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1. 2016

1.1 February

Sacred Animals in Religions (2016-02-14 10:46)

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1. <https://wordpress.com/page/109926795/new/>

1.2 March

Hinduism and Cows (2016-03-13 19:03)

Throughout their history, the practitioners of Hinduism have held cows in high regard. In fact, they view cows as one of the most sacred animals in their religion. The cow was always considered to be pure and represent goodness and love, and this attitude is reflected within their society. Within India, cows often walk the streets and are widely protected from being slaughtered and consumed, usually by law. In some places, such as holy sites, cows are forbidden to even be approached at all. The sacredness of the cow is often mentioned Hindu religious texts. The cow is often associated with Lord Krishna due to Lord Krishna's habit of appearing as a cattle herder in stories, so often in fact that one of his namesakes even became "the child who protects cows". In certain Hindu texts, cows are depicted as the "mother" of civilization, so clearly the protection of cows is big within Hinduism and areas in which Hinduism is also the dominant religion. Additionally, the sacredness of the cow is also represented in the Hindu deities as the goddess, Kamadhenu. Kamadhenu is represented as a celestial cow and known as the mother of all Gods in Hindu scriptures, and thus cows take on Kamadhenu's role as a representation of mother nature itself. Also due to obvious connotation between a cow's milk and the concept of motherhood, the cow's supply of milk is repeatedly depicted as an object of nurturing or healing in certain religious stories.

1.3 April

Ancient Egypt and Cats (2016-04-04 13:43)

Ancient Egyptians often believed that cats were very sacred and would worship them highly. Cats often were associated with many Egyptian gods and goddesses and were the highest worshiped animal by the Egyptian people. The Egyptian people often put these sacred cats on different types of amulets and decorations and other various things. The Egyptians' high status for the cats began with the powerful deities that the people worshiped. Also, due to the Egyptians' rodent and snake problems, the cat was almost similar to saviors in that they preyed on these species which saved many of the crops that the people were growing. The feline was often seen as a good luck charm or protection in a person's everyday life and widely worshiped for these reasons. In many Egyptian texts, the goddesses, Bastet and Sekmet, in which are counterparts to one another. The goddess Bastet is a feline goddess in which was often prayed to for protection of one's home, family and also fertility. As a result of the cat representing a powerful deity, the feline species itself was thought to be simply a physical symbol of the goddess and therefore it was treated almost god-like. In Egypt, cats were not allowed to be harmed due to their "powers" and luck that they bring to the Egyptian culture. There were several laws that would forbid the harming of a cat and also the enforcement of the people in which harming a cat would result in death. For many Egyptians, for a person to harm a cat would seem to be compared to almost harming or threatening a goddess.

Native Americans and the Buffalo (2016-04-09 14:39)

The Native Americans over centuries have considered lots of animals to be sacred based upon different stories told about these animals over time. One of the most prominent sacred animal of the Native Americans was the American Buffalo. The American buffalo/bison was often seen as a symbol of survival and manifestation throughout many of different tribes. Unlike other cultures and religions, the Native American communities believed in using the buffalo to survive. The buffalo was one of the most prominent species around the Native American tribes and could be used for food, shelter, clothes, and other necessities in the tribes. The buffalo's representation as a symbol of survival and the sacredness behind why the buffalo is so widely revered throughout Native American history goes back to different stories and texts written about the white buffalo. The White Buffalo is considered the most sacred out of all of the different buffalo due to its significance and representation of the Creator. In old stories, a woman dressed in white buckskin told a young man to go to his village and teach the people how to pray and prepare for her arrival. As a gift she left a prayer pipe and taught them the different ceremonies of prayer including prayers to purify the body and spirit and also prayer for protection and thanks for family. As she left, she told them that she would return within four ages and as she walked off she turned into 4 different colors (black, yellow, red, and white) before disappearing. The buffalo and specifically the white buffalo almost represents a savior of the Native Americans giving them a prayer pipe so that they can live and pray correctly. The buffalo in a way represents the Creator to the Native Americans as a way of survival and often honored due to the different benefits and aids to survival that it provides.

Buddhism and Elephants (2016-04-10 19:29)

Buddhism over the years has mainly been known for its beliefs of the protection of all animals in the world. Buddhism believes that various animals are sacred and hold some sort of special significance within the culture. One of the most sacred animals in Buddhism and throughout the centuries is the elephant. The elephant in Buddhism is believed to represent a symbol for mental and physical strength. Also in many societies, elephants were also considered to be good luck and bring fortune to the society in which the elephants are in. The elephant's sacredness in Buddhism goes back to texts in which has many mentions of an elephant or a white elephant. In many depictions Buddha was believed to be born as an elephant in different lives. The white elephant also signifies wisdom and is also a symbol of good luck and family. In other parts of Buddhist texts and stories, the white elephant appears again in a dream of Buddha's mother in which she saw a white elephant tell of her pregnancy. A white elephant is thought to be the purest elephant of the species due to its representation in Buddhist texts and stories. The luck of the elephant and representation in which it holds in a community gives it the sacred status in which it holds. In areas where Buddhism is prominent, elephants are more abundant it is customary not to harm an elephant due to the significance and connection it holds to Buddha in that it is similarly a representation of the prosperity it brings as in the texts. The white elephant is often rare to see but it is represented as pure and a mind that is under control and is usually associated with those of royalty in cities in which they are found and mainly belong to royal families.

Chinese Culture and the Tiger (2016-04-15 10:50)

In China, the Tiger is recognized as one of the most sacred animals throughout the culture. The tiger is celebrated during the Year of the Tiger in the Zodiac of the Chinese culture. The tiger was traditionally seen to be a lucky symbol to the Chinese people and thought to be a king due to the symbol on its forehead is similar to the Chinese word for king. It is often believed that they protect the Chinese people from any evil when celebrated during the New Year. The tiger is often depicted in paintings in homes or in any sort of representation to guarantee safekeeping and is seen a symbol of strength and courage to the Chinese people. The tiger was often mentioned in ancient Chinese religions such as Taoism. Many folk tales and stories portrayed the tiger to kill evil and always defending good. The founder of Taoism, Chang Tao-Lang, is depicted riding on top of a tiger in many stories and paintings. In the old Chinese stories, it is known that the tiger helped Chang Tao-Ling fight evil and defeat the king of demons before ascending to the heavens. The tiger itself is almost seen as a deity to the people in the Chinese culture. It is believed that the tiger holds the spirits of the ancient ancestors who were protecting them. It is prayed to for protection and worshipped by the Chinese people. In many ancient Chinese tribes killing a tiger was considered an unbelievable sin and usually resulted in death.



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