you are referring to all the Aboriginal people in Canada collectively, without regard to their separate origins and identities. Better to use “Aboriginal peoples” – by adding the ‘s’ to people, you are emphasizing that there is a diversity of people within the group known as Aboriginal people.

AFRICA:

The world’s second largest continent, containing more than 50 nations with hundreds of distinct cultures and political parties.

ACTION: Avoid presenting Africa as a monolith –best to be as specific as possible when referencing geography. *SOURCE: News Watch*

AFRICAN AMERICAN:

Term describing U.S. permanent residents and citizens of African ancestry. Many people associate the term “African American” as a cultural community in the U.S. that developed from the slave trade. Some people prefer the term “black”. The terms “black” and “African American” are not synonymous. Some people from outside Africa (i.e. the Caribbean) may be considered black, but not African American. See “black”.

ACTION: Best to ask for personal preference when interviewing. In a story in which race is relevant and there is no stated preference for an individual or individuals, use black because it is an accurate description of race. *SOURCE: News Watch*

AFRICAN CANADIAN:

A broad and rarely-used term describing Canadian permanent residents and Canadian citizens of African ancestry. The term is not synonymous with African American since African American can be used to describe someone whose ancestors were part of the American slave trade.

ACTION: Caution. Use only in proper names or if interview subject identifies with the term. May require further explanation. For accuracy, it is recommended to use person’s specific ethnic origin.



AFRO AMERICAN:

Archaic term to describe a black person. Popular in 1960s and 70s, the name was overtaken by black and later African American in the 80s and 90s. See “black” and “African American”.

ACTION: Do not use unless in direct quotes. *SOURCE: NABJ*

AFROCENTRIC, AFROCENTRISM:

The study of Africa, its history and culture from a non-European perspective. The term Afrocentrism was first coined in 1976 by Molefi Kete Asante and can be defined as rediscovering African and African American achievement, restoring Africa’s rightful place in history, and establishing its importance on par with European history, culture and accomplishment. *SOURCE: NABJ*

AMERICAN INDIAN:

Archaic term used to distinguish First Nations from people from India.

ACTION: Do not use unless in direct quotes. When possible, use national affiliation such as Cree, Iroquois, Algonquin, etc., or use the term “Aboriginal”.

APARTHEID:

Racial segregation specifically, a policy of segregation and political and economic discrimination enforced by the white minority government against non-white residents in South Africa from 1948 to 1994. *SOURCE: NABJ*

ARAB:

Refers to a nation or people from an Arabic-speaking country. Not synonymous with Muslim. Note: Iran is not an Arab country. The majority of Iranian people are Persian and the language is Farsi.

ACTION: When referring to events in a specific country, name the country, rather than generalizing with the term “Arab”. Do not imply in headlines or text that Arab equals Muslim, holy war or terrorist. *SOURCE: News Watch*

ASIA:

The world’s largest and most populated content; about 60 percent of the world’s population lives in Asia (approaching 4 billion people according to a 2012 estimate).

ACTION: Caution. Best to be as specific as possible when referencing geography. *SOURCE: AAJA*

ASIAN:

In Canadian usage, the term “Asian” is generally used as shorthand for East Asians, or East and Southeast Asians (Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, etc.). British usage generally treats the term “Asian” as referring to South Asia (Indians, Pakistanis, Bangladeshis, etc).

ACTION: Caution. A term as broad as “European”. Better to be specific Chinese, Japanese, etc. *SOURCE: AAJA*

ASIAN CANADIAN:

A broad term describing Canadian permanent residents and Canadian citizens of Asian ancestry, which can include China, Japan, South Korea, India, Philippines, etc.

ACTION: Caution. Use only in proper names or if interview subject identifies with the term. May require further explanation. For accuracy, it is recommended to use person’s specific ethnic origin. *SOURCE: News Watch*

ASIAN INDIAN:

A term sometimes used to distinguish Indians from Aboriginal peoples.

ACTION: Do not use. Use “people from India”, “Indian Canadians” or “Indo-Canadians” when referring to Canadian permanent residents and Canadian citizens of Indian ancestry. *SOURCE: News Watch*

ASIATIC:

Means relating to or deriving from Asia. A vestige of European colonialism and imperialism. A 19th century adjective typically used in “scientific” European treatises assuming the superiority of the white race. Implies enemy race.



ACTION: Do not use. Use the term “Asian” instead, however use with caution since the term is broad. See “Asian”. *SOURCE: News Watch*

B

BALTIC STATES:

Comprised of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. They were once part of the USSR. Estonians speak a Finno-Ugric language and consider themselves Nordic while many Latvians and Lithuanians speak a Baltic language.

ACTION: Caution. Best to be as specific as possible when referencing geography. *SOURCE: Ukrainians and Russians in Court*

BANGLADESH:

Formerly the eastern section of Pakistan (once known as East Pakistan), Bangladesh became independent after a 1971 civil war. *SOURCE: AAJA*

BARRIO:

Spanish name for neighbourhood.

ACTION: Caution. The term could stereotype predominantly Latino neighborhoods (similar to the word ‘ghetto’), so whenever possible, use the name of the neighborhood to be more precise and specific. *SOURCE: Latino Identity*

BENGAL:

During partition, the Indian state of Bengal was divided into two: the mostly Hindu state of West Bengal, which became part of India, and the mostly Muslim country of East Pakistan, now known as Bangladesh. However, political borders are not necessarily cultural borders. Both Bangladeshis and West Bengalis speak the same language (Bengali or Bangla) and call themselves “Bengalis” or “Bangalis” (never Bangalees). Travelers need a passport to go from one to the other. *SOURCE: News Watch*

BENGALI NEW YEAR, POILA BOISAKH:

As in many regions of South Asia, the people of Bangladesh and the Indian state of West Bengal have their own traditional calendar. The Bengali new year, which takes place in the spring, is called Poila Boisakh (“Poila” is Bengali for “first” and “Boisakh” is the first month of the Bengali calendar). Poila Baisakh is a major celebration and national holiday in Bangladesh and is also celebrated in West Bengal. *SOURCE: SAJA*

BHANGRA:

Dance and music style originating in the Indian state of Punjab. Now often refers to a blend of western pop and traditional Punjabi music when performed in the West. *SOURCE: SAJA*

BHARAT:

The official Sanskrit name of India. *SOURCE: SAJA*

BHS, BCS:

Recently coined abbreviations used by the United Nations to indicate a language spoken by Serbs/Montenegrins, Croats, and Bosniaks. Note: these four nations essentially speak the same language; it is mainly due to politics that each nation has named the language as their own. Not to be confused with Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit (BHS). *SOURCE: S. Vidakovic with Edmonton Serbian Community*

BINDI:

The Hindi name for the decoration worn on the forehead by many women in South Asia. Though various explanations of its religious significance have been speculated, the bindi remains a decoration for most communities, no different from makeup or jewelry, and comes in different shapes and colors to match a woman’s wardrobe. Contrary to popular belief, the bindi does not necessarily indicate marital status.

ACTION: Bindi is the proper term for the decoration. Do not call the bindi a “dot”. The term “bindi dot” is redundant. *SOURCE: AAJA, SAJA*



BIRACIAL:

Generally accepted terms to describe a person who has mixed ancestry of two races. See “multiracial”.

ACTION: Best to ask for personal preference when interviewing. *SOURCE: Race Reporting Guide*

BLACK:

Term sometimes used to describe persons who are perceived to be dark-skinned compared to other given populations. The terms “black” and “African American” are not synonymous. Some people from outside Africa (i.e. the Caribbean) may be considered “black” but not “African American”.

ACTION: Best to ask for personal preference when interviewing. In a story in which race is relevant and there is no stated preference for an individual or individuals, use black because it is an accurate description of race. *SOURCE: News Watch, NABJ*

BLACK AFRICA:

Term sometimes used to denote the region of Africa to the south of the Sahara Desert.

ACTION: Do not use because it is incorrect; there are sizeable non-black populations in many of these countries such as South Africa and Zimbabwe. Use the term “Sub-Saharan Africa” instead, however use with caution since the term is broad. See “Sub-Saharan Africa”. *SOURCE: NABJ*

BOLLYWOOD:

A word referencing “Bollywood’s Hollywood”. A word coined by the Indian media to identify the movie industry in Mumbai. Has since evolved to evoke the flamboyant, song-and-dance filled Hindi movies that India is famous for.

ACTION: Caution. Bollywood does not refer to the entire Indian film industry. *SOURCE: SAJA*

BOMBAY:

The old English-language term for Mumbai - India’s

largest city and commercial center. Other Indian cities have also formally switched to the names in their native languages, including Kolkata, formerly Calcutta.

ACTION: Use the name Mumbai, however include reference to the name Bombay if needed to avoid confusion. *SOURCE: AAJA*

BORICUA:

Interchangeable with Puerto Rican. Some Puerto Ricans call themselves “Boricuas” as a means to show their cultural pride and reaffirm their indigenous heritage, in honor of the Taínos, who called the island “Borinquen”. Usage of “Boricua” has grown in its popularity in recent years.

ACTION: Best to ask for personal preference when interviewing. *SOURCE: News Watch*

BOSNIAK:

South Slavs of Muslim religion that live in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in smaller numbers in Serbia and Montenegro. *SOURCE: S. Vidakovic with Edmonton Serbian Community*

BOSNIAK LANGUAGE:

Recently coined term that refers to a dialect of Serbian language spoken by Bosniak people. See “BHS, BCS”. *SOURCE: S. Vidakovic with Edmonton Serbian Community*

BURMA:

See “Myanmar”.

C

CALYPSO:

African-Caribbean music combining syncopated phrasing and orchestration, which often includes guitars, maracas, brass and wind instruments, drums and steel drums (originally modified oil drums). The



lyrics are frequently improvised and usually address current events or social concerns. The musicians are known as calypsonians. *SOURCE: NABJ, P. Knox*

CAMPESINO:

Spanish term for an individual who comes from a rural area. Could also refer to a farmer or peasant. *SOURCE: P. Knox*

CANTONESE:

A dialect of spoken Chinese mainly spoken in and around Guangzhou (Canton), near the South China Sea. The dialect of many of the early Chinese immigrants to the United States and Canada. Also the principal dialect of Hong Kong.

ACTION: Caution. Cantonese is not spoken by all Chinese. See “Mandarin”. *SOURCE: AAJA*

CAO DAI:

Vietnamese religion. *SOURCE: News Watch*

CARIBBEAN:

Geographically, the Caribbean region includes the Caribbean Sea (but not the Gulf of Mexico) and the islands located in it or on its perimeter. These are:

- Sovereign Nations: Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Re-public, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & The Grenadines, Tri-nidad & Tobago.
- Overseas Territories of the United Kingdom: Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Montserrat.
- Overseas Departments of France: Martinique, Guadeloupe (including St. Martin and St. Barthélemy).
- Autonomous Regions of the Netherlands: Aruba, Netherlands Antilles (Bonaire, Curaçao, Saba, St. Eustatius, Sint Maarten).
- Territories under U .S. Rule: Virgin Islands (U.S. portion, an unincorporated territory), Puerto Rico (“commonwealth”).

- Other: Islands that form part of mainland nations, including Mexico, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Colombia and Venezuela. Note that the Bahamas (a sovereign nation) and the Turks and Caicos Islands (a UK overseas territory), although culturally Caribbean, are located in the Atlantic Ocean outside the Caribbean perimeter.

The Caribbean coastal regions of Central and South America share cultural affinities with the islands. African-descended populations, some of them English-speaking, live in eastern Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. *SOURCE: P. Knox*

CENTRAL AFRICA:

Statistical region of Africa that includes: Angola, Cameroon, Central African Re-public, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

CENTRAL AMERICA:

A statistical region of the Americas that includes: Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

CENTRAL ASIA:

A statistical region of Asia that includes: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

CHICANO/CHICANA:

A term that reflects Mexican Americans’ dual heritages and mixed culture, their presence for centuries in the United States, and their right to be equal U.S. citizens. Use “Chicano” in reference to males; “Chicana” in reference to females.

ACTION: Caution. Some Mexican Americans do not relate to the term, seeing it as a name that reflects militant activism. They say the term is outdated, while others find it offensive. Yet others prefer it, arguing that it reflects pride in both their Mexican and U.S. heritages. Best to ask personal preference when interviewing. *SOURCE: News Watch, P. Knox*



CHOLO:

Term refers to a Hispanic person with indigenous heritage, often with the pejorative connotation of backward or violent.

ACTION: Do not use. *SOURCE: P. Knox*

CHINESE NAMES:

Typically family name first (as in “Smith”), personal name second (as in “John”). Example: Mao Zedong, where Mao is the family name. Some Chinese Canadians adopt Western names in addition to traditional names.

ACTION: Best to ask for personal preference when interviewing. *SOURCE: AAJA*

CHING CHONG:

A pejorative term used to mock Chinese people and or Chinese languages.

ACTION: Do not use. *SOURCE: AAJA*

CLAN:

A term sometimes used to describe Roma families and or extended families.

ACTION: Do not use. Could be damaging due to its association with criminal activity, especially drug trafficking. “Extended family” or “family group” are appropriate terms for a traditional Roma family (composed of the nuclear family plus a wide range of relatives: cousins, brothers and sisters-in-law, sons and daughters-in-law). “Lineage” would be appropriate in some contexts (especially when referring to family ancestors and descendants). *SOURCE: Equal Treatment, the Media and Roma Community*

COLOURED:

An archaic term for describing black people in North America. However, in some African countries, coloured denotes those of mixed racial ancestry. The term is still in use in some communities in South Africa.

ACTION: Caution. Considered offensive by some. Do not use unless referring to proper names or historical references. The National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People (NAACP) is one example of its current use in North America. Use if interview subject identifies with the term. May require further explanation. *SOURCE: NABJ*

CONFUCIANISM:

Like Buddhism, Confucianism is not a religion in the Western sense of the word because there is no deity. It is built around the teachings of Confucius, whose work gained early respect in the West. Confucianism, much practiced in East Asia, is a way of and guide to living. It is an informal combination of practical philosophies, values, and folk beliefs. *SOURCE: AAJA*

COSSACKS:

A traditional community of people living primarily in Ukraine and southern Russian, settling frontier areas along the Don, Dnepr, and Volga rivers. They supported themselves by hunt-ing, fishing, and cattle raising. Later the Cossacks organized military formations for their own defense and as mercenaries. The latter groups were renowned as horsemen and were absorbed as special units in the Russian army. *SOURCE: Ukrainians and Russians in Court*

CROATS:

South Slavs of Catholic religion that live in Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Slovenia and in smaller numbers in northern part of Serbia and Montenegro. *SOURCE: S. Vidakovic with Edmonton Serbian Community*

CROATIAN LANGUAGE:

Language spoken by Croatian and Bosnian and Herzegovinian people. See “BHS, BCS”. *SOURCE: S. Vidakovic with Edmonton Serbian Community.*

CYRILLIC:

An alphabet based on Greek characters that was created in the ninth century for trans-lating Eastern Orthodox religious texts into Old Church Slavonic.



Named for Cyril, the leader of the first religious mission from Byzantium to the Slavic people, the alphabet is used in Russia, Belarus, Bulgaria, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia. The Central Asian republics, Moldova and Azerbaijan, used a modified Cyrillic alphabet in the Soviet period. *SOURCE: Russia: A Country Study*

CZAR:

A form of the Roman imperial title “Caesar.” Tsar was a title for a supreme ruler (similar to an emperor or king) used in Bulgaria, Russia and Serbia. The last tsar of Russia was Tsar Nicholas II. His abdication in 1917 ended 300 years of rule by House of Romanov.

ACTION: Also spelled Tzar, Zar, and Csar, however, Canadian spelling is Czar. *SOURCE: Ukrainians and Russians in Court*

D

DARK CONTINENT:

An archaic term used to describe Africa.

ACTION: Do not use. Considered offensive. *SOURCE: NABJ*

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO:

A country in Africa formerly called Zaire. It is sometimes called Congo-Kinshasa, after its capital, to distinguish it from the Republic of Congo, or Congo-Brazzaville. The name of the river is still Congo River, even though inhabitants of the former Zaire call it the Zaire.

ACTION: Always use the full name. Do not shorten to “Congo”. *SOURCE: NABJ*

DESI:

A colloquial name for people of South Asian ancestry, especially those of India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan. It is the Hindi word for “from my country.” *SOURCE: AAJA*

DEVANAGARI:

Script for writing Sanskrit, Hindi, Nepali, and some other South Asian languages. *SOURCE: SAJA*

DURAND LINE:

Line arbitrarily drawn by Sir Mortimer Durand, a British diplomat, in 1893, dividing the former British Indian territory from Afghanistan. Today the Durand Line marks the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, dividing one ethnic group, the Pashtuns, between the two states. *SOURCE: SAJA*

E

EAST AFRICA:

Statistical region of Africa that includes: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mayotte, Mozambique, Reunion, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

EAST ASIA:

Statistical region of Asia that includes: China, Hong Kong, Japan, Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea, Taiwan. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

EASTERN EUROPE:

Statistical region of Europe that includes: Belarus, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Ukraine. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

EAST INDIAN:

Outdated word for people who trace their origin to South or Southeast Asia used to distinguish from “West Indians”.

ACTION: Do not use. Use “South Asian” or “Southeast Asian” instead, however use with caution since the terms are broad. See “South Asia” and “Southeast



Asia”. *SOURCE: SAJA, News Watch*

ESKIMO:

Typically considered a derogatory term used by European explorers to describe Inuit peoples, however there is still some disagreement over whether it was pejorative.

ACTION: Caution. Use “Inuit” instead. See “Inuit”. *SOURCE: SABAR*

ETHNICITY:

A term usually meant to refer to a social group of people who share/derive from a common culture and other factors such as religion, language, ancestry, physical features, etc. However, it can also be subjective, and a social construction. It is a complex term.

F

FAR EAST:

Denotes Asia, as viewed from London.

ACTION: Do not use. Use “Asia”, “East Asia” or “Southeast Asia” depending on what specific region being referenced. See “Asia”, “East Asia” and “Southeast Asia”. *SOURCE: News Watch*

FILIPINO/FILIPINA:

Terms used to reference people from the Philippines. Use “Filipino” in reference to males from the Philippines; “Filipina” in reference to females from the Philippines. Some Filipinos, often younger, prefer “Pilipino” since Tagalog, the leading dialect of the Philippines, lacks an “F” sound. *SOURCE: News Watch*

FIRST NATIONS:

A term that came into common usage in the 1970s to replace the word “Indian”, which many people found offensive. Although the term “First Nations” is widely used, no legal definition of it exists. Some Aboriginal

peoples have also adopted the term “First Nations” to replace the word “band” in the name of their community. Not a synonym for “Aboriginal peoples” because it usually doesn’t include Inuit or Metis people.

ACTION: Caution using this term as many don’t identify with it – best to ask for personal preference when interviewing. *SOURCE: SABAR*

FU MANCHU:

Character created by mystery writer Sax Rohmer in 1913 and popularized in 1930s and 1940s films. Fu Manchu was an evil genius. Rohmer described him this way: “Imagine a person, tall, lean, and feline, high-shouldered, with a brow like Shakespeare and a face like Satan, a close-shaven skull, and long, magnetic eyes of the true cat-green.” He is also “the yellow peril incarnate in one man.” Later Asian and pseudo-Asian villains – like Flash Gordon’s nemesis, Emperor Ming the Merciless, and James Bond’s Dr. No – were variations of Fu Manchu.

ACTION: Do not use – offensive stereotype of East Asians. *SOURCE: AAJA*

G

GANDHI:

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948). Known as the Mahatma (“great soul”) and the father of modern India, M.K. Gandhi served as president of the Indian National Congress and helped lead a nonviolent movement for independence from Britain during the first half of the 20th century. He was assassinated in 1948 in a conspiracy by fanatical nationalists who accused him of betraying Hindus and favoring Muslims during the Partition of 1947. One of the most misspelled names in journalism – be sure not to place the H after the G. *SOURCE: AAJA, SAJA*

GLASNOST:

This Russian word means “transparency” or “openness”. After years of government censorship,





Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev sought to allow public access to information. This “openness” had a rippling effect, leading to the liberalization of the press, freedom of dissent, increased migration and immigration, and eventually led to the collapse of the Soviet system. *SOURCE: Ukrainians and Russians in Court*

GUAJIRO:

Cuban term for rural islanders. *SOURCE: News Watch*

GUJARATI:

Language spoken in Gujarat, a state in West India, and extensively by members of Indian diaspora. *SOURCE: News Watch*

GYPSY:

Sometimes used to refer to those of Roma descent/ethnicity.

ACTION: Do not use when referring to people belonging to the Roma ethnic group. Considered offensive by most. Use the ethnic name, “Romani” or “Roma”, instead. See “Roma”. *SOURCE: Council of Europe*

H

HAKUJIN:

Japanese for “white person”. Not necessarily derogatory. *SOURCE: News Watch*

HAPA:

Once considered derogatory, hapa comes from the Hawaiian phrase “hapa haole” meaning “half white, half foreigner”. It now describes anyone whose heritage is white plus another racial or ethnic group, but especially Asians and Pacific Islanders. The term is now considered by many to be one of positive self-identification. *SOURCE: AAJA*

HAVAIKI:

Legendary homeland of the Polynesians. *SOURCE: Tonga-Samoa Handbook*

HAWAIIAN:

Refers to a person who is of Polynesian descent/ethnicity.

ACTION: Caution. Unlike terms such as Californian, Hawaiian should not be used for everyone living in Hawaii. The distinction is not trivial. “Islander” is an alternative for those born in Hawaii who do not have Polynesian ancestry. *SOURCE: AAJA*

HEBREW STATE:

See “Jewish State”.

HINDI:

One of the two official languages of India, and one of 19 distinct languages spoken around the country.

ACTION: Do not confuse Hindi (the language) with Hindu (religious designation). *SOURCE: News Watch*

HINDUSTANI:

An unofficial language spoken in North India, a mixture of Urdu and Hindi. *SOURCE: News Watch*

HISPANIC:

Umbrella term referring to a person from the Spanish-speaking parts of Latin America or anyone who identifies themselves as a descendant of people from these areas.

ACTION: Caution. Some people prefer “Latino/Latina”. Others use the two terms interchangeably or prefer a term indicating their national origin, such as Colombian, Cuban, Mexican, etc. Best to ask personal preference when interviewing. *SOURCE: News Watch P. Knox*

HMONG:

An ethnic group in southern China, Vietnam, Laos



and Thailand. Approximately 50,000 Hmong came to America as refugees in the mid- 1970s, uprooted from their homeland largely as a result of a civil war in Laos. *SOURCE: News Watch*

HENNA:

See “Mehndi”.

HONG KONG:

Former British colony. Independent of Britain in 1997 and now one of China’s two special administrative regions (the other is Macau). Capitalist after many years of British rule, Hong Kong’s character was preserved by agreement with the British under China’s “One Country, Two Systems” policy. Continuing tension over what that policy means. *SOURCE: AAJA*



IBEROAMERICA:

Refers to former colonies of Spain and Portugal, which share the Iberian Peninsula in south-western Europe. Essentially, Iberoamerica is Latin America minus Haiti. See “Latin America”. *SOURCE: P. Knox*

INDIAN:

Refers to a person who is of Indian descent/ ethnicity.

ACTION: Use “Indian” or “person from India” to refer to a person with ancestral ties to India. Do not use “Indian” to refer to Aboriginal peoples of the United States or Canada – it is an outdated term used to collectively describe all the Aboriginal people in North America who are not Inuit or Métis. However, there are legal reasons for the continued use of the term “Indian” in Canada. Such terminology is recognized in the Indian Act and is used by the Government of Canada when making reference to this particular group of people. Use only when citing titles of books, works of art, etc; when discussing constitutional matters that involve the Indian Act; or in statistical information collected using the three categories. *SOURCE: SABAR*

INDIAN CANADIAN:

Canadian permanent residents and Canadian citizens of Indian ancestry. See “Indo-Canadian”.

ACTION: Best to ask for personal preference when interviewing.

INDIGENOUS:

Native to the area, peoples who have occupied a territory since time immemorial. The term has gained prominence as a term to describe Aboriginal peoples in an international context. Indigenous is considered by some to be the most inclusive term of all, since it identifies peoples in similar circumstances without respect to national boundaries or local conventions. However, for some it is a contentious term, since internationally, and in the United Nations context, it often defines groups primarily in relation to their colonizers. See “Aboriginal”.

ACTION: Caution using this term as many don’t identify with it – best to ask for personal preference when interviewing. *SOURCE: SABAR*

INDO:

A modifier used to denote something of Indian origin or with an India connection; similar to “Sino” for China. For example, “Indo-Canadian relations”. Also increasingly used to refer to the South Asian diaspora and not just India the country. *SOURCE: News Watch*

INDO-CANADIAN:

Canadian permanent residents and Canadian citizens of Indian ancestry. Also increasingly used to refer to the South Asian diaspora as a whole and not just India the country. See “Indian Canadian”.

ACTION: Best to ask for personal preference when interviewing.

INDO-CARIBBEAN:

Refers to more than two million people living in the Caribbean who are of South Asian ancestry. Most

are descended from indentured plantation labourers brought from India in the 19th century. The largest communities are in Trinidad & Tobago and Guyana, where they are politically powerful. *SOURCE: P. Knox*

INDO-CHINESE:

Refers to people from Vietnam, Cambodia, or Laos. The term is falling into less frequent use because of its colonial context. The peninsula comprising these countries was once called French Indochina”.

ACTION: Caution. Use “Southeast Asian” instead. See “Southeast Asia”. *SOURCE: News Watch*

INUIT:

Inuit are the Aboriginal people of Arctic Canada. This region is referred to by Inuit as “Inuit Nunangat”. It includes the Inuvialuit Region of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik (northern Quebec), Nunatsiavut (northern Labrador), and the ice, land, and water within these regions. The word “Inuit” means “the people” in the Inuit language and is used when Inuit are referring to themselves as a culture. Inuit is also the plural form of “Inuk”. *SOURCE: SABAR*

IRAN:

Iran is nearly 3000 years old. Known as Persia until 1935. Iran and Persia are used inter-changeably in cultural and other contexts. Following the overthrow of its monarchy, Iran became an Islamic republic in 1979. *SOURCE: AAJA*

ISRAELI:

Refers to people from Israel. Note, the term Israeli is not a synonym for “Jew”, as only three-quarters of Israelis are Jewish.

ACTION: Caution. Be specific when referring to specific groups of Israelis – Israeli Jew(s) or Jewish Israeli(s), Israeli Arabs, etc. *SOURCE: A Reporter’s Glossary of Loaded Language in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*

ISRAELI-ARABS:

This term is sometimes used to refer to members

of the Arab/Palestinian minority residing within the State of Israel and who hold Israeli citizenship. Media use several names for this population: “the Arabs of Israel”, “the Arab sector”, “the Arab minority”, “the Arab-Palestinian minority”, etc. Palestinian media refer to the population as “Internal Arabs” or “48 Arabs”, to remind readers of the displacement of Palestinians following the 1948 war, and to emphasise the fact that they are part of Arab and Palestinian society but living within the Israeli state. Israeli media, by contrast, prefer “Arabs of Israel”, because it allows the group to be regarded as Arabs and not Palestinians. Some prefer the alternative term Arab citizens of Israel, which recognises the group’s civil identity without highlighting a sense of separate national identity. There are Palestinians who prefer Palestinian citizens of Israel because a sense of Palestinian identity is dominant among Arabs in Israel, and this term reflects their civil and national identity.

ACTION: When possible, ask for personal preference when interviewing, or use the term that fits the context of the story. *SOURCE: A Reporter’s Glossary of Loaded Language in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*

J

JERUSALEM:

The ancient city of Jerusalem is laden with cultural and religious significance for Israelis and Palestinians, as for Jews, Muslims, and Christians. It is therefore at the heart of political conflict. Israel identifies Jerusalem as its capital, and it is home to all branches of government. Additionally, Israelis see the city as the heart of Israelis and the Jewish people worldwide. The United Nations and the Palestinians recognise West Jerusalem as an Israeli city but do not recognise Israeli control over East Jerusalem. Palestinians seek to make East Jerusalem the capital of their future state, and the place where their government will be based; although it is not recognised as such by the United Nations. *SOURCE: A Reporter’s Glossary of Loaded Language in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*



JEWISH STATE:

A term sometimes used to refer to the country Israel.

ACTION: Do not use. The term downplays the Arab/Palestinian history and culture that exists in the country. *SOURCE: A Reporter's Glossary of Loaded Language in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*

JIBARO:

Puerto Rican term for rural islanders. *SOURCE: News Watch*

JUDEA & SAMARIA:

Judea and Samaria are names used by the Israeli government and supporters to refer to the territory roughly corresponding to the area now usually referred to as the "West Bank", which was captured by Israel in 1967 and has been under Israeli control since then. Judea and Samaria are biblical references that confer a Jewish-Israeli ownership of the western flank of the Jordan River, which is offensive to the Palestinians who make up the majority of the population there.

ACTION: Caution. Use "West Bank" instead, as it is more neutral and therefore a preferable term. *SOURCE: A Reporter's Glossary of Loaded Language in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*

K

KEFFIYEH:

A checked garment some Arab men wear on their head to show identity and pride in their culture. It is a traditional, not religious, garment. *SOURCE: News Watch*

KASHMIR:

A disputed region at the northern tip of the Indian subcontinent claimed partly by India, Pakistan, and China. While Muslims form a majority in the region, Hindus form a sizeable portion of the population in the

south and Buddhists are predominantly in the north. The nations agreed to a ceasefire line that was poorly defined. *SOURCE: AAJA, SAJA*

KHMER:

Synonymous with "Cambodian". Alone, the Cambodian term refers to the language or the people. Khmer should not be confused with the Khmer Rouge, which refers to dictator Pol Pot's guerrilla forces. *SOURCE: News Watch*

KILLING FIELDS:

Massacre of civilians in Cambodia by the Communist Khmer Rouge in mid-1970s. Broadly, any site of mass killing. Coined by Dith Pran (1942-2008), a Cambodian refugee and later a photojournalist for the New York Times. *SOURCE: AAJA*

KREMLIN:

The central citadel in many medieval Russian towns, usually located at a strategic spot along a river. The term is predominantly associated with Moscow's Kremlin, the seat and symbol of the Russian government. *SOURCE: Russia: A Country Study*

KWANZAA:

Swahili for "first fruits of the harvest". Kwanzaa is an African American cultural holiday that occurs from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1 and is derived from traditional African harvest festivals. A candle is lit each day symbolizing Kwanzaa's seven principles: unity (umoja), self-determination (kujicha-gulia), collective work and responsibility (ujamaa), cooperative economics (ujima), purpose (nia), creativity (kuumba) and faith (imani). The candleholder is called a kinara. Political activist Maulana Karenga is credited with creating Kwanzaa in 1966. *SOURCE: NABJ*

L

LAO:

A separate ethnic entity, apart from the Khmu and Hmong. It is also a language. *SOURCE: News Watch*

LATIN AMERICA:

An umbrella geographical term often used to avoid having to deal with the complex cultural and political terminology of the southern Americas. The term denotes the countries in the Americas that are former possessions of Spain, Portugal or France – European colonizing nations whose Romance languages derive from Latin and some of whose institutions can be traced back to the Roman Empire. On this principle, Latin America includes ex-colonies of Spain (Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Bolivia, Paraguay, Argentina, Uruguay), Portugal (Brazil) and France (Haiti). Latin America also includes Puerto Rico, a former Spanish colony now under the control of the U.S.

ACTION: Caution. Do not assume that a person of Latin American origin is Spanish-speaking or of Spanish ancestry. Never write as if Latin America is an exclusively Spanish-speaking region, or about Latin Americans as a whole, since there are many exceptions, such as Brazil, where the official language is Portuguese. Also remember that millions of people in the region are indigenous, speaking a variety of languages and asserting distinctive cultural traditions. Millions more are of African or Asian descent and some of these maintain non-European cultural practices. Finally, it's worth noting that many residents of Canada and the United States were born in Latin America, speak Spanish or Portuguese as their first language, and maintain many of the customs of their country of birth. For these reasons some believe the term "Latin America" is imprecise and has colonialist and exclusionary overtones. Nevertheless, "Latin America" remains a widely understood and useful term, but, where possible, substitute more neutral geographical descriptors such as "the Americas" or a more specific geographical descriptor such as at the country name itself – Brazil, Peru, Mexico, etc. *SOURCE: P. Knox*

LATINO/LATINA:

See "Hispanic".

M

MACAU:

Once a Portuguese colony, it is one of China's two special administrative regions, the other being Hong Kong, a former British colony. Macau, like Hong Kong, is a port city and commercial center. Tourism and gambling dominate its economy. *SOURCE: AAJA*

MADRASI:

A term used by many North Indians to refer to all South Indians, who resent it. There are four South Indian states - Kerala, Tamil Nadu (former Madras state), Karnataka, and Andhra Pradesh. Each has its own language and culture. A Keralite, for example, is not a Madrasi. Even a "Ma-drasi" (Madras is the former name of Chennai, the capital of Tamil Nadu) may resent the word because it is used derogatorily by some people.

ACTION: Do not use. Considered offensive. *SOURCE: News Watch, SAJA*

MAHATMA:

Sanskrit term for "great soul". Became the honorific for M.K. Gandhi during India's struggle for independence. *SOURCE: SAJA*

MALAYALAM:

Language spoken in South India. *SOURCE: News Watch*

MANDARIN:

The official language of China and Taiwan. The term Mandarin refers to the spoken language. One speaks Mandarin but writes Chinese. While the Cantonese dialect was more prevalent in Canadian Chinese immigrant communities, Mandarin is increasingly

spoken nowadays. China has one written language using characters understood by anyone who is literate, but many spoken regional dialects such as Shanghainese and Fukienese, which are unintelligible to people from other regions. See “Cantonese”.
SOURCE: AAJA

MANONG/MANANG:

Manong is a term of respect that precedes the first name of older Filipino men; manang for older Filipina women. *SOURCE: AAJA*

MARATHI:

Language spoken in West India. *SOURCE: News Watch*

MEHNDI:

Refers to the traditional Indian and diaspora art of intricate hand and body decoration using dyes from the henna plant. Used mainly by brides during marriage ceremonies. It is now becoming popular as a decoration and temporary tattoo. In recent years, mehndi has gained attention in the West as a result of its use by some entertainers. Sometimes inaccurately referred to as “henna”, which is actually the name of the dye used to create mehndi. *SOURCE: News Watch*

MELANESIA:

The high island groups in the western Pacific Ocean. Includes: Fiji, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu. From the Greek word “melas” (black). *SOURCE: Tonga-Samoa Handbook, UN Stats*

MESTIZO:

Mestizo are people of both Spanish European and indigenous (indigenous peoples of the Americas) ancestry. Toltecs, Incas, and Aztecs are examples of indigenous peoples of the Americas. *SOURCE: News Watch, P. Knox*

METIS:

Métis are people of both First Nation and European ancestry. They have a unique culture that draws on their diverse ancestral origins, including Scottish, French, Ojibwe and Cree. Prior to Canada’s crystallization as a nation, Métis were the children of First Nation women and European men. While the initial offspring of these First Nation and European unions were individuals who possessed mixed ancestry, the gradual establishment of distinct Métis communities, outside of First Nation and European cultures and settlements, as well as the subsequent intermarriages between Métis women and Métis men, resulted in the genesis of a new Aboriginal people - the Métis. Métis people maintain their own distinct culture, language (Michif) and traditions. The Canadian Constitution recognizes Métis people as one of the three Aboriginal peoples. *SOURCE: SABAR*

MICRONESIA:

Chains of high and low islands mostly north of the Equator. Includes: Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Mariana Islands, Palau. From the Greek word “micro” (small). *SOURCE: Tonga-Samoa Handbook, UN Stats*

MISTIZO/MISITZA:

Filipino terms for someone of mixed Pacific Islander and European parentage. Use “mistizo” when referring to males; “mistiza” for females. *SOURCE: News Watch*

MIXED RACE:

See “multiracial” and “biracial”.

MOJADO:

See “wetback”.

MONTENEGRINS:

South Slavs of Eastern Orthodox religion that live in Montenegro, Serbia, Kosovo and in smaller numbers in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. *SOURCE: S. Vidakovic with Edmonton Serbian Community*



MULTIRACIAL:

Generally accepted term to describe a person who has mixed ancestry of two races or more races. *SOURCE: Race Reporting Guide*

MULATTO:

A person who has a white parent and a black parent.

ACTION: Do not use. Considered to be insensitive/offensive. Better to use “biracial”, “multiracial” or “mixed race”. Best to ask for personal preference when interviewing. See “biracial” and “multiracial”. *SOURCE: NABJ, Race Reporting Guide*

MYANMAR

A country in Southeast Asia. Independent in 1948 from Britain. Also known as Burma - the ruling junta changed Burma’s name to Myanmar in 1989. The country is known as Myanmar to the United Nations, but the US and Canadian government still use Burma to refer to the country.

ACTION: Use the name Myanmar, however include reference to the name Burma if needed to avoid confusion. Since the Canadian government uses Burma, it may be best to identify both names when referencing the country. *SOURCE: AAJA, R. Wiseman*

N

NATIVE:

A collective term referring to Indians (status and non-status), Métis, and Inuit. It continues to be supplanted by Aboriginal, which is seen as a more accurate term. It nonetheless appears in legitimate form as program and departmental names at universities and in academic journal titles.

ACTION: Caution using the term as many people don’t identify with it. Best to ask for personal preference when interviewing. Use “native-born” to describe someone who is born in Canada, but isn’t Aboriginal. *SOURCE: SABAR*

NAKBA:

The term used by Palestinians to refer to the displacement of Palestinians and the establishment of Israel. It commemorates the end of the 1948 Arab–Israeli War, which Israelis refer to as the War of Independence. It is the name for the most traumatic collective memory for Palestinians, and literally means “a catastrophe”. In the Palestinian consciousness, this date represents the displacement of Palestinians, their separation from their land, and the subsequent ban on their return to what they see as their homes and properties. *SOURCE: A Reporter’s Glossary of Loaded Language in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*

NEGRO:

An outdated term referring to black people. The word Negro was adopted from the Spanish and Portuguese and first recorded in the mid-16th century. It remained the standard term between the 17th-19th centuries. Since the Black Power movement of the 1960s, however, when black was favored as the term to express racial pride, Negro and related words such as Negress were dropped.

ACTION: Caution. Considered offensive by some. Do not use unless referring to proper names or historical references, for example, National Council of Negro Women or Negro National Anthem. Use “black” instead. See “black”. *SOURCE: NABJ*

NIP:

Short for Nipponese, or Japanese, a holdover from the racism of World War II.

ACTION: Do not use. Considered offensive. *SOURCE: AAJA*

NORTH AFRICA:

Statistical region of Africa that includes: Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia. Predominantly Arab or Berber in ethnicity or culture. *SOURCE: NABJ, UN Stats*



NORTH AMERICA:

A continent and statistical region that includes Canada and United States of America. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

NORTHERN EUROPE:

Statistical region of Europe that includes: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

O

ORIENTAL:

A term meaning a native or inhabitant of the Orient (East). A vestige of European imperialism, the term, at minimum, is vague. In art, it may include countries such as China and Japan, but exclude Turkey. In rugs, it may mean India and China and include Turkey. In food, it may mean China or Japan, but not India, Vietnam or the Philippines.

ACTION: Do not use. Better to be specific - Chinese, Japanese, etc. In a story in which there is no stated preference for an individual or individuals, use the term Asian instead - however use with caution since the term is broad. See "Asian". *SOURCE: AAJA*

P

PACIFIC ISLANDER:

A catch-all term for natives of the Pacific Islands or their descendants (Fijian, Guamanian, Hawaiian, Northern Mariana Islander, Palauan, Samoan, Tahitian, and Tongan).

ACTION: Caution. Better to be specific - Samoan, Fijian, etc. However, use if interview subject identifies with the term. May require further explanation. *SOURCE: The Critical Media Project, News Watch*

PALAGI:

A Samoan word used to describe Europeans or Caucasians. Sometimes also used to describe anything that does not belong to Samoa or Samoan culture. Not necessarily derogatory. *SOURCE: Tonga-Samoa Handbook*

PAKISTAN:

Urdu for "Land of the Pure". An officially Islamic nation created in 1947 from the partition of British India upon independence. Pakistan initially consisted of West Pakistan and East Pakistan. After a civil war in 1971, East Pakistan (partially supported by India) broke away and became the independent nation of Bangladesh. *SOURCE: SAJA*

PASHTO:

Language spoken in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan, previously known as the Northwest Frontier Province (from 1955 -2010). *SOURCE: News Watch*

PARSI:

An ethnic group in India (mainly Mumbai) and other parts of the diaspora who follow the religion of Zoroastrianism. Parsis are descendants of followers of the Persian prophet Zoroaster (628 BC-551 BC). Parsis immigrated to India (roughly in the year AD 900) to avoid religious persecution by conquering Muslim rulers. The community in India has dwindled to less than 100,000 people (mainly because of strictures against conversion to the religion), but has wielded considerable influence in Indian business and public life. Note: All Parsis are followers of the Zoroastrian religion, but not all Zoroastrians are Parsis - there are also Iranian and Central Asian Zoroastrian communities. *SOURCE: SAJA*

PASHTUN:

Ethnic group of approximately 18 million people who live primarily along the Durand Line, in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Although the Pashtun of Pakistan maintain semi-autonomy from Pakistan, they



continue to fight for an independent state that would unite the Pashtun on both sides of the Durand Line. *SOURCE: SAJA*

PEKING:

The old English-language term for Beijing.

ACTION: Use the name Beijing, however include reference to the name Peking if needed to avoid confusion. *SOURCE: AAJA*

PERESTROIKA:

The Russian term for the economic reforms introduced in 1985 by the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev. Its literal meaning is “restructuring”, referring to the reshaping of the Soviet economy. Now commonly used in English as a metaphor for liberalization. *SOURCE: Ukrainians and Russians in Court*

PINYIN:

The now-standard method of romanization, or rendering, Chinese words in the Latin alphabet. It simplified and eventually replaced other systems, which were more cumbersome and tended to be less accurate in representing sounds. Mao Zedong is the pinyin form of the name of the revolutionary leader, formerly written Mao Tse-tung. *SOURCE: P. Knox*

POLYNESIA:

Divided into Western Polynesia (Samoa and Tonga) and Eastern Polynesia (Cook Isl-ands, French Polynesia, Niue, Tuvalu). From the Greek word “poly” (many). *SOURCE: Tonga-Samoa Handbook, UN Stats*

PUNJAB:

Both a state in North India and a province in eastern Pakistan. At partition, the British split Punjab, dividing it between the two neighbors. The name Punjab means “five waters” or “five rivers” and signifies the land drained by the Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, and Sutlej rivers, which are tributaries of the Indus River. *SOURCE: SAJA*

PUNJABI:

The primary language of the Punjab region and one of the main regional languages in India. A person from the Punjab region is also referred to as a Punjabi. *SOURCE: News Watch*



QUINCEANERA:

A long-standing Christian custom in Latin American countries celebrating a girl’s 15th birthday. The event has the religious symbolism of a Jewish bat mitzvah, as well as the splendor of a debutante ball. The name is from two Spanish words: “quince,” 15, and “años,” years. *SOURCE: Latino Identity*

QUISQUEYA:

Arawak name for the island of Hispaniola shared by two sovereign nations – Dominican Republic and Haiti. Dominicans often refer to their homeland as Quisqueya and themselves as quisqueyas. *SOURCE: News Watch*



RACIAL SLURS:

A term designed to insult others on the basis of race, ethnicity, or nationality.

ACTION: Do not use.

RAJ:

Term used to describe the centuries of British rule of India (including what is now Pakistan and Bangladesh). *SOURCE: SAJA*

ROMA:

An ethnic group that originated in North India and



migrated to Europe around 1,000 years ago for reasons which are still uncertain. Traditionally thought of as nomadic people, although few still are today. *SOURCE: Council of Europe*

ROMANI CHIB:

An Indo-European language spoken and understood by many European Roma, although there are numerous variants. Similar to Sanskrit and relatively close to present day Hindi. *SOURCE: Council of Europe*

S

SANSKRIT:

Indo-Aryan language in which many ancient Indian texts are written. The name is based on the Sanskrit word “samskrta”, which means “purified” or “perfect”. Not all Indian languages are derived from Sanskrit. *SOURCE: SAJA*

SANTERIA:

Santería is a religion that originated among the Yoruba people of Africa and was introduced to Cuba during the slave trade of the 1500’s. The worship customs of the enslaved African Yorubas fusing with the Spanish colonial Catholicism of Cuba led to the birth of Santería. The African religion underwent severe transformations in Cuba in order to survive. Santería has images of saints similar to Catholicism and is prevalent in other Caribbean islands. It is still practiced today by people from all walks of life. Other religions of African origin practiced in Latin America include vodou (Haiti), macumba (Brazil) and candomblé (Brazil). This amalgamation of two religious traditions is called “syncretism”. *SOURCE: Latino Identity, P. Knox, R. Wiseman*

SARI:

A South Asian female garment. Sometimes spelled “saree”. *SOURCE: AAJA*

SERBS:

South Slavs of Eastern Orthodox religion that live in Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Macedonia, Kosovo, and, in smaller numbers, Slovenia. *SOURCE: S. Vidakovic with Edmonton Serbian Community*

SERBIAN LANGUAGE:

Language spoken by Serbian, Montenegrin, Bosnian and Herzegovinian people. See “BHS, BCS”. *SOURCE: S. Vidakovic with Edmonton Serbian Community*

SERF:

In feudal societies, a serf was bound to land owned by a lord. Lords gave permission to serfs to stay on the land, and serfs paid the lord in crops, labor and sometimes coin. Unlike slaves, serfs were not property that could be sold but remained on the land if it was sold. *SOURCE: Ukrainians and Russians in Court*

SHINTOISM:

An indigenous Japanese religion that has elements of Taoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism. There is no clear-cut set of rituals or beliefs. The word Shinto means “the way of kami”, or the divine. It has a polytheistic root centered on shrines that preceded Confucianism’s arrival in Japan in the fifth century. When Buddhism was introduced in Japan in the sixth century, it influenced Shinto. *SOURCE: AAJA*

SINDHI:

The language spoken in Sindh, a province in what is now Pakistan. It is also spoken in India and the diaspora by immigrants from Sindh. A person from Sindh is known as a Sindhi. *SOURCE: News Watch*

SINHALESE:

Members of the ethnic majority of Sri Lanka. Also the name of the language spoken by the Sinhalese. *SOURCE: SAJA*



SINO:

A modifier used to denote something of Chinese origin or with a Chinese connection; similar to “Indo” for India. Eg. “Sino-Canadian relations”. *SOURCE: SAJA*

SISTA:

Terms used to refer to a family member or an affectionate, respectful name for a church member, sorority member or another black woman.

ACTION: Caution. Be mindful of appropriateness in news copy. *SOURCE: NABJ*

SLAV:

A person of Eastern European descent that speaks a Slavonic language. Slavs are customarily divided into three linguistic groups: East Slavs (Russians, Ukrainians, and Belarusians), West Slavs (Czechs, Poles, and Slovaks), and South Slavs (Bosniaks, Bulgarians, Croats, Macedonians, Montenegrins, Serbs and Slovenians). *SOURCE: Ukrainians and Russians in Court*

SLAVA:

An annual celebration of a Family Patron Saint practiced by Serbs, Montenegrins, and some Macedonians. *SOURCE: S. Vidakovic with Edmonton Serbian Community*

SOUL FOOD:

Items popular originally in the southern part of the United States of America and traditionally eaten by black people. The cuisine originated during slavery when slaves were given leftovers or undesirable cuts of meat by their owners, which was supplemented by vegetables the slaves grew themselves. Today, the dishes include collard greens, fried chicken, ham hocks, black-eyed peas, yams and cornbread. *SOURCE: NABJ*

SOUTH AMERICA:

A continent and statistical region that includes: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

SOUTH AFRICA:

Statistical region of Africa that includes: Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

SOUTH ASIA:

Statistical region of Asia that includes: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Sri Lanka. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

SOUTHEAST ASIA:

Statistical region of Asia that includes: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Laos, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, East Timor. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

SOUTHERN CROSS:

Confederate battle flag used during the American Civil War, which remains offensive to some black Americans because it represents the Confederacy and the era of slavery. The flag has a red background, with two blue stripes in a cross, and 13 white stars inside the stripes. Some have described the Southern Cross as a proud symbol of Southern heritage. The Ku Klux Klan and other racist hate groups have also appropriated it. According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, more than 500 extremist groups use the Southern Cross as one of their symbols. *SOURCE: NABJ*

SOUTHERN EUROPE:

Statistical region of Europe that includes: Albania, Andorra, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Macedonia, Malta, Montenegro, Portugal, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA:

Region south of the Sahara Desert and used to describe those countries not part of North Africa, the region north of the Sahara. Sub-Saharan Africa is predominantly black in ethnicity or culture and is one of the poorest regions in the world – with few exceptions, such as Mauritius and South Africa. The



exact dividing line between the two regions is not clear. However, according to one classification, Sub-Saharan Africa includes 48 countries - 42 of which are on the African mainland and six island nations (Madagascar, Comoros, Mauritius and Seychelles, Sao Tome and Principe, and Cabo Verde).

ACTION: Caution. Best to be as specific as possible when referencing geography. *SOURCE: NABJ*

SWADESHI:

Economic nationalism, or a policy promoting India-made goods as a means to economic self-reliance. Originated during India's struggle for independence from Britain. *SOURCE: AAJA*



TAGALOG:

The official language of the Philippines, but also one of scores of local and regional dialects; there are eight major dialects and 84 other dialects. *SOURCE: AAJA, News Watch*

TAIWAN:

After the 1949 Communist victory in China, the Nationalist government and two million followers fled to Taiwan, an island off the southeast coast, and reconstituted the Republic of China with headquarters in the island's capital, Taipei. Taiwan has prospered economically but is recognized as a sovereign nation by only a handful of countries and has no permanent representation at the United Nations. The Beijing government considers Taiwan a province of China. Many present-day residents of Taiwan are from rural Fujian province across the strait from Taiwan.

ACTION: Caution when using the term Taiwanese to describe a resident of Taiwan as this term is often associated with the indigenous population partially displaced by the retreating Nationalists. *SOURCE: AAJA, P. Knox*

TAMIL:

The name of an ethnicity and language. Anyone whose mother tongue is Tamil is considered Tamil ethnically. The Tamil language is most prominently spoken in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu and parts of Sri Lanka. Because of the large population of Tamil-speaking immigrants and their descendants, Tamil is an official language in Singapore and a major language in Malaysia and Mauritius. *SOURCE: News Watch*

TAOISM, DAOISM:

Pronounced "dow," Chinese for "the way". It is a philosophy and guide to life that, much like Confucianism, has shaped China for more than two millennia. Also implies skill, harmony and the true nature of reality. In many ways Taoism is more metaphysical than Confucianism but, like Confucianism, Taoism involves no organized worship of a deity. Attributed to Lao Tzu, a contemporary of Confucius, in the sixth century. His "Tao-te Ching" ("The Book of the Way") is a central text. *SOURCE: AAJA*

TELUGU:

Indian language primarily spoken in South India. *SOURCE: News Watch*

THAILAND:

Known as Siam until 1939. Thailand is one of the few countries in the region never to have been colonized by a European power. The first Thais believed to have come to the U.S. were Chang and Eng Bunker, born joined at the hip and with fused livers. A circus attraction, they were known as "The Siamese Twins". *SOURCE: AAJA*

THIRD WORLD:

Used during the Cold War to denote countries supposedly non-aligned with either the West or the Soviet bloc. Now meaningless because the global political system has become multi-polar, allegiances continue to shift, and the economic and demographic characteristics of these countries vary widely. Sometimes used when



referring to countries with a relatively low annual per-capita income or predominantly subsistence economy.

ACTION: Do not use. The term has negative connotations and pejorative tone. Use “developing countries”, “developing nations”, or “developing world” instead, however use with caution since the terms lack precision and retain an element of elitism. Where possible, use more specific or descriptive terms when referencing geography. *SOURCE: NABJ, AAJA, P.Knox*

TIBET:

An autonomous region of China since 1965 and is the home of an important branch of Buddhism dating back more than 2,000 years. Long known as the “Roof of the World” because it is home to the Himalayan mountain range and Mount Everest. Tibet’s spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, lives in exile in India. Tibetan exiles have set themselves on fire in protest against Chinese rule. *SOURCE: AAJA, SAJA*

TURBAN:

A head covering in desert or other hot climates that does not necessarily have ethnic or religious significance and is not solely Arab. However, the turban has religious significance for Sikhs. Observant Sikh men and some women wrap their long uncut hair (an article of faith) in a turban. *SOURCE: AAJA, Religion Stylebook*

U

UIGHUR:

An ethnic group in China that speaks languages of the Turkic family (which includes Kazakh, Turkish, and Uzbek). They generally practice Sunni Islam. They are newsworthy because of increasingly violent clashes with China’s central government. *SOURCE: AAJA*

URDU:

One of the official languages of Pakistan, but also spoken in many parts of India and Afghanistan. Also the language used in ballads known as ghazals. Urdu is written in a Perso Arabic alphabet. Persian uses an adapted Arabic script which is further adapted to accommodate Urdu. *SOURCE: AAJA*

W

WEST AFRICA:

Statistical region of Africa that includes: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cote d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Saint Helena, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

WEST ASIA:

Statistical region of Asia that includes: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Ku-wait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, Yemen. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

WESTERN EUROPE:

Statistical region of Europe that includes: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, Switzerland. *SOURCE: UN Stats*

WEST INDIES:

An archaic name for the Greater and Lesser Antilles plus the Lucayan Archipelago (Bahamas and Turks & Caicos). In the colonial era this term was used to distinguish these mostly Caribbean islands from the East Indies (present-day Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, etc.). It has been replaced by Caribbean in most usage but survives in some fields, such as cricket (the West Indies team includes players from several islands) and higher education (the University of the West Indies has campuses in Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados, as well as distance-education programs).



ACTION: Caution. Do not use unless referring to proper names or historical events. May require further explanation. *SOURCE: P. Knox*

WETBACK:

Derogatory term referring to individuals of Mexican descent and is derived from the crossing of the Río Bravo/Río Grande into the United States.

ACTION: Do not use. *SOURCE: News Watch*

Y

YIN/YANG:

A symbol from Chinese philosophies such as Taoism and Confucianism representing two forces continually interacting in humans and in the universe; balance between the two is ideal. Yin is the darker, female, passive force; yang is the lighter, male, active force. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

Z

ZAPATISTAS:

Indigenous group in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas warring with the Mexican federal government over land ownership and indigenous rights. The indigenous people say their ancestors were the original landowners in Chiapas and thus they are reclaiming their land. They call themselves Zapatistas in honor of Mexican revolutionary Emiliano Zapata, who called for federal land reform laws during the 1910 Mexican revolution. Subcomandante Marcos, while not indigenous himself, is a Zapatista leader. *SOURCE: News Watch*

RELIGION IN CANADA



Over two-thirds of Canadians reported having religious affiliations in the 2011 National Household Survey. The majority of Canadians belong to the following six faiths. (See Figure 1)

The largest faith in Canada is by far Christianity, with Roman Catholicism representing the majority of Christians (38.7% of Canada).

Immigration has contributed to a higher share of the population having affiliation with Islamic, Hindu, Sikh or Buddhist religions. Of the immigrants who came prior to 1971, 2.9 percent were affiliated with Islamic, Hindu, Sikh, or Buddhist religions, whereas 33 percent of immigrants who came between 2001 and 2011 reported affiliation to one of these religions.

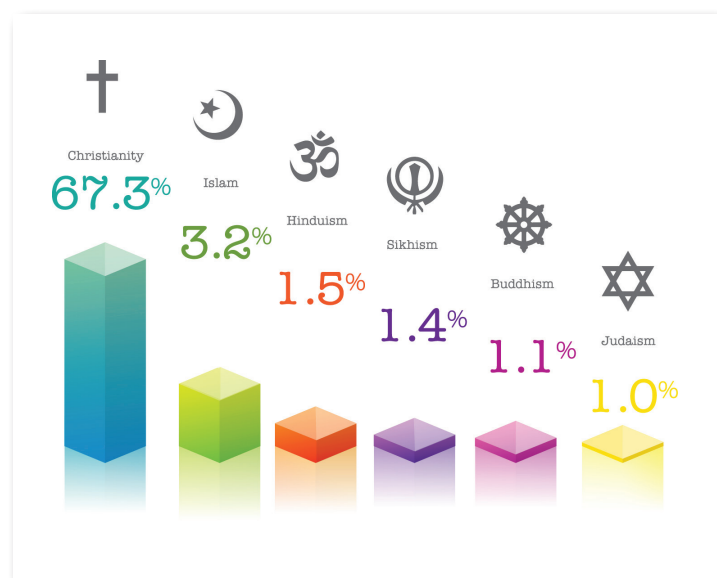


Figure 1 - 2011 National Household Survey.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, 2011

INTRODUCTION TO MAJOR RELIGIONS IN CANADA



Introduction to Christianity



Christianity is based on the life and teachings of Jesus as described in the New Testament. Believers, called “Christians”, consider Jesus the Son of God and believe his crucifixion served as atonement for all human sins, while his resurrection assures believers of life after death.

The original Christians were Jews who believed that Jesus was the Messiah promised in the Hebrew Bible. However, other Jews disagreed and eventually Christianity became distinct from Judaism as the Apostle Paul and others spread the faith to gentiles (non-Jewish people).

Christianity split into two major branches (denominations), Roman Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, after the Great Schism of 1054, which was largely over issues of papal authority.

Catholicism grew out of the notion that an unbroken line of apostolic succession dating back to Jesus’ original disciples (in particular, the apostle Peter) grants legitimacy to the church’s bishops and priests, as well as authority to the pope.

Eastern Orthodoxy, on the other hand, does not recognize papal authority over their governance.

In 1517, Martin Luther, a German Augustinian monk, wrote his “Ninety-Five Theses” (a criticism of certain beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church which Luther saw as corrupt) catalyzing a Europe-wide revolt against the church known as the Protestant Reformation.

The Protestant Reformation rejected the idea that the Catholic Church could define Christian practice. It regarded the Bible as the source and standard of Christian doctrine and called into question the authority claimed by the pope and the tradition of the church as the only sources of theological authority and orthodoxy.

The ultimate result of the Reformation was a schism, leading to a separation between the church and reformers. This was the beginning of the third major denomination of Christianity, known as Protestant Christianity, which has since split into many new denominations under the Protestant branch.

SOURCE: Religion Stylebook, Reporting on Catholicism, Reporting on Orthodox Christianity, Reporting on Protestant Christianity.

Introduction to Islam



The word “Islam” is derived from the Arabic word for peace, and the word “Muslim” is usually translated as “to submit”. However, “[Islam’s] technical meaning is the monotheistic believer’s humble submission to God/Allah; this is synonymous with embracing, bowing, agreeing, and accepting unreservedly and with deep love the lordship of the omnipotent yet compassionate divinity” (Karim, 157).

Muslims believe in one God (monotheistic), translated as Allah in Arabic (the term Allah is used by both Arab Christians and Muslims). Muslims believe that God’s messenger, the Prophet Muhammad, revealed Islam to the world in the form of the Holy Book, the Quran. There is no central religious authority for Islam, so theological and legal interpretations can vary from region to region, country to country, and even mosque to mosque.

After Prophet Muhammad’s death, Islam split into two distinct branches — Sunni and Shia — in an argument

over who would succeed him. Today, Sunnis make up an estimated 85 percent of all Muslims. Shias are the majority in Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and Bahrain, while Sunnis are the majority in other Islamic countries. In Sunni and Shia Islam, there are various madhhabs, or schools of thought, and other theological traditions.

Although they are often mistakenly conflated, not all Muslims are Arabs (anyone with Arabic as a native language), nor are all Arabs Muslims. Arab Muslims make up only 15 percent of the world’s total Muslim population. Of the world’s 220 million Arabs, about 10 percent are non-Muslims. Throughout the world, Muslims learn Arabic so they can read and understand the Quran and perform ritual prayers in Arabic.

SOURCE: AAJA, K. Karim (see references), Religion Stylebook, Reporting on Islam, SAJA, R. Wiseman.

Introduction to Hinduism



Hinduism is the oldest surviving major religion and without a founder, few specifics are known about its origin. Its oldest scriptures are the Vedas and there is no formal clergy - instead they have spiritual teachers also known as gurus.

Hinduism has many deities, which all are manifestations of one god. Most Hindus believe in one God, who is all-pervasive, though he or she may be worshipped in different forms, in different ways and by different names. The primary trio (the “Trimurti”), which plays a prominent role in the religion, is made up of Brahma (“the creator”), Vishnu (“the preserver”) and Shiva (“the destroyer”). Hindus celebrate God’s various attributes through these different representations. As such, Hinduism can be described as monotheistic and henotheistic: monotheistic in its belief in one God and henotheistic in that any one God can be worshipped without denying the existence of other forms or manifestations of God.

Hindus believe that all living beings (humans and animals alike) have souls, and some are revered as manifestations of God. A basic belief in Hinduism is that the soul does not die but is reborn into another life form when the body dies. Under Hinduism’s rule of karma, every act and thought affects how the soul will be reborn. This cycle of birth and rebirth continues until the soul achieves spiritual perfection and is united with the Supreme Being.

Most followers of Hinduism live in India, but there are large populations in many other countries, especially in Southeast Asia. There are four major Hindu sects:

VAISHNAVISM: Sees Vishnu, or one of his reincarnations, as the Supreme God. Approximately 80 percent of Hindus are Vaishnavites. Vaishnavism is distinguished by its consideration of God as a personal being. It identifies six qualities of God: all knowledge, all power, supreme majesty, supreme strength, unlimited energy and total self-sufficiency.

SHAIVISM: Sees Shiva as the Supreme God. It is regarded as the oldest Hindu denomination. Shaivism is predominant throughout India, with particular influence in Southern India and Sri Lanka. Shaivism is a very mystical denomination. Shiva is considered to transcend physical form and is seen as symbolizing the entire universe. Shaivism emphasizes self-realization and attaining “moshka” (liberation).

SHAKTISM: Sees the goddess Devi as the Supreme Deity. Devi is represented as Shiva’s consort, so Shiva embodies the male principle and Devi embodies the female – therefore Shaktism is seen by many as being complementary to Shaivism. The Tantras, which were written as Shaktism was developed between the fourth and seventh centuries, are the only holy Hindu texts in which Devi takes the role of the Supreme, and as a result, they are particularly influential in Shaktism. Shaktism looks at the Supreme Goddess as the source of life and controller of nature.

SMARTISM: Smartism is the branch of Hinduism that worships five deities, Vishnu, Shiva, Surya, Ganesha, and Devi. Any deity may be worshipped in Smartism. Smartas comprise the smallest of the four Hindu sects. In Smartism, all of the deities are regarded as equals, though individuals are allowed to give preference to one particular deity according to their personal beliefs. Smartism is linked to the ideology of Shankara.

SOURCE: News Watch, Religion Stylebook, Reporting on Hinduism, SAJA

Introduction to Buddhism



Buddhism is not a religion but rather a philosophy. For most Westerners, religion implies a deity or deities and a community of worship. Buddhism, for the most part, lacks a deity.

Buddhism began with Siddhartha Gautama, a prince believed to have been born in what is now Nepal in the sixth century BCE. Gautama's teachings are the foundation of Buddhism and he is venerated by all Buddhists. Even though Gautama did not claim to be divine, some sects may worship him as a divinity. Gautama is known as the Buddha, but sometimes distinguished as the Supreme Buddha, since the term "Buddha" – which means "awakened one" – is used by some Buddhists to describe any who have attained enlightenment or "satori".

Buddhists main method to attain satori is meditation, and their goal is "nirvana" – a final beatitude and release from desire and attachment to self. When Buddhists meditate, it is not the same as prayer.

Like Western religions, Buddhism has many schools of thought arising from the Buddha's teachings. There are two major variants, Mahayana and Theravada, also known as the "Greater" and "Lesser" Vehicles, and each Asian culture has distinct variations of these. Major schools of Buddhist thought:

THERAVADA: The oldest form of Buddhism (the lesser vehicle) emphasizes meditation and the goal of enlightenment – particularly directed to monastic life. Those who attain enlightenment are equal to the Buddha, who is not regarded as a god. It is the predominate school of Buddhism in Southeast Asian countries such as Myanmar, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Laos and Thailand.

MAHAYANA: The second-oldest form of Buddhism (the greater vehicle) emphasizes compassion and the belief that all beings have the potential to become a Buddha. It is the predominant school in China, Japan, Korea and Vietnam.

TIBETAN OR VAJRAYANA: Based on Mahayana teachings and is led by the Dalai Lama. Emphasizes reincarnation.

ZEN: A combination of Mahayana Buddhism and Taoism. Zen teaches that everyone is a Buddha, and each person can discover that through Zen practice (meditation and contemplation). It has roots in China, moved into Korea and Japan and became popular in the West.

SOURCE: AAJA, *Religion Stylebook, Reporting on Buddhism*

Introduction to Sikhism



Sikhism is a monotheistic religion founded by Guru Nanak, c. 1500 AD, as a reform offshoot of Hinduism (it has some elements of Hinduism and Islam).

Turning against the caste system, Nanak, the first Sikh teacher, taught that all religions lead to One Formless God and that all people, including women and the poor, are equal. Nanak believed all may realize liberation here and now through living an honest life of love and service.

Nine gurus succeeded Guru Nanak, and in 1699, the 10th teacher, Guru Gobind Singh, formed Sikhs into the Khalsa: a spiritual sister- and brother-hood where men share the last name Singh (“lion”) and women share the name Kaur (“daughter of kings”). They were also given five articles of faith – “The Five Kakaars”. The 11th, and lasting Sikh teacher, is the Guru Granth Sahib (the Sikh holy book), also known as the Adi Granth.

The term “Sikh” is derived from the Sanskrit for “he wishes to learn”. The religion is known among its followers as “Gurmat”, or “the way of the Guru”. Sikhism has no clergy, but spiritual guides may be called gurus. Majority of Sikhs live in the Indian state of Punjab, but they also make up a highly visible portion of South Asians in the diaspora.

SOURCE: AAJA, News Watch, Religion Stylebook

Introduction to Judaism



Judaism is the religion of the Jewish people and its beliefs and history are a major foundation for other Abrahamic religions, including Christianity and Islam.

Judaism traces a covenant between the Jewish people and God that began with Abraham and continued through Jacob, Moses, David and others to today's modern Jews. Jews believe that the Messiah will one day establish a divine kingdom on earth, opening an era of peace and bliss. They believe that God called their ancestor, Abraham, to be the father of their nation, which works toward the goal of establishing this kingdom.

Traditional Jewish belief holds that each person is created equally in God's image and is responsible for his/her actions and choices.

There are three major branches of Judaism:

REFORM JUDAISM: Developed in the United States, Reform Jews believe that Judaism must respond and change with the times. They believe that the spirit of Jewish law can be adapted to time and place, so they tend to emphasize social justice issues more than dietary laws, Sabbath rules, and other particulars of traditional Jewish life. They are the largest branch in North America and the smallest in Israel.

ORTHODOX JUDAISM: The oldest form of the religion. Orthodox Jews practice strict adherence to traditional Jewish laws, including the rules that prohibit work on the Sabbath and kosher dietary laws that prohibit such things as eating pork products or shellfish and eating meat and dairy products together. They are the smallest branch in North America and the largest in Israel. Within Orthodoxy there are the sub-branches Haredi and Modern Orthodox. Modern Orthodox followers attempt to adapt – up to a point – to the demands of contemporary society, whereas Haredi followers (also known as Hasidim) are much more strict and do not often integrate into modern, mainstream society – they would prefer to live in separate Hasidic communities.

CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM: Conservative Jews follow a middle path between Reform and Orthodox Judaism – it is a blend of the traditional practice with the progressive, centered on the idea that Jewish law – Halakhah – is binding, but must evolve with the times. Congregations and individuals vary in terms of how observant they are of dietary laws, and though some do not, many drive to synagogue on the Sabbath.

REPORTING ON RELIGION: RULES & TIPS



TIPS FOR REPORTING ON RELIGION:

1. Respect the role of religion in people's lives.
2. Do not treat the interviewee who has a certain religious affiliation as a representative of all people from that religion.
3. Be aware of the religious stereotypes that may exist and be careful not to repeat stereotypes about people with different religious affiliation.
4. If religion is relevant to the story, make sure to be mindful of different sects, branches, schools of thought, etc., that exist within each religion. Make sure to have the interview subject explain his or her beliefs in detail.
5. Describe various beliefs well and correctly, even if you personally disagree with them.

RELIGIOUS TERMS

(FIVE MAJOR RELIGIONS
IN CANADA)



AGNOSTIC:

Someone who is unsure whether there is a God or who believes it is unknowable whether God exists. Do not confuse with atheist. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

APATHEIST:

A person who thinks the question of God's existence is irrelevant and unimportant. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ATHEIST:

A person who does not believe in God or other supernatural forces. Some people make a distinction between "weak atheism" (the idea that evidence doesn't support a belief in God) and "strong atheism" (being convinced that God does not exist). *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

DHARMA:

The mode of conduct for an individual that is most conducive to spiritual advancement. Dharma includes universal human values as well as values that are specific to persons in various stages of life. In Hinduism, dharma also refers to individual obligations in terms of law and social law. In Buddhism, dharma is the teachings of Buddha from which an adherent molds his conduct on the path toward enlightenment. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

DOGMA:

In religions such as Christianity and Islam, dogmas are considered core principles that must be adhered to by followers. In Roman Catholicism, it is a truth proclaimed by the church as being divinely revealed. Dogma must be based in scripture or tradition. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ENLIGHTENMENT:

The goal of life in both Buddhism and Hinduism. For Buddhists, it is realization of the truth about reality, achieved by following a system of practices (which may especially include meditation), in accordance with the particular school to which an adherent belongs. For Hindus, it is union with God and self-realization. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

GOD:

A supreme being or spirit.

ACTION: Capitalize in reference to all monotheistic religions. Many consider God to be beyond gender, so be sensitive to the context of the story and avoid gender-defining pronouns when appropriate. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

GOLDEN RULE:

Variations on this precept, which can be succinctly stated as "treat others as you wish to be treated,"



are found in the texts of major religions, including Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

KARMA:

In Buddhism and Hinduism, the universal law of cause and effect; the effect of a person's actions in one's next lifetime.

ACTION: Lowercase in all references, unless at the beginning of a sentence. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MANTRA:

A syllable, word, or phrase with spiritual power, that is chanted or held in the mind in connection with meditation or ritual. Mantras are commonly used by Hindus, Buddhists, and Jains and are traditionally drawn from Sanskrit scriptures, such as "The Vedas". Some of the more powerful mantras consist of a single syllable, the most popular of which is "om". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MONOTHEISM:

A religion devoted to the worship of a single god. Judaism, Christianity, and Islam are known as the world's three major monotheistic religions. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ORDINATION:

The process of authorizing a person to perform ministry in an official capacity for a specific religious organization, usually Christian or Jewish. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PAGAN:

Generally, a person who does not acknowledge the God of Judaism, Christianity, or Islam and who is a worshipper of a polytheistic religion. Many pagans follow an Earth-based or nature religion.

ACTION: Caution. May be considered offensive. Better to be specific when referring to specific beliefs. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PATRIARCH:

In the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches, a patriarch is the highest-ranking bishop. In the Roman Catholic Church, the patriarch is the bishop of Rome and is called the pope. Unlike the pope, who has jurisdiction over all Roman Catholic territories, the authority of Eastern and Oriental patriarchs is more limited. They have a great deal of enforceable jurisdiction in their own territories but no authority over each other's.

ACTION: Capitalize if used before a name. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

REINCARNATION:

The belief that a person's soul is reborn in another body after physical death. It is common in many Asian traditions — including Buddhism, Sikhism, and Hinduism — as well as some Aboriginal traditions. According to Hinduism and Buddhism, incarnation in the next life is determined by one's previous actions. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SATAN:

In the Hebrew Bible (Judaism), Satan is depicted as an angel used by God to test man. In the New Testament (Christianity), Satan is a fallen angel who is the ultimate evil and enemy of God and man. In Islam, Satan was the head jinn or until he angered God by refusing to accept man's superiority.

ACTION: Uppercase in all references, but always lowercase "devil". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SWASTIKA:

One of the most popular symbols for Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists. The word "swastika" is derived from Sanskrit words that mean "auspicious", "luck" and "well-being". In Hinduism the swastika is a sign of the Sun-God Surya and his generosity as well as one of the 108 symbols of Lord Vishnu, representing the sun's rays, without which there would be no life. The swastika is used in religious and civil ceremonies in India, both public and private. The swastika used by the Nazis was a perverted version of the ancient Hindu swastika. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*



Systemic Faithism:

Systemic faithism refers to the ways that cultural and societal norms, systems, structures and institutions directly or indirectly, consciously or unwittingly, promote, sustain or entrench differential (dis)advantage for individuals and groups based on their faith (understood broadly to include religious and non-religious belief systems). Systemic faithism can adversely affect both religious and non-religious persons, depending on the context. Source: Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC)

Christianity

CHRISTIANITY:

A.D.: Abbreviation of the Latin phrase “anno Domini”, translated as “the year of the Lord”. Traditionally, it is used to date years after the birth of Jesus. Scholars and textbooks are increasingly using the abbreviations B.C.E. for “before the common era” and C.E. for “common era” to avoid using terms defined by their relation to Christianity. SOURCE: *Religion Stylebook*

ABSOLUTION:

In Catholicism, a priest grants absolution to a confessed sinner as part of the sacrament of penance. The concept of absolution also exists in Lutheranism, Anglicanism, and Eastern Orthodox denominations. SOURCE: *Religion Stylebook*

ADVENT:

In Western Christianity, it is the season before Christmas and opens the liturgical year. Advent anticipates Jesus Christ’s birth as well as his “Second Coming”. The Eastern Orthodox Church does not observe Advent – instead there is a period of fasting 40 days before Christmas. SOURCE: *Religion Stylebook*

ALL SAINTS’ DAY:

All Saints’ Day honors those in heaven, specifically

those who have not been canonized and have no special feast day. SOURCE: *Religion Stylebook*

ANNUL, ANNULMENT:

A divorced person who wishes to remarry in the Catholic Church can apply to a church court for an annulment or “declaration of nullity”. This means that the sacramental bond of matrimony never existed in the earlier marriage because at least one of the parties was unwilling or unable to make and keep a promise of permanent, faithful, self-sacrificial marriage in which he or she modeled the love of Christ toward a spouse. A declaration that the sacrament did not exist does not mean that a loving marriage relationship never existed, and it does not make children illegitimate in the eyes of the church or civil law. SOURCE: *Religion Stylebook*

ANTICHRIST:

The apocalyptic literature of the Bible predicts that an Antichrist will rise up to challenge Christ in the end times. Some Christians believe the Antichrist is alive, others believe the Antichrist has yet to appear, and still others believe the Antichrist is a spiritual force that is always present in the world.

ACTION: Capitalize when referring to an adversary of Jesus Christ or a false Christ who embodies evil. The adjective anti-Christ refers more generally to being opposed to Christ and his message. SOURCE: *Religion Stylebook*

APOCALYPSE:

A final, cosmic battle between forces of good and evil that encompasses the Earth. For religious believers, the Apocalypse ushers in the reign of God and results in the righteous being raised to everlasting life. Apocalyptic beliefs are most closely associated with Christians who read the Bible literally and with fringe religious movements. Other Christians are more likely to read “Revelation” (the book that speaks of the Apocalypse) as an allegory. SOURCE: *Religion Stylebook*

APOSTLES:

The most common Christian reference is to Jesus’



twelve disciples after he commissioned them to go and preach the gospel to the world. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ASH WEDNESDAY:

In Western Christianity, the seventh Wednesday before Easter marks the beginning of the Lenten season. The name is taken from a practice of putting ashes on the foreheads of penitent believers as a reminder of their physical return to dust (“ashes to ashes”). The practice is common among Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Episcopalians, and many Lutherans. It is also becoming more popular among other Protestant churches. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

B.C.:

Abbreviation for “before Christ” or the Christian era. Scholars and textbooks are increasingly using the abbreviations B.C.E. for “before the common era” and C.E. for “common era” to avoid using terms defined by their relation to Christianity. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

BAPTISM:

A Christian sacrament or ceremony marked by ritual use of water and admitting the recipient to the Christian community. Christians practice three forms of baptism: immersion (where the believer is totally submerged in water), sprinkling (where the believer is sprayed with water), and affusion (where the believer has water poured on his head). There may be variations within a tradition. Different Christian bodies have very different ideas about what baptism accomplishes in the person who receives it. Some see it as a symbolic way of publicly proclaiming faith in Christ; others see it as necessary for salvation. They vary on whether it is required for membership. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

BIBLE:

In Christianity, the Bible is a collection of writings compiled through centuries and authorized by various church councils, rather than a single book. The name “Old Testament” is a Christian designation for the “Hebrew Bible”.

ACTION: Capitalize the term “bible” when referring to the Old Testament or the New Testament. The term “Hebrew Bible” may be used in articles dealing solely with Judaism. See “Old Testament”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

CANONIZATION:

The process in the Roman Catholic Church by which an individual is declared a saint. When a cause for canonization (as the process is known) is opened, the candidate is formally known as a “Servant of God”. Three major steps follow: a declaration of heroic virtues, beatification and canonization. Canonization is a solemn affirmation by the church to the faithful that a particular person is in heaven and that that person’s life and virtues are especially worthy of emulation and veneration. Canonization is also practiced by the Eastern Orthodox Church. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

CHRISTMAS:

Western Christians celebrate Christmas, which marks the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem, on Dec. 25. Many Orthodox Christians, using the Julian calendar, celebrate Christmas on Jan. 7. Armenian Christians celebrate Christmas on Jan. 6, except in Jerusalem, where it is celebrated on Jan. 19.

ACTION: Do not abbreviate Christmas to “X-Mas” or any other form when speaking of the religious holiday. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

COMMUNION:

Most frequently refers to the commemoration of the meal that, according to the New Testament, was instituted by Jesus on the night before his crucifixion. Other terms include “Holy Communion” and “Eucharist”. Belief and practice vary widely. Catholics and Orthodox Christians uniformly see communion as the central rite of Christian worship, and it is celebrated at least in every Sunday service. Some Protestants also celebrate at least weekly; others do so every other week, monthly, quarterly or less frequently. Catholics and the Orthodox, as well as some Anglicans, believe that the consecrated bread and wine themselves become the body and blood of Christ. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*



CONFESSION:

An integral part of historic Christian practice. Confession can mean either to admit one's sins or to profess the Christian faith. In the Roman Catholic Church, individual confession is part of the sacrament of penance and reconciliation, in which a baptized person admits his or her sins to a priest, who can then absolve the person in the name of Christ through the power conferred through ordination. Absolution is granted if the individual displays genuine remorse and a commitment not to repeat the sin. A penitential act may be attached to the absolution, such as an exhortation to pray or do good works. In Eastern Orthodoxy, individuals confess their sin to God before an icon and a priest; however, the priest does not act as an intermediary to God. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

CONSUBSTANTIATION:

The doctrine that Jesus becomes spiritually present in the bread and wine when it is blessed by an ordained minister during communion. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

CREATIONISM:

In the United States, creationism usually refers to the belief that the Bible's account of creation is literally true and accurate. That generally means Genesis 1-2:4a, where God creates the Earth and all its life forms in six consecutive 24-hour days less than 10,000 years ago. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

CROSS:

A universal sign of Christianity associated with Jesus Christ's crucifixion by the Romans. Making the sign of the cross with the hands is a ritual of Christian devotion for Roman Catholics, Eastern Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Lutherans, Anglicans, and some Methodists and Presbyterians. A cross is different from a crucifix, which has an image of the crucified Jesus. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

DENOMINATION:

A subgroup within a religion that operates under a

common name, tradition, and identity. The term can be applied to any Christian body, though some traditions object strongly to its use. For example, the Catholic and Orthodox churches object to its underlying philosophical assumption that they are just various brand names for a single Christian tradition. Baptists (especially Independent Baptists), the Churches of Christ and some strongly congregational groups strenuously object to the notion that they are in any way an organized bureaucracy – instead they like to think of themselves as “fellowships”.

ACTION: Caution. The term “Christian bodies” may be substituted for “denomination” to avoid any potential controversy. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

DIVINE LITURGY:

Term for the communion service in Eastern Christianity. It consists of three parts: the Liturgy of Preparation; the Liturgy for the Catechumens, and the Liturgy of the Faithful. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

EASTER:

A major Christian holy day that marks Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead three days after his crucifixion. Western Christian churches and Eastern Christian churches usually celebrate Easter on different dates, sometimes as much as five weeks apart. Both observe Easter on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the March equinox. However, the Western churches use the Gregorian calendar, whereas the Orthodox Church and many Eastern Catholic churches use the Julian calendar. They also use different definitions of a full moon and an equinox. The two Easters are observed on the same day about a quarter of the time (around every four years). Orthodox Christians refer to Easter as “Pascha”, derived from the Hebrew word for Passover. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

EASTERN CHRISTIANITY:

Consists of the Eastern Orthodox Church, Oriental Orthodox Churches, the Assyrian Church of the East, and Eastern Catholic Churches.



EASTERN ORTHODOX:

A major branch of Christianity that does not recognize the authority of the pope in Rome, but, like the Roman Catholic Church, has roots in the earliest days of Christianity. The East Orthodox Church split from the Roman Catholic Church in the Great Schism of 1054, primarily over papal authority and whether the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father (as the Orthodox believe) or from the Father and Son (as the Catholics believe). Included in the Eastern Orthodox churches are the Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, as well as other, smaller churches based on the nationalities of various ethnic groups such as Armenians, Ukrainians, Bulgarians, Romanians, and Syrians. The churches have their own traditions on matters such as married clergy; for example, a married man may be ordained, but a priest may not marry after ordination. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

EUCCHARIST:

See “communion”.

EVANGELICALISM:

Within Protestant Christianity, there are two major groupings: Mainline Protestants and Evangelical Protestants. The English word “evangelical” is a transliteration of the Greek “evangelion” (the “good news” or the “gospel”). In the early 20th century, more theologically conservative Christians broke away from the Protestant mainline traditions (Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian) over a theological dispute (known as the “Modernist Controversy”) and were determined to return to the fundamentals of the Christian faith. They became known as “Fundamentalists” and generally separated themselves from what they saw as sinful culture. By the late 1930s however, Evangelicals, who wanted to return to a more conservative interpretation of Christian theology, while still engaging with wider society, emerged as a distinct group from the Fundamentalists. They believed in faith having a role in the public square and worked cooperatively with other Christian traditions whereas Fundamentalists were separationists. Today, American Evangelicals are known more for their support of conservative politics. In Canada, however, Evangelicals span the political spectrum and make up approximately

10-12 percent of the Canadian population. *SOURCE: R. Wiseman, Religion Stylebook*

GOOD FRIDAY:

In Christianity, Good Friday commemorates the day on which Jesus Christ is traditionally believed to have been crucified. It falls just before Easter Sunday, on which Christians celebrate his resurrection. Part of the Christian Holy Week. See “Holy Week”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

GOSPEL:

The word derives from the Old English word “Godspell”, or “good news”. This refers to the “good news” that Jesus Christ came as the Messiah, was crucified for the sins of humanity, died, and then rose from the grave to triumph over death. Of the many gospels written in antiquity, four came to be accepted as part of the New Testament – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These four are often called the “four canonical gospels”.

ACTION: Capitalize when referring to each or all of the first four books of the New Testament. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

GRACE:

In Christianity, “grace” is the unmerited love and favor of God toward mankind, however different traditions sometimes use the word differently, which can lead to confusion. Evangelicals tend to equate grace with salvation. Catholics often use the plural, “graces”, to refer to any gift that they believe God has endowed the church with – including saints, bishops, the pope and the sacrament of penance. Thus, when Catholics say that other Christian traditions are lacking in grace, they do not mean that they are outside salvation. Grace also refers to a prayer of thanks before a meal. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HOLY SEE:

A term used to refer to the pope and the Roman Catholic Church’s administrative offices. It refers to an entity that is distinct from the city-state of the Vatican, although the two terms are often used interchangeably. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*



HOLY SPIRIT:

The third entity of the Christian Trinity of God, Son and Holy Spirit. Christians believe the Holy Spirit leads people to belief in Jesus and dwells in each Christian. The Holy Spirit is depicted in Christian art as an ascending dove bathed in light or as a flame.

ACTION: The term “Holy Spirit” replaced the term “Holy Ghost” in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. “Holy Spirit” is now the preferred term. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HOLY WEEK:

In Christianity, the week that begins with Palm Sunday and concludes with Easter Sunday. Palm Sunday commemorates Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and Easter Sunday commemorates his rising from the dead. Also includes Holy Thursday, which commemorates the Last Supper (Jesus’ final meal with his disciples), and Good Friday, the day of Christ’s crucifixion. See “Easter”, “Good Friday”, “Palm Sunday”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

JESUS CHRIST:

Christians believe that the person Jesus of Nazareth is the prophesied Messiah and the Son of God incarnate. Jesus is one with God and the Holy Spirit in the Christian Trinity, and is worshipped as God and as the way to salvation. The New Testament gives Jesus the title “Christ”, which is Greek for “Messiah” or “anointed one”. Jesus’ life, crucifixion, and resurrection are recorded in the gospels of the New Testament. His birth is celebrated on Christmas Day, his death is commemorated on Good Friday, and his resurrection is celebrated on Easter Sunday. Muslims revere Jesus as a prophet, but they do not believe that Jesus was crucified or resurrected. They believe he was drawn up alive into heaven.

ACTION: Because “Christ” is a theological term, refer to “Christ” or “Jesus Christ” in quotations or in the context of stories about Christians. Otherwise, refer to as “Jesus”. Personal pronouns referring to him are lowercase. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

LAST SUPPER:

In Christianity, the Last Supper was the final meal Jesus shared with his disciples before his death. The meal is discussed in all four canonical gospels of the New Testament. Christians believe it took place on a Thursday night (Holy Thursday), before Jesus was crucified on Friday (Good Friday). *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

LENT:

The period of penance and fasting preceding Easter. Lenten observances are most common in the liturgical traditions, such as Roman Catholicism, Orthodoxy, and Anglicanism. The observance of Lent developed through the centuries and sometimes varied in its focus and length. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

LITURGY:

A pattern for worship on a regular basis. Liturgy differs between Western Christians and Eastern Christians. Churches that tend to vary their services each week, such as most Baptist, Pentecostal, and independent churches, are often called “non-liturgical”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

LORD’S PRAYER:

The New Testament describes Jesus teaching his followers this prayer, the most commonly recited in Christianity. It is found in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MARY MAGDALENE:

One of Jesus’ female disciples, although she was not counted among the Twelve Apostles. All four canonical gospels make her the first witness to the resurrection – alone or with others. For that reason early Christian writers gave her the title “Apostle to the Apostles”. Due to the frequency of the name “Mary” in the New Testament, for many centuries Catholic tradition attributed stories about other Marys and some unnamed women – including a repentant sinner and the woman caught in adultery – to Mary Magdalene. The result was that she was erroneously



depicted as a repentant adulteress and later, based on early Protestant preaching, as a reformed prostitute. The Catholic Church officially corrected this depiction of Mary Magdalene in 1968, when her feast day on the church calendar was separated from that of the other Marys, and the readings were changed from those about a sinful woman to her witnessing of the resurrection. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS:

According to the New Testament, Mary was a virgin when she miraculously conceived Jesus through the Holy Spirit. She then married Joseph. Catholic and Orthodox Christians believe that she remained a perpetual virgin and that biblical references to Jesus' brothers and sisters mean either Joseph's children by an earlier marriage or cousins. Most Protestants believe that Mary and Joseph had children together. Catholic, Orthodox and some Protestant Christians give her the title "Mother of God". Catholics alone believe that Mary's parents conceived her without transmitting original sin to her – a dogma known as the "Immaculate Conception". The Immaculate Conception is often confused with the "Virgin Birth", which refers to the birth of Jesus by the Virgin Mary. The veneration of Mary, along with the entire tradition of devotion to saints, was historically one of the principal divides between Catholics and most Protestants. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MASS:

A term used by Catholics and some Anglicans for a worship service that includes the celebration of Holy Communion. The term cannot be used for services that do not include communion.

ACTION: Capitalize when referring to the celebration of worship in the Catholic Church. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

NEW TESTAMENT:

The part of the Christian Bible written after the death of Jesus Christ. There are 27 books in the New Testament, including the four canonical gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, as well as the letters of the Apostles

and early church leaders. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

OLD TESTAMENT:

Also known as the "Hebrew Scriptures" or "Hebrew Bible", the Old Testament makes up the first part of the Christian Bible. It is divided into categories of law, history, poetry and prophecy. All of the books were written before the birth of Jesus. The canonical books used differ among Jews, Protestants, Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians, although there is much overlap.

ACTION: Caution. Jews do not use the term "Old Testament" and many consider it disrespectful – believing the name implies that the "Hebrew Bible" is "old" and unnecessary compared with the Christian scriptures. Therefore, use "Hebrew Bible" in stories solely involving Judaism. "Old Testament" is capitalized in all references. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ORTHODOX CHURCH:

Any of the several Eastern Christian churches that are rooted in the Middle East or Eastern Europe but do not give allegiance to the Roman Catholic pope. The term "Orthodox" was adopted by the Eastern Christians to signify its adherence to the original apostolic traditions, teachings, and style of worship. The Orthodox communion service is called the Divine Liturgy and worship is very sensual, involving incense, chants, and the veneration of icons. The Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches were united until 1054, when the Great Schism occurred, mainly as a result of disputes over papal authority. The pope in Rome claimed supremacy over the four Eastern patriarchs, while the Eastern patriarchs claimed equality with the pope. Although the split was officially made in 1054, divisions began more than two centuries earlier. Today the spiritual head of Orthodoxy is the ecumenical patriarch of Constantinople, who has no governing authority over the other patriarchs but is called "first among equals". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PALM SUNDAY:

The beginning of the Christian Holy Week before Easter. Palm Sunday marks Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. The

day gets its name from the biblical reference to crowds throwing palm fronds before Jesus as he entered the city. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PARISH:

Originally this referred to a geographic territory whose residents were all to go to the one church within that territory. That is still essentially how it functions within Roman Catholicism. A member of a parish is called a “parishioner”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PASCHA:

The term used by Orthodox churches and some other Christians for Easter. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PENTATEUCH:

The Greek term for the first five books in the Old Testament. The Hebrew word for the same books is “Torah”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PENTECOST:

A Christian feast held on the seventh Sunday after Easter that marks the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the followers of Jesus Christ. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PONTIFF:

An alternative name for “pope”.

ACTION: Do not use as a formal title. Do not capitalize unless at the beginning of a sentence. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

POPE:

Most commonly refers to the head of the Roman Catholic Church.

ACTION: Capitalize only when used as a formal title before a name. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PROTESTANT:

In the 16th century, church thinkers and leaders such as Martin Luther and John Calvin demanded changes in Roman Catholic Church doctrine and practice. That led to the development of denominations made up of the protesters or “Protestants” who declared themselves independent of papal authority. Many Protestants say the word means to “testify forth”, as in to preach the word of God. Protestant churches include Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Quaker churches. The label “Protestant” is not applied to Christian Scientists, Jehovah’s Witnesses, or Mormons. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

REVELATION:

In monotheistic religions, revelation is the process through which God reveals or communicates truths about God’s self or will.

ACTION: Uppercase when referring to the final book of the New Testament, the Book of Revelation. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ROMAN CATHOLIC:

The largest Christian community in the world. The Roman Catholic Church considers itself to be the one, true, and full expression of the church founded by Jesus Christ. The word “catholic” means “universal”. The Catholic Church considers Eastern Orthodoxy a true church with which it has few significant doctrinal differences — the authority of the pope being one of them. On the other hand, the Catholic Church characterizes much of Protestantism as not comprising true churches but rather “ecclesial communities”. The Roman Catholic Church was known simply as the Catholic Church until the Protestant Reformation, when the authority of the pope became a source of contention. Catholics began to use the Roman appellation to reinforce their unity under the pope, and the primacy of the papacy has become one of the distinguishing marks of modern Catholicism. Catholic belief and practice are ordered around seven sacraments — communion, baptism, confirmation, penance (confession), matrimony, holy



orders (ordination) and the sacrament of the sick. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ROSARY:

A form of repetitive prayer and meditation used by Roman Catholics. The beads of the rosary are separated into five decades, with each decade representing a mystery or event in the life of Jesus Christ. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SABBATH:

The day of the week observed for rest and worship. Most Christian traditions observe the Sabbath on Sunday. The Jewish people, along with some Christians, observe the Sabbath on Saturday. Jews' observance of the Sabbath begins at sundown Friday.

ACTION: Capitalize in religious references but lowercase when talking about periods of rest. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SAINT:

A saint is anyone who is judged to have lived a holy life, to be in heaven, and to be a model Christian worthy of public veneration. Canonization is the process in the Catholic Church by which a deceased person is officially recognized as having joined the "communion of saints" in heaven and therefore able to intercede with God in a special way for people on earth. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

TRANSUBSTANTIATION:

The doctrine that the bread and wine are physically transformed into the body and blood of Christ when consecrated in communion. The Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox churches believe in transubstantiation. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

TRINITY:

This key doctrine in Christianity says that God, the Son, and the Holy Spirit together make up the one Godhead. The exact nature and definition of the Trinity were central in the split between the Eastern and Western Christian churches. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

VATICAN, VATICAN CITY:

The pope and his administrative clergy live in this 108-acre city-state that is the temporal headquarters of the Roman Catholic Church. Vatican City is an independent state in the center of Rome. St. Peter's Basilica sits above the tomb where the remains of St. Peter, who Catholic tradition regards as the first pope and bishop of Rome, are believed to rest. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

WESTERN CHRISTIANITY:

Consists of the Roman Catholic Church, the Latin Catholic Church, and a variety of Protestant denominations.

Islam

ABAYAH:

See "Chador".

ADHAN:

The Islamic call to prayer. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

AHL AL-KITAB:

Used in the Quran to refer to Jews and Christians; Arabic for "People of the Book". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

AL-ISRA WAL MIRAJ:

The name of Muhammad's journey from Mecca to Jerusalem, where it is believed he ascended to heaven to speak with God. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ALLAH:

Arabic word for "God". Allah is also used by Arabic-speaking Christians and Jews in prayer or speech about God. Some Muslims say they generally say or write "God" instead of "Allah" when addressing a non-Muslim to avoid any suggestion that the two are not the same.



ACTION: Always use “Allah” when quoting a person or text that uses the term “Allah”. *SOURCE: Facts About Islam, Religion Stylebook*

ALLAHU AKBAR:

In Arabic it means “God is great” or “God is the greatest”. Muslims say it several times a day, such as during the call for prayer, during prayer, when they are happy and when they wish to express their approval of what they hear. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

AQIQAH:

A birth or welcoming ceremony into Islam. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

BURQA:

A form of covering for women who are Muslims, most frequently found in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is an all-enveloping outer garment with a net-covered opening for the eyes or face to allow the woman to see. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

CALIPH:

Successor or representative of the Prophet Muhammad and the political leader of the Islamic community. A dispute over who should succeed Muhammad after his death prompted the Sunni-Shia split that continues today. According to Sunnis, who make up the vast majority of Muslims, the first four caliphs were Abu Bakr As-Siddiq, Omar ibn Al-Khattab, Othman ibn ‘Affan, and ‘Ali ibn Abi Talib. These four are known collectively as the “Rightly Guided Caliphs”. Shias believe that Muhammad’s relatives should have succeeded him. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

CALIPHATE:

The lands of the Islamic state ruled by the caliph. In 1517, the Ottomans claimed the caliphate and held it until 1923, when the secular nation of Turkey was created. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

CHADOR:

Full-cloak, robe-like garment worn by some Arab

women to practice “hijab” – Islamic modesty. Also known as an “abayah” or a “jibab”. *SOURCE: News Watch, Religion Stylebook*

DA’WAH:

Inviting others to Islam. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

DHIKR:

The remembrance of God, especially by chanting the names of God. Some sects do so to induce alternative states of consciousness. Sometimes spelled “zikr”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

EID AL-ADHA:

Islamic holiday. The last day of the “hajj” – the pilgrimage to Mecca. Eid al-Adha shifts dates every year because Muslims use a lunar calendar that only includes about 354 days. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

EID AL-FITR:

Islamic holiday. The day marking the end of “Ramadan” – the month of fasting. For Muslims, this holiday is as important as Christmas to Christians. Eid al-Fitr shifts dates every year because Muslims use a lunar calendar that only includes about 354 days. Eid al-Fitr commences with the sighting of the new moon, signifying the end of the month of Ramadan. *SOURCE: News Watch, SAJA, Religion Stylebook*

FATWA:

A ruling, or legal opinion, on Islamic law issued by an Islamic scholar. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

FIVE PILLARS OF ISLAM:

The fundamental aspects of Islam that direct the private lives of Muslims in their dealings with God. All branches of Islam accept these pillars. The first pillar is the “shahada”; the profession of faith that there is no god other than Allah and that Muhammad is his prophet. The second pillar is “salat”; the five daily or canonical prayers (performed at prescribed times with a prescribed ritual) for remaining constant in the faith.





The third pillar is “zakat”; charitable giving. The fourth pillar is fasting during the holy month of Ramadan. The fifth pillar is “hajj”; the pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca, which every Muslim who is able (physically and financially) is required to make once in their lifetime. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HADITH:

Refers to the teachings, sayings, and actions of Muhammad that were collected by his devoted companions. Hadith are viewed by Muslims as explanations of the Quran and are second only to Islam’s holy book in terms of guidance and as a source of “Shariah” (Islamic law). *SOURCE: Facts About Islam, Religion Stylebook*

HAJJ:

A pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, the birthplace of Mohammed and the site of the Ka’ba. Muslims who are able to afford the journey are expected to make the hajj at least once in their lifetime. A person who has undertaken this pilgrimage is known as a “hajji”. The hajj is one of the “Five Pillars of Islam”. See “Five Pillars of Islam”. *SOURCE: News Watch*

HALAL:

Something that is lawful and permitted in Islam. It is often used to refer to Islamic dietary laws, which prescribe ritual slaughtering of beef and poultry, among other things. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HARAM:

Something that is forbidden or prohibited in Islam. Sometimes spelled “haraam”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HIJAB:

A scarf or other head covering worn by Muslim women. It is also a metaphor for female privacy and modesty. Wearing a hijab in most Muslim societies is a matter of choice, but there can be pressure to use one in fundamentalist communities. In countries such as Turkey and Egypt, there are different styles of hijab. Many Muslim women do not wear one at all. *SOURCE: AAJA*

IJTIHAD:

The process of reasoning and interpreting the Quran, hadith, and other sacred texts to uncover God’s rulings. Religious scholars effectively terminated the practice five centuries ago, but a need seen by some Muslims to reinterpret the faith for modern times has revived the practice. It is disputed whether ijti had is reserved for scholars or open to all Muslims with a basic degree of religious knowledge. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

IMAM:

Leader of prayer at a mosque. Might also be called a “sheik” or “shaykh”. They are often considered to be community leaders and sources of insight about the local community, however, it is important to consult with a variety of community members who may not be attached to a formal religious organization or association. *SOURCE: News Watch, A. Elghawaby*

ISLAMIC:

An adjective used to describe the religion of Islam. It is not synonymous with the term “Islamist”. The term “Muslim” is a noun and is the proper term for individual believers. See “Muslim”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ISLAMIST:

A Muslim who advocates for Islam to define a country’s national and international politics. Not all Muslims are Islamists.

ACTION: Do not use the term “Islamist” as a synonym for Islamic fighters, militants, extremists, or radicals, who may or may not be Islamists. *SOURCE: News Watch, Religion Stylebook*

Islamophobia

The term “Islamophobia” was first introduced as a concept in a 1991 Runnymede Trust Report and defined as “unfounded hostility towards Muslims, and therefore fear or dislike of all or most Muslims.” Source: University of California, Berkeley, Centre for Race & Gender.



JIBAB:

See “Chador”.

JIHAD:

An Arabic word that translates as “struggle” or “striving”. It is most commonly used to describe an inward, spiritual struggle, though traditionally it has also been used to describe defensive military action against non-Muslims. Today, militants use it to call for aggressive armed strikes against non-Muslims, including civilians, and against other Muslims whom they consider impure – all acts condemned by mainstream Islam. Although many in the media translate “jihad” as “holy war”, it does not mean that literally, and the majority of Muslims do not use it that way. It is preferable to avoid using the term “jihadis” or “jihadists” which may serve to bestow legitimacy to terrorist claims that they are fighting in the path of God. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook, Words Make Worlds: Terrorism & Language (RCMP)*

KA’BAH:

A large cube-shaped house of worship that Muslims believe was built in Mecca by Prophets Abraham and Ishmael. Muslims around the world face the Ka’bah when they pray and circle it several times as a rite of hajj. Sometimes spelled “Kaabah”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MADRESSA, MADRASSA:

A Muslim place of learning usually associated with a mosque where the Quran is usually taught. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MAHDI:

The “guided one” that many Muslims believe will appear at the end of times to restore righteousness for a short period before the end of the world. Shia Muslims believe the Mahdi is the Twelfth Imam – a descendant of Muhammad who disappeared in 873. Many Sunni Muslims also believe in the Mahdi, though not necessarily that he is the Twelfth Imam. However, some noted Sunni authorities have rejected belief in the Mahdi, saying it is not compatible with a religion that does not rely on intercession to achieve salvation. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MECCA:

The birthplace of Muhammad and Islam’s holiest place. Located in western Saudi Arabia, Mecca is the focal point of Muslims’ prayers. Muslims pray toward Mecca five times each day. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MOSLEM:

An outdated term for Muslims.

ACTION: Do not use unless it is part of a proper name. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MOSQUE:

A building in which Muslims gather for prayer and worship. The tower of a mosque, a “minaret”, is used to chant a call for prayer. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MUHAMMAD:

Islam’s final prophet. He is not regarded as the “founder” of Islam, but the last in a long line of prophets including: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Solomon, and Jesus. Therefore, Islam did not begin or follow Muhammad. He is regarded as a human being and in no way divine, but rather the final prophet who completed the revelation communicated by the earlier prophets. *SOURCE: Facts About Islam, Religion Stylebook*

MUSLIM:

A follower of Islam – one who believes in Allah (God) and that Muhammad was the final messenger of Allah. A Muslim seeks to live his or her life in accordance with God’s word as told by Muhammad. Note: not all Muslims are Arabs, not all Arabs are Muslim. *SOURCE: AAJA, Facts About Islam*

NIQAB:

A veil worn by some Muslim women. The niqab covers all of the face except the eyes. Some Muslims believe it is mandatory, while the majority do not. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*



QAWWALI:

Devotional songs of the Sufi tradition of Islam. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

QURAN:

Holy book for Muslims. Muslims believe the Quran is the direct word of God as dictated in Arabic to Muhammad by the Angel Gabriel during the month of Ramadan. The Quran is the basis for Muslim beliefs regarding worship, morality, knowledge, wisdom, God, the human relations to God, and relationships among human beings. *SOURCE: News Watch, Facts About Islam, Religion Stylebook*

RAMADAN:

Islam's holy month (the ninth month of the Muslim calendar), during which Muslims fast from sunrise to sundown. Ramadan is considered a month of self-discipline and purification. Along with abstaining from food or drink during the daytime, Muslims abstain from intimate relations with their spouse during the daytime, and avoid speaking any ill. It commemorates the time during which the faithful believe God sent the Angel Gabriel to Muhammad in Mecca and gave him the teachings of the Quran. The end of Ramadan is marked by Eid al-Fitr. Ramadan is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. See "Five Pillars of Islam." *SOURCE: News Watch, Religion Stylebook*

SALAT:

Prayer five times a day. Salat is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. See "Five Pillars of Islam." *SOURCE: News Watch*

SHARI'AH:

The moral and legal code that guides the Muslim way of life. It addresses religious practices, personal and family life, as well as social, economic, and political life. Based on the Quran as well as the teachings and practices of Muhammad. *SOURCE: Facts About Islam, Religion Stylebook*

SHAHADA:

The statement that "there is no true god but God

(Allah) and Muhammad is his prophet." Shahada is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. See "Five Pillars of Islam." *SOURCE: News Watch*

SHIA:

The smaller of the two major branches of Islam. It developed after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, when his followers split over who would lead Islam. The Shia branch favored Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law 'Ali ibn Abi Talib. Shia followers are called "Shiites" or "Shia".

ACTION: The term "Shia" is preferable over "Shiite" when referring to the Shia branch of Islam; however it is best to ask the source for their personal preference. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SUFISM:

An Islamic mystic tradition with followers around the world. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SUNNI:

The larger of the two major branches of Islam, followed by about 85 percent of Muslims. It developed after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, when his followers split over who would lead Islam. Sunni followers are called "Sunnis". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

TAWHID:

The concept that denotes the oneness and unity of God – it is the basis of Islam. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

UMMAH:

The worldwide community of Muslims. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

WUDU:

A ritual in Islam in which the hands, face, mouth, and feet are cleaned with water. It is symbolic of spiritual cleansing. Wudu is usually performed before a Muslim goes to prayer five times each day. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ZAKAT:

The sharing of alms with the poor. Zakat is one of the Five Pillars of Islam. See “Five Pillars of Islam.”
SOURCE: News Watch

Hinduism

AARTI:

In Hinduism, the most common ritual that is performed in front of the image of a deity, whether in a temple or in a home shrine. It typically consists of waving, in a clockwise motion, various items in front of the deity. It is done in conjunction with mantras or prayers.
SOURCE: Religion Stylebook

AHIMSA:

The Sanskrit word meaning “non-injury” in any form, including action, speech, or thought. This is an important principle of Hinduism and a core principle of Jainism. For this reason, many Hindus and most Jains are vegetarians, as are significant numbers of Sikhs and Buddhists.
SOURCE: Religion Stylebook

ATMAN:

The essential, eternal self or soul in Hinduism.
SOURCE: Religion Stylebook

AVATAR:

The incarnation of a Hindu deity. Hindus believe avatars come to Earth at various times to promote dharma and righteousness and to alleviate suffering.
SOURCE: SAJA, Religion Stylebook

BHAGAVAD GITA:

One of the most popular Hindu scriptures, which literally means “Song of the Lord”. It is in the form of a conversation between Lord Krishna (an avatar of Lord Vishnu) and Arjuna on the great battlefield at Kurukshetra, just before the famous war in the Mahabharata. In the conversation, Lord Krishna

illuminates Arjuna on righteous action that is conducive to the well-being of the world and spiritual liberation (moksha). He instructs him on karma yoga (the path of self-transcending action), samkhya yoga (the path of discerning the principles of existence correctly), jnana yoga (the path of wisdom), raja yoga (the path of knowledge) and bhakti yoga (the path of devotion).
SOURCE: Religion Stylebook

BRAHMA:

The name used for God when functioning as creator of the universe. While God has different roles in Hinduism, the divine is always understood to be one. His consort is Saraswati. Brahma forms part of the trinity of Hindu gods (known as the “Trimurti”). See “Vishnu”, “Shiva”, and “Trimurti”.
SOURCE: Religion Stylebook

CASTE SYSTEM:

The four major castes, known as “varna”, in Hinduism are the Brahmins (priests, scholars, doctors, teachers), Kshatriyas (kings, lawmakers, warriors), Vaishyas (merchants, traders, farmers, artisans) and Shudras (servants, laborers), though there are thousands of sub-castes (known as jati). Later, a fifth varna was created, into which people who performed tasks considered “polluting”, in a physical or spiritual sense, were placed. Members of this lowest caste were once known as “untouchables”, but are now commonly referred to as Dalits, Harijan or Anasuchit Jati. Discrimination based on castes is technically illegal in India, but the social hierarchies of the system are still recognized, particularly in the villages, and the diaspora. These hierarchies are a corruption of an ancient system of classification that grouped people and families by their inherited trades.
SOURCE: AAJA, Religion Stylebook

DEVA/DEVI:

Means heavenly and divine. Also one of the terms for “deity” in Hinduism. The masculine form is “Deva”; the feminine form is “Devi”

DIWALI, DEEPAVALI:

One of the most festive holidays observed by Hindus, Diwali generally occurs during late autumn (October

or November). While it is celebrated in many parts of North India as the start of the new year, Diwali should not be referred to as the Indian New Year, South Asian New Year, or Hindu New Year. No such thing exists. Nor is there any one explanation of Diwali's significance that is applicable to all Hindus. Due to ethnic variations from state to state, the traditional new year is celebrated at different times in different parts of India and diaspora. Diwali, like Christmas, is sometimes celebrated as a secular holiday and many non-Hindus in India also take part in the festivities. *Sources: News Watch, SAJA*

DURGA:

The demon-fighting form of Pravatī. See "Pravatī".

GANESHA:

The beloved elephant-faced representation of God, honored by Hindus and followers of other Indian religions, Ganesh is the remover of obstacles. He is revered for his great wisdom and is invoked before any undertaking. He is the son of Lord Shiva and the goddess Parvatī. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HANUMAN:

An incarnation of Lord Shiva and the embodiment of devotion. Hanuman is generally depicted in a monkey form but can assume any form. He is most popular among devotees of the avatar Lord Ram and others following a devotional path. There are more temples and roadside shrines to Hanuman than any other deity in all of North India. For Hindus, Hanuman is one of the finest exemplars of a life of love and service of God. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HARE KRISHNA:

This Hindu term can refer to a worshipper of Krishna or a mantra to him. See "Krishna". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

KRISHNA:

One of the most popular representations of God in Hinduism. He is worshipped as the eighth incarnation of Lord Vishnu and is best-known as the teacher in

the Bhagavad Gita. For most Krishna devotees, his name refers to the unqualified absolute (Brahman). See "Bhagavad Gita". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

LAKSHMI:

A representation of the goddess and universal mother to whom prayers are offered for wealth, fortune and prosperity. Hindus believe that she is Lord Vishnu's consort. She forms part of the trinity of Hindu goddesses (known as the "Tridevi"). See "Pravatī", "Saraswati", and "Tridevi". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MURTI:

An image or icon of God used during worship. A manifestation, embodiment or personification of the divine.

ACTION: Caution. The terms "idol" and "murti" are not synonyms. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

OM:

The mantra of the divine. The ancient Sanskrit name for the absolute. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PARVATI:

A representation of the goddess and universal mother to whom prayers are offered for strength, power, love, health, and fertility. Hindus believe that she is Lord Shiva's consort. She forms part of the trinity of Hindu goddesses (known as the "Tridevi"). See "Lakshmi", "Saraswati", and "Tridevi". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PUJA:

A generic term for any ritual practice. This can be as simple as an individual saying a prayer or can encompass a complex, multiday ritual involving any number of individuals and priests. Puja generally incorporates a series of hospitality offerings to God. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

RAM:

One of the two most popular incarnations of Lord Vishnu and venerated hero of the Hindu epic Ramayana. For most Ram devotees, his name refers to the unqualified



absolute, or Brahman. Ram's exemplary life helps to set high standards of dignity and nobility as an integral part of the Hindu way of life. Sita is his wife. See "Sita". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

RAMAYANA:

One of the two Hindu epics; the other being the Mahabharata. Originally written in Sanskrit, it is the story of God taking a human form to destroy evil and teach the path of righteous behavior. The most popular telling of the story was written by Tulsidas in Hindi and is called the Ramcharitmanas. It is the predominant scripture in North India and in the Hindu diaspora. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

RIG VEDA:

The earliest, and among the most revered, Hindu scriptures. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SADHANA:

A religious practice that is undertaken on a regular basis for the purpose of purifying oneself to gain wisdom, devotion or enlightenment. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SADHU/SADHVI:

A Hindu ascetic who has renounced advancement in the material world and has dedicated his or her life to the search for wisdom, devotion, God, truth or enlightenment. There are many different types in India, grouped into orders according to their beliefs and practices. They may live in monasteries (ashrams), as hermits, or as wanderers. They often live on alms, or provisions and gifts they are given. "Sadhu" is the male form; "sadhvi" is the female form. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SARASWATI:

A representation of the goddess and universal mother to whom prayers are offered for knowledge, music, arts, culture, and wisdom. Hindus believe that she is Lord Brahma's consort. She forms part of the trinity of Hindu goddesses (known as the "Tridevi"). See "Lakshmi", "Pravati", and "Tridevi".

SATTVA:

In Hinduism, the quality of light and goodness. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SHAKTI:

The active power or manifest energy that pervades all of existence and is represented in feminine names and forms. Worshipped as the "Supreme Being" in Shaktism and Shaivism. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SHIVA:

The name used for God when functioning as lord of time and change. While God has different roles in Hinduism, the divine is always understood to be one. His consort is Parvati. Shiva forms part of the trinity of Hindu gods (known as the "Trimurti"). See "Vishnu", "Brahma", and "Trimurti". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SITA:

The wife of the avatar Lord Ram, as depicted in the Hindu epic, Ramayana. For millions of Hindus, Sita represents the perfect mother and expression of womanly virtue. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SWAMI:

A title of respect and reverence conferred on a religious teacher and, in particular, one who has taken vows of celibacy and renunciation. It literally means "one who has self-control".

ACTION: Capitalize before a name. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

TRANSCENDENTAL MEDITATION:

A form of meditation made popular by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, who introduced it in 1955. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

TRIDEVI:

A concept in Hinduism that joins the three consorts of the "Trimurti". It is personified by the Hindu goddesses Saraswati, Lakshmi, and Parvati. See "Trimurti".

TRIMURTI:

A concept in Hinduism that joins the three major roles of God – the creator, the preserver, and the destroyer. It is personified by the Hindu gods Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva.

UPANISHADS:

The Upanishads are the final sections of each of the four Vedas, or Hindu scriptures. These texts are spiritual dialogues in which teachers and students discuss ultimate questions of human existence. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

VEDAS:

Hinduism's most ancient scriptures. There are four: Rig Veda, Atharva Veda, Sama Veda and Yajur Veda. The Vedas include more than 100,000 verses and additional prose. The term "Veda" stems from a Sanskrit word meaning knowledge. Many Hindus believe that the Vedas were revealed by God and/or realized by ancient sages. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

VISHNU:

The name used for God when functioning as preserver. While God has different roles in Hinduism, the divine is always understood to be one. Vishnu has many avatars or incarnations, the best-known of which are Ram, Krishna, and the Buddha. His consort is Lakshmi. Vishnu forms part of the trinity of Hindu gods (known as the "Trimurti"). See "Shiva", "Brahma", and "Trimurti". *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

YOGA:

Most often associated with body poses, stretching exercises, and breathing techniques developed in India. Yoga is the philosophy, process, disciplines, and practices whose purpose is the unification of individual consciousness with transcendent or divine consciousness. One of its eight "limbs" is referred to as "asana" (also known as "hatha yoga") and involves various body postures meant to keep the body physically relaxed and healthy as an important prerequisite for meditation. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

Sikhism

ADI GRANTH:

See "Guru Granth Sahib".

AMRIT:

Sikh baptism. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

BHAKTI:

A Sanskrit term meaning "loving devotion to God", bhakti inspired major Indian religious movements, including Sikhism, by focusing on the individual's relationship to the divine. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

FIVE KAKAARS:

The Five Kakaars are the five articles of the Sikh faith. They are: kara (a steel bracelet); kanga (a comb); kirpan (a ceremonial dagger); kach (undergarments); and kesh (long uncut hair that men, and some women, wrap in a turban). Most Sikhs wear some of the articles, while Sikhs who have taken "amrit" (Sikh baptism) wear all five. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

GURDWARA:

Punjabi for "doorway to the guru". A gurdwara is a Sikh place of worship, similar to a church for Christians and a mosque for Muslims. The gurdwara contains a copy of the Adi Granth, the sacred scripture of Sikhism. There are no idols in Sikhism. *SOURCE: News Watch*

GURPURAB:

A Sikh holiday that commemorates the birth or death of a Sikh guru. The most significant gurpurab is the birthday of Guru Nanak, the first Sikh teacher, celebrated in November. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

GURU GRANTH SAHIB:

Holy book of the Sikh religion, considered the 11th and lasting guru. It is a compilation of the writings



and teachings of Guru Nanak and other early Sikh gurus. Sikhs consider it the supreme spiritual authority and living guide of the Sikh religion. It is installed under a canopy in every Sikh “gurdwara” (house of worship) where Sikhs sing, recite, and meditate on the scripture. Also known as “Adi Granth”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

GURU NANAK:

The founder of the Sikh religion. Guru Nanak was born in the mid-15th century in Punjab, now North India and Pakistan. He is said to have disappeared by the river for three days and emerged with a revelation: “There is no Hindu, there is no Muslim.” In other words, beneath all husks and labels, humanity is one. He wandered the countryside with Muslims and Hindus as companions, singing “bhakti” (devotional) poetry in wonder of One Formless God. His teachings became the foundation of the Sikh religion and were later recorded in the Guru Granth Sahib. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

KACHERA:

Undershorts worn by Sikhs as a symbol of dignity, modesty, and the control of sexual desire. Kachera are one of the five articles of faith known as the “Five Kakars” – outward symbols of Sikh faith – ordered by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. See “Five Kakars”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

KANGA:

A small comb worn by Sikhs under their turbans to tidy their uncut hair. Kanga is one of the five articles of faith known as the “Five Kakars” – outward symbols of Sikh faith – ordered by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. See “Five Kakars”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

KARA:

A steel bangle worn by Sikhs as a reminder to carry out God’s work. It is usually worn on the right arm. Kara is one of the five articles of faith known as the “Five Kakars” – outward symbols of Sikh faith – ordered by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. See “Five Kakars”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

KAUR:

A last name shared by all women who practice the Sikh religion. Kaur means “daughter of kings” or “princess”. The 10th Sikh teacher, Guru Gobind Singh, gave Sikhs the same last names as a sign of equality (traditional last names in 17th-century North India indicated caste). Women are seen as equals in the Sikh tradition. See “Khalsa” and “Singh”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

KESH:

The wearing of long uncut hair by Sikhs as a symbol of respect for the natural perfection of God’s creation. Kesh one of the five articles of faith known as the “Five Kakars” – outward symbols of Sikh faith – ordered by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. See “Five Kakars”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

KHALISTAN:

The name adopted by proponents of an independent Sikh homeland in what is now the India state of Punjab. It means “land of the pure”. Khalistani separatists declared their independence from India on Oct. 7, 1987, but this declaration has not been recognized by any nation. Not all those who support the concept of Khalistan are militants or terrorists. The clamor in certain quarters for Khalistan peaked in the mid-1980s and has since quieted down. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook, SAJA*

KHALSA:

The spiritual brotherhood and sisterhood of Sikhs formed by the 10th guru, Guru Gobind Singh. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

KIRPAN:

A ceremonial dagger, it is a Sikh article of faith that symbolizes a commitment to fight against injustice. A kirpan is one of the five articles of faith known as the “Five Kakars” – outward symbols of Sikh faith – ordered by Guru Gobind Singh in 1699. See “Five Kakars”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*



LANGAR:

A Sikh congregational meal served in a free and open kitchen at every “gurdwara” (Sikh house of worship). The institution of langar represents the central teaching of service “seva” (service) in the Sikh tradition. It also represents equality – regardless of gender, religion, class or race, people sit on the ground and eat together as equals. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

REHT MARYADA:

The Sikh code of conduct. It is designed to create uniformity in the religious and social practices of Sikhism and has been in place since the birth of Sikhism in the 15th century. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SINGH:

A last name shared by all men who practice the Sikh religion. Singh means “lion”. The 10th Sikh teacher, Guru Gobind Singh, gave Sikhs the same last names as a sign of equality (traditional last names in 17th century North India indicated caste). See “Khalsa” and “Kaur”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

VAISAKHI:

A spring harvest festival in Punjab that usually falls on April 13, the solar new year. For Sikhs, Vaisakhi marks the beginning of the Sikh new year and commemorates the founding of the spiritual sister and brotherhood, known as the “Khalsa”, in 1699. Also spelled “Baisakhi”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

Buddhism

AMIDA:

Japanese name of the “Buddha of Infinite Light”, a celestial Buddha venerated in Chinese and Japanese Mahayana Pure Land schools, which teach that calling upon the Buddha’s name, “Namu-Amida-Butsu” (“Veneration to the Buddha Amida”), will bring them

into his paradise, or state of Buddhahood. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ARHAT:

In early Buddhism, one who has attained full realization and transcended desires and defilements and who thus will not be reborn. It is the ideal goal in the Theravada tradition. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ASHOKA:

Lived from 273 to 232 BCE. Celebrated king of the Maurya dynasty in what is now modern-day India, and grandson of the founder, Chandragupta. At the commencement of his reign, he was a Hindu, but converted to Buddhism after seeing the havoc and suffering in the Kalinga War. Propagated Buddhism and nonviolence. The blue wheel that appears in India’s tricolour flag is from the stone “pillars of wisdom” that Ashoka built. *SOURCE: SAJA*

BHIKKHU / BHIKKHUNI:

A bhikkhu is a fully ordained monk in the Theravada Buddhist tradition; a bhikkhuni is a nun in the Theravada Buddhist tradition. In the Mahayana Buddhist tradition, the Sanskrit forms bhikshu and bhikshuni are used.

ACTION: Capitalize when used with a name. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

BODH GAYA:

The site in Northeast India of the tree under which the meditating Buddha attained realization. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

BODHISATTVA:

In Mahayana Buddhism, one who strives to attain Buddhahood through the practice of prescribed virtues, while postponing his or her own entry into nirvana for the sake of helping others to enlightenment. The term also refers to various celestial beings who are venerated in some schools for their special ability to help those on the Buddhist path. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*



BUDDHA:

The Buddha, meaning “the awakened one”, refers to Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism. A Buddha is anyone who has attained enlightenment. There are human Buddhas of the past, present, and future as well as celestial Buddhas who are venerated in some Buddhist schools for their ability to help those on the path to liberation. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

DALAI LAMA:

Spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism and formerly the spiritual and political ruler of Tibet. Dalai Lama is a title rather than a name, but it is all that is used when referring to the man. Each dalai lama is considered to be the reincarnation of the Buddha. The current (and 14th) Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, fled with a group of followers to India in 1959 after an unsuccessful rebellion against China. He and thousands of other Tibetans now live in exile in India. In 1989, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent efforts to win independence for his homeland.

ACTION: Capitalize when referring to the person who currently holds the title; lowercase when referring to the title in general. *SOURCE: SAJA, Religion Stylebook*

DHAMMAPADA:

One of the most widely known verse texts of the Buddha’s teaching, it means “the path of dharma” and is part of a collection within the “Sutta Pitaka”. See “Tipitaka”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

FIVE PRECEPTS:

Principles for conduct undertaken by upasaka and upasika. The Five Precepts are: do not kill; do not steal; do not lie; do not be unchaste; and do not take intoxicants. These precepts have broader, metaphorical as well as literal applications; for example, “do not steal” means more broadly, “do not take what is not given”. See “upasaka/upasika”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS:

The fundamental truths that the historical Buddha

realized in meditation and then taught to his followers: life is suffering; the cause of suffering is craving; suffering can be eliminated by the extinguishing of craving; there is a way to achieve this goal – by following the Noble Eightfold Path. See “Noble Eightfold Path”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

LAMA:

A Tibetan Buddhist teacher or master.

ACTION: Capitalize when used as a title before a name or when referring to the man who holds the title “Dalai Lama”; lowercase when referring to the title in general. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MAHAYANA:

One of the two main schools of Buddhism, along with Theravada. Its traditions emphasize the Buddha nature of all beings; the ideal is the bodhisattva and realization is as much a goal for lay adherents as for monastics. Mahayanists see Buddha as more than a man who was a great spiritual teacher; they believe he is also a universal spiritual being to whom (in his various forms) prayers may be effectively directed. Its followers are called Mahayanists. See “bodhisattva”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MERIT:

By ritual and ethical practices, the Buddhist adherent accumulates merit, or adds positive karma and offsets negative karma (the spiritual fruits of former actions) on the path to liberation. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

NEO-BUDDHISM:

A movement founded by B.R. Ambedkar in India in the mid-1950s to encourage members of the Hindu caste of untouchables to convert to Buddhism, which would assure them of social acceptance as well as spiritual guidance. Mass conversions are still held today. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

NIRVANA:

Attaining a state of freedom from the endless cycle of

personal reincarnations. From the Sanskrit for “act of extinguishing”. The Buddha’s entrance into nirvana at his death is referred to as his “parinirvana”. *SOURCE: SAJA, Religion Stylebook*

NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH:

The eight practical steps taught by the Buddha, Siddhartha Gautama, to end craving and thus eliminate suffering. The steps are right understanding, right intent, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. Together with the Four Noble Truths, the Noble Eightfold Path constitutes the foundation of Buddhist thought. See “Four Noble Truths”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

OM MANI PADME HUM:

An important mantra in Tibetan Buddhism, roughly translated as “(homage to) the jewel in the lotus”. It honors the Buddha-nature of all beings. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PALI CANON:

See “Tipitaka”.

PRAJNAPARAMITA SUTRA:

A major scripture in Mahayana Buddhism. It teaches that all phenomena are marked by impermanence and insubstantiality and presents the bodhisattva path. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

RINPOCHE:

A title of respect for a Buddhist teacher, often signaling one considered to be an incar-nate lama. Literally translates to “precious one”.

ACTION: The title of rinpoche generally follows a name, but practice varies. Capitalize when used before or after a name; lowercase when referring to the title in general. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ROSHI:

A title for a Zen Buddhist master. Literally translates to “old teacher”.

ACTION: The title of roshi generally follows a name, but practice varies. Capitalize when used before or after a name; lowercase when referring to the title in general. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SAMSARA:

The cycle of birth, death, and rebirth – and thus continual return to the suffering that constitutes human life. The fundamental goal of Buddhist practice is to be freed from samsara. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SANGHA:

The monastic community of Buddhism. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SATORI:

Term in Zen Buddhism for the experience of awakening to the truth. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SHUNYATA:

A key teaching in Mahayana Buddhism that all phenomena lack real and permanent substance. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SIDDHARTHA GAUTAMA:

Name of the historical Buddha. Gautama was born to a wealthy ruling family between the sixth and fifth centuries B.C. in an area that is part of modern-day Nepal. He left the kingdom at age 29 after encountering the outside world of illness, old age, and death beyond the palace walls, to find enlightenment and release from suffering. After years as a wandering ascetic, he awoke to the true nature of reality after meditating under a bodhi tree and spent the rest of his life passing on to others what he had realized. Gautama did not teach that he was a god; as a historical figure, he is venerated in Buddhist tradition as a perfect teacher and ultimate authority. See “Buddha”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SUTRA:

In Buddhism, a sutra or sutta is a text containing the Buddha’s discourses. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*



THERAVADA:

One of the two main schools of Buddhism, along with Mahayana. Theravada is an early tradition directed to the monastic community. The Theravada ideal goal is arhat - an individual who attains enlightenment and escapes the cycle of rebirth through practices involving ethical conduct, meditation, and insight. Its scriptures are those of the Tipitaka, held to represent the earliest direct teachings of the Buddha. Theravada Buddhism is the form found in most of Southeast Asia (Sri Lanka, Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar, Bangladesh, and Laos). An adherent of the Theravada school is a Theravadin. See “arhat” and “Tipitaka”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

THREE JEWELS:

In Buddhism, the three objects Buddhists take refuge in or give themselves to: the Buddha (both the historical Buddha and the Buddha-nature that is in every sentient being), the dharma (the Buddha’s teachings as well as universal law) and the Sangha (the monastic community as well as the wider community of Buddhists everywhere). *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

TIBETAN BUDDHISM:

See “Vajrayana”.

TIPITAKA:

The “Three Baskets”, or collections, of early Buddhist texts that make up the “Pali Canon” – the scriptures of the Theravada school of Buddhism. The “Vinaya Pitaka” lists regulations for monks and nuns, the “Sutta Pitaka” consists of discourses from the historical Buddha or his disciples, and the “Abhidhamma Pitaka” presents a systematic organization of the teachings.

TULKU:

An incarnate or reincarnated lama in Tibetan Buddhism. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

UPASAKA/UPASIKA:

Followers of Buddhism who are not monks, nuns,

or novice monastics in a Buddhist order, and who undertake certain vows called the Five Precepts. Sometimes known as lay adherents. Upasaka is used for men; upasika is used for women. See “Five Precepts”.

VAJRAYANA:

Considered the third major tradition or school of Buddhism, after Mahayana and Theravada. It is also called “Tibetan Buddhism”, “Esoteric Buddhism”, or “Tantric Buddhism” (its scriptures are called tantras). Vajrayana literally means “diamond vehicle”. It developed from Mahayana Buddhism, particularly in Tibet, Nepal, and Mongolia. Vajrayana Buddhists emphasize the use of ritual, meditative practices, mantras, mudras (symbolic gestures), and mandalas (symbolic diagrams in the form of a circle). *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

VIPASSANA:

In Theravada Buddhism, a profound, nonjudgmental self-awareness practiced in meditation. Often called insight meditation. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ZEN:

A combination of Mahayana Buddhism and Taoism. Practiced everywhere in Asia, but especially prominent in Japan. Thought to have originated in 10th century China, it was popularized in the West in the first half of the 20th century by Suzuki (1870–1966), a Japanese Buddhist scholar. *SOURCE: AAJA*

Judaism

ADONAI:

A common substitution for the name of God. “Adonai” means “my Lord” and is used out of respect. See “Yahweh”.

ANTI-SEMITISM:

A prejudice against people of Jewish heritage. Religious



anti-Semitism is based on the idea that all Jews are eternally and collectively responsible for killing Jesus. It has been formally renounced by most major churches, led by the Catholic Church. Although Muslims revere Jesus as a prophet, they do not make the anti-Semitic claim against Jews because they do not believe that Jesus was crucified. Economic and political anti-Semitism is rooted in widespread 19th- and 20th-century claims that Jews were engaged in a plot to rule the world. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ASHKENAZI:

A Jew of German, Polish, Austrian, or Eastern European descent. Ashkenazic Jews developed a distinct culture and spoke predominantly Yiddish (a combination of German and Hebrew) or Slavic languages. During the 19th and 20th centuries, as they faced increasing persecution in Eastern Europe, many Ashkenazic Jews migrated to Western Europe and the U.S. Since the mid-18th century, Ashkenazic Jews have made up the majority of Jews in the U.S. After the Holocaust, their numbers were drastically reduced in Europe. Many of the surviving Ashkenazic Jews immigrated to France, the U.S., and current-day Israel. They are estimated to make up 80 percent of the world's Jewish population. "Ashkenazim" is the plural form of the term and "Ashkenazic" is the adjective form of the term. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

BAR/BAT MITZVAH:

Means "son of commandment" in Hebrew and Aramaic. A milestone in Judaism in which a person is no longer a child in the eyes of Jewish law and is now responsible for his or her own actions spiritually, ethically and morally. A boy automatically reaches the milestone at age 13 (bar mitzvah), while a girl reaches it at age 12 (bat mitzvah). No ceremony is required to mark the passage, although religious ceremonies and receptions are commonplace. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

BRIT MILAH:

The ritual circumcision of a male Jewish child on the eighth day of his life or of a male convert to Judaism. "Brit milah" literally means "covenant of circumcision"

in Hebrew. "Bris", the Yiddish term, is also sometimes used. There are no mandated rituals for newborn girls. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

CHANUKIYAH:

A nine-stick candelabra used during Chanukah. A chanukiyah is used to represent the eight nights of the holiday, with the ninth candle lighting all the others. Not to be confused with a "menorah". See "menorah".

ECCLESIASTES:

A book of wisdom in the Hebrew Bible and Old Testament whose author represents himself as King Solomon. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ERUV:

A symbolic enclosure in which observant Orthodox Jews are permitted to perform tasks that would otherwise be forbidden, such as carrying items on the Sabbath and other holy days from one "domain" to another – the area surrounded by the "eruv" is considered to be a single "domain". Dictated by Jewish law, "eruvim" (the plural form) are unbroken boundaries rabbis erect by attaching strips of plastic or cloth to public utility poles. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

GENTILE:

Anyone who is not a Jew. It is usually a reference to Christians. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HALACHAH:

Jewish law, or the set of rules and practices that govern every aspect of life. They are defined by Jewish scripture and teachings. Jews believe that the law was given by God to Moses at Mount Sinai and that it has been interpreted for each generation by respected and learned rabbis. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

CHANUKAH:

The Jewish Festival of Lights. It usually falls in early or mid-December. The eight-day holiday celebrates the Maccabees' victory over the Syrians in the second



century B.C. The Maccabees were a first- and second-century B.C. Jewish family that brought about the restoration of Jewish religious and political life. They also made several unsuccessful attempts to overthrow Roman rule in Judea. Also spelled “Hanukkah”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HAREDI:

A Hebrew term that literally means “fear” or “anxiety” and is used in the context of a devout believer who “trembles in awe of God”. The label can be applied to strictly observant Orthodox Jews. “Haredim” in the plural form. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HASHEM:

The term “HaShem” is used by some Jews in place of the word “God”, which is considered to be too holy to utter. It literally means “The Name”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HASIDISM:

A social and religious movement in Judaism founded in 18th-century Poland. It stresses the importance of devotion in prayer and serving God in ecstasy amid day-to-day life. Hasidism is usually structured around a “rabbi”, or revered spiritual teacher whose interpretations of Jewish law govern the community. Its followers, called “Hasidim”, are among the most traditional of Orthodox Jews. “Hasidic” is the adjectival form. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HEBREW:

The language in which the Hebrew Bible, or Old Testament, was first written. Its ancient form consists only of consonants, although later scholars added vowel points under the letters to aid pronunciation. “Biblical Hebrew” differs from “Modern Hebrew”, which is the language of the state of Israel. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HIGH HOLY DAYS:

The High Holy Days are the 10-day period beginning with “Rosh Hashanah”, which marks the beginning of

the Jewish New Year, and ending with “Yom Kippur” (the Day of Atonement). See “Rosh Hashanah” and “Yom Kippur”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HOLOCAUST:

The murder of 6 million Jews and others during World War II. Also called “Shoah”. See “Shoah”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

JEHOVAH:

A somewhat archaic English rendering of the four Hebrew letters, usually transliterated as “YHWH”, which forms the name of God. Jews traditionally never pronounce this name, substituting the Hebrew word “Adonai”, meaning “my Lord”.

ACTION: Do not use unless referring to those who belong to the religious community of Jehovah’s Witnesses.

JEW:

Follower of the Jewish faith. Tradition holds that people are Jewish if their mothers are Jewish or if they have gone through a formal process of conversion, but some Jews argue for a more liberal definition. Many Jews consider themselves “secular Jews” whose connection to Judaism is cultural or ethnic rather than spiritual. Jews believe that God called their ancestor, Abraham, to be the father of their nation, which works toward the goal of establishing a divine kingdom on earth. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

KABBALAH:

A doctrine of ancient Jewish mysticism that provides a path for humans to achieve an understanding of the divine mysteries of God and the universe. It teaches that such understanding can only be attained by praying and contemplating the hidden meanings of the Hebrew words and letters of the Torah. It had its greatest following in Europe during the 13th and 14th centuries. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

KASHRUT, KOSHER:

In Judaism, refers to ritually pure food prepared in accordance with Jewish dietary laws. “Kashrut” is the term for Jewish dietary laws, while “kosher” is the adjective. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MAGEN DAVID:

The six-pointed star that is a symbol of Judaism. The star appears in the center of the Israeli flag. “Megen David” is its Hebrew name; “Star of David” is its English name. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MENORAH:

A seven-stick candelabra used in synagogues. A seven-branched menorah is believed to have been in the original Jerusalem Temple. Not to be confused with a “chanukiyah”. See “chanukiyah”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MESSIAH:

A Hebrew term meaning “the anointed one”. For Christians, the one and only Messiah is Jesus Christ. Jews await the coming of the Messiah.

ACTION: Capitalize in religious uses and lowercase in secular cases. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MIKVAH:

A ritual bath Jews use for spiritual purification after a woman’s menstrual cycles, in conversion rituals, and for men before important holidays. Jewish couples who observe the “laws of family purity” only engage in intercourse between when the woman goes to the “mikvah” after her menstrual cycle and the beginning of her next period. Contemporary Jews are incorporating the mikvah into new rituals involving major life events, from graduations to divorces to adoptions. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MINYAN:

The quorum necessary to recite certain prayers or to read from the Torah during “Shabbat” (day of rest) services. Traditionally, a minyan consists of 10 Jewish

males over age 13, though many congregations allow any Jewish adult over age 13 to be counted for the minyan. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

MODERN ORTHODOX:

A movement within Orthodox Judaism that tends to integrate traditional Jewish practices and beliefs with life in the secular world while retaining a distinctive Jewish identity and presence. Modern Orthodox followers will keep strictly kosher and carefully observe the “Shabbat” (day of rest), and they will often wear a “yarmulke”, for example, but not always. The term “Modern Orthodox” is accepted among Jews, but as with any movement it can encompass a wide spectrum of beliefs and behaviors. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ORTHODOX JUDAISM:

The most conservative of the three major branches of Judaism. It strictly adheres to traditional teachings and acceptance of Jewish principles of faith and law. Do not confuse with Eastern Orthodoxy, which is a branch of Christianity. “Hasidism” is a movement within Orthodox Judaism. See “Hasidism”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PASSOVER:

A major Jewish holiday commemorating the freedom of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt under the leadership of Moses, who was directed by God. The account is found in Exodus, the second book of the Hebrew Scriptures and the Christian Old Testament. Passover takes its name from God’s instruction to the Israelites to mark the upper part of their homes’ doors with lamb’s blood so the Angel of Death would “pass over” their homes as he killed the firstborn male of each family in Egypt during the 10th plague. Passover, also called by its Hebrew name “Pesach”, is celebrated in late March or early April and lasts for seven days in Israel, though most outside of Israel celebrate for eight days. On the first two nights of Passover, it is traditional for a Jewish family to gather for a special dinner called a “seder” in which the story of the Exodus is retold. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

PURIM:

The Jewish holiday also called the “Feast of Lots”, held in February or March. As recorded in the Hebrew Scriptures, Purim commemorates the deliverance of the Jews by Queen Esther from a massacre plotted by the Persian vizier Haman. It is a joyous festival that is celebrated by publicly reading the “Megillah” (the Book of Esther), dressing in colorful costumes, and regaling the community with humorous Purim plays and skits. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

RABBI:

Hebrew word for “teacher” and the title used by Jewish clergy. Sometimes spelled “rebbe”.

ACTION: On first reference, capitalize before a name. On second reference use only the cleric’s last name. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

REFORM JUDAISM:

One of the three branches of Judaism. Originated in Germany in the 1700s, Reform Judaism is a more liberal form of Judaism than the Orthodox and conservative branches. It is rooted in the belief that an individual’s personal autonomy overrides traditional Jewish law and custom. The individual decides which Jewish practices, if any, to adopt. It also believes that both traditional rabbinic modes of study and less traditional ones are valid ways to learn about and from the Hebrew Bible. Reform Judaism is also more accommodating to modern lifestyles and ideas. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

ROSH HASHANAH:

The Jewish New Year, celebrated according to the Hebrew calendar sometime between the middle of September and the middle of October. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SEDER:

The ritualized dinner held in Jewish homes on the first night or first two nights of Passover. The term “seder” means “order” in Hebrew. It commemorates the Jews’

escape from slavery in Egypt as described in the book of Exodus, and it features special foods and the reading of the “Haggadah”, a compilation of biblical passages, prayers, hymns, and rabbinic literature. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SEPHARDI:

A Jew of Portuguese, Spanish or North African descent. Originally, Sephardi meant a Jew descended from the Iberian Peninsula, but it has now come to mean Jews who are not Ashkenazim, including Jews from Arab countries and Greece. Sephardic Jews are estimated to make up 20 percent of the world’s Jewish population. “Sephardim” is the plural form of the term and “Sephardic” is the adjective form of the term. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SHABBAT:

Hebrew word for “Sabbath”. The Jewish Sabbath is from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. Shabbat is observed by lighting candles on Friday night (this is usually done by the woman of the house) and sharing a special family meal. Religious services that include a reading from the Torah happen on Saturday morning, after which families gather for a Shabbat lunch. Shabbat ends with the lighting of a three-wicked “havdalah” candle and the passing around of a fragrant spice box, the scent of which is supposed to carry the peace of Shabbat into the work week. Orthodox Jews refrain from driving, turning lights on or off, and a number of other activities that are considered “work” on Shabbat. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SHAVUOT:

The name for the Jewish Feast of Weeks, which commemorates Moses’ receiving of the Ten Commandments. Shavuot falls 49 days after Passover. These days are counted out ritually by Jews in a practice known as “Counting the Omer”. Shavuot occurs in May or June. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SHEMA:

Considered the most important prayer in Judaism, it



consists of Deuteronomy 6:4-9, which begins, “Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One.” *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SHIVAH:

The Jewish term for the seven-day period of mourning after a close relative’s funeral. The ritual is referred to as “sitting shivah”. During shivah, mourners abstain from work, sex, learning, and following other rules. Mourners often sit on low stools or benches to symbolize how they are brought low by grief, and they cover all mirrors in the shivah house to focus on the deceased rather than on their own vanity. The purpose of shivah is to honor the dead and to help the mourner grieve. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SHMINI ATZERET:

Jewish holiday celebrated eight days after the beginning of “Sukkot”. The term “shmini” means “the eighth”. See “Sukkot”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SHOAH:

The Hebrew word for “Holocaust”. The memorial day for those who died in the Holocaust is called “Yom Hashoah” and takes place in March or April. See “Holocaust”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SIMCHAT TORAH:

A Jewish holiday marking the completion of the yearlong cycle during which the entire Torah is read. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

STAR OF DAVID:

See “Magen David”.

SUKKOT:

Seven-day Jewish festival commemorating the Israelites’ life as they wandered 40 years in the desert after being liberated from slavery in Egypt. “Sukkot” is the term for the booths the Israelites lived in. Also called the “Feast of the Booths” or the “Feast of the Tabernacles”. It is considered one of the most important

Jewish holidays and occurs during September or October. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

SYNAGOGUE:

Jewish place of worship. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

TALMUD:

The extensive written body of interpretation and commentary by scholarly ancient rabbis of the oral law believed to have been given by God to Moses at Mount Sinai. The Talmud is made up of the “Mishnah” (the written version of early Jewish oral law) and the “Gemara” (the interpretation and comments on the Mishnah and other traditional texts). The Talmud constitutes the basis of religious authority in Orthodox Judaism and is distinct from the written law of the Torah. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

TANACH:

The technical name for the entire Hebrew Bible. It includes the Torah, the Prophets, and the Sacred Writings, organized into 24 books. Sometimes spelled “Tanakh”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

TEN COMMANDMENTS:

The biblical edicts handed to Moses by God atop Mount Sinai. They are the basis of Mosaic Law. The commandments are numbered differently by Jews and by different Christian traditions, including Orthodox, Protestant and Catholic Christians. The different numbering and wording (according to the biblical translation chosen) is one factor that has made public posting of the Ten Commandments controversial. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

TORAH:

The Jewish sacred writings found in the first five books of the Hebrew Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy). Also called “the Five Books of Moses”, the Torah is copied by specialized scribes onto parchment scrolls and is treated with great care and respect by Jewish congregations. The term “Torah” is sometimes also used to describe the



larger body of Jew-ish law and scripture. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

Yahrzeit:

In Judaism, the anniversary of the death of an immediate family member, marked by the lighting of a “yahrzeit” candle that burns for 24 hours. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

Yahweh:

An English translation of the four Hebrew letters usually transliterated as “YHWH” that form the name of God. Jews do not attempt to pronounce this name, as they believe that would risk taking the name of God in vain. Wherever it appears in Scripture, they say “Adonai” meaning “my Lord” instead. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

Yarmulke:

Yiddish name for the skullcap traditionally worn by Jewish men in synagogue, and by some Jewish men at all times. It is a symbol of humility and submission to God. It is sometimes also referred to by its Hebrew name, “kippah”, which means “dome”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

Yom Hashoah:

The Hebrew words for Holocaust Remembrance Day, which commemorates the victims of the Holocaust and takes place on the 27th day of the month of Nisan in the Jewish calendar. It is a national memorial day in Israel. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

Yom Kippur:

The Jewish “Day of Atonement”, which takes place on the 10th day of the Jewish month of Tishri — September or October of the Gregorian calendar. Yom Kippur is marked by spending the day in prayer; forgoing food, drink and work; and repenting for misdeeds of the past year. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

Zionism:

A modern movement in Judaism rooted in the establishment of a separate Jewish nation. The movement is based on what is believed to be God’s biblical promise that Israel would forever belong to Abraham and his descendants as a nation. Many Zionists do not have religious motives, but believe a Jewish state is necessary because of the long history of persecution of Jews. That goal was realized with the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948. Zionism refers to Mount Zion, the site of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem. A “Zionist” is a supporter of Zionism. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

POLITICAL MOVEMENTS WITH RELIGIOUS UNDERTONES OR MOTIVATIONS

AL-QAIDA:

The international network of militant terrorists associated with Osama bin Laden and an extremist form of Islam. The terrorist group achieved pre-eminence following its success in carrying out the 9/11 attack against New York and Washington. In Arabic, al-Qaida means “the base”. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook, Terrorism, Crime and Public Policy*

HAMAS:

An Islamic political party in Palestine. An armed wing of the party uses the same name. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

HEZBOLLAH:

A Shia political party in Lebanon. An armed wing of the party uses the same name. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY (IRA):

An umbrella of Irish Catholic militia groups that fought to end British rule in Northern Ireland and make Northern Ireland a part of the Republic of Ireland. *SOURCE: Terrorism, Crime and Public Policy*

ISIS:

A militant terrorist group primarily in Iraq and Syria. When ISIS first emerged on the scene a few years ago, it went by the name “Daesh” which is an Arabic acronym for The “Islamic State of Iraq and Greater Syria”. In English, some refer to the group as ISIS (The Islamic State of Iraq and Syria) or ISIL (The Islamic State of Iraq and Levant). Other names include IS (The Islamic State), which is the name the group uses to describe itself in its English propaganda material.

ACTION: The name of this group has caused a lot of stir among journalists. Whatever name you choose, make sure to be consistent and use the term the organization publishing your story prefers. Note: At least one major Canadian publication has adopted the term “Daesh”. *SOURCE: International Journalists Network, The Toronto Star*

JEWISH DEFENCE LEAGUE (JDL):

The Jewish Defense League (JDL) is a far-right religious-political organization that preaches anti-Arab, Jewish nationalism. The group has orchestrated countless terrorist attacks in the U.S. and abroad, and has engaged in intense harassment of foreign diplomats, Muslims, Jewish scholars and community leaders, and officials. The JDL today has chapters in Eastern Europe, Canada, Australia, South Africa, Russia, and the United Kingdom, in addition to those in the U.S. The FBI deemed the U.S. chapter a right-wing terrorist group in their report “Terrorism 2000/2001”. *SOURCE: Southern Poverty Law Centre, Anti-Defamation League*

KU KLUX KLAN (KKK):

A terrorist group in the United States that advocates white supremacy and opposes immigration. Today the Klan continues to draw support from racist extremists, although not nearly at the numbers or levels of violence associated with its heydays in the 1870s and 1920s. *SOURCE: Terrorism, Crime and Public Policy*

LIBERATION TIGERS OF TAMIL EELAM (LTTE):

Also known as the “Tamil Tigers”. It is a militant group in Sri Lanka that was at war with the government for close to 30 years. Its aim was the establishment of a homeland for the Tamil ethnic minority in the predominantly Buddhist and Sinhalese nation (most, but not all Tamils are Hindu). The civil war came to an end in 2009. *SOURCE: SAJA*

LORD’S RESISTANCE ARMY (LRA):

A quasi-religious rebel group in Uganda led by Joseph Kony. The LRA began life in the early 1980’s as the “Holy Spirit Movement”, led by a woman called Alice Lakwena. Lakwena claimed the Holy Spirit had ordered her to overthrow the Ugandan government, which was accused of treating the Acholi people of the North unfairly. As resentment towards the Ugandan government intensified, supporters flocked to Lakwena and the Holy Spirit Movement gathered momentum, until a battle won by the government led to Lakwena’s exile. With no clear direction for the movement, a man claiming to be Lakwena’s cousin, Joseph Kony, took over as leader and rebranded the movement in 1986 as the “Lord’s Resistance Army”. Kony initially stated that the LRA’s mission was to overthrow the government and rule Uganda based on the Ten Commandments. He rapidly lost support, however, and in frustration Kony began abducting thousands of children to swell its ranks, turning them into killers and unleashing them on villages. *SOURCE: WarChild.org*

RASTAFARI:

A political and religious movement among blacks in Jamaica and several other countries. This movement dates back to the 1930s. Members of Rastafari, known as Rastafarians, believe that Haile Selassie (originally known as Ras Tafari), a former emperor of Ethiopia, is the only true God and they consider him the messiah. They believe that black people are the Israelites reincarnated and have been subjected to the

white race in divine punishment for their sins; they will eventually be redeemed by repatriation to Africa. These beliefs, first enunciated in 1953, can be traced to several independent proponents, particularly Marcus Garvey. Some Rastafarian rituals include the use of marijuana, considered a holy weed, and the chanting of revivalist hymns. Reggae music is the popular music of the movement.

ACTION: Caution. Only use when interview subject identifies as Rastafarian. Do not use to describe those who may be interested in cultural elements that are sometimes associated with Rastafari – dreadlocks, marijuana, etc. *SOURCE: NABJ*

TALIBAN:

“Talib” means “student” in Pashto; “taliban” is its plural form. Today the term “Taliban” refers usually to the Islamic fundamentalist movement that ruled Afghanistan from 1996 until its overthrow by forces of the Northern Alliance and NATO in 2001. Many members of the Taliban fled to the mountains in the Waziristan province of north-western Pakistan. The Taliban have regrouped and since 2004 have operated as insurgents in both Afghanistan and Pakistan. *SOURCE: Terrorism, Crime and Public Policy*

WAHHABISM:

An austere form of Islam dominant in Saudi Arabia and Qatar that follows a strict, literal interpretation of the Quran. A follower of Wahhabism is called a “Wahhabi”. Most people in the West knew nothing of Wahhabism until after the 9/11 attacks, which were organized by the terrorist Osama bin Laden, a Wahhabi. Wahhabism has spread rapidly since the 1970s, when the oil-rich Saudi royal family began contributing money to it. It is considered a puritanical form of Sunni Islam that strictly enforces rules and criticizes those who follow other traditions of Islam. *SOURCE: Religion Stylebook*

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