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## **JMI MA Comparative Religions and Civilizations Entrance Syllabus**

**Centre for the Study of Comparative Religions and Civilizations**

*Jamia Millia Islamia New Delhi 110025*

|                      |                                                               |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Maximum marks</b> | 100 marks                                                     |
| <b>Part A</b>        | Multiple Choice Questions 60 marks                            |
| <b>Part B</b>        | Descriptive or Essay Type Questions 40 marks                  |
| <b>Core domain</b>   | Major religions, civilizations, thinkers and reform movements |

**Official syllabus reorganised for focused preparation**

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### **Entrance Test Overview**

The M.A. Comparative Religions entrance test consists of two sections. Both sections require broad knowledge of world religions, religious traditions, ancient civilizations, major social and religious thinkers, and movements of reform and change.

### **Examination Pattern**

| <b>Part</b> | <b>Question type</b>      | <b>Marks</b> | <b>Assessment focus</b>                                                               |
|-------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>A</b>    | Multiple Choice Questions | 60           | Factual knowledge, concepts, texts, traditions, thinkers and historical developments. |



|          |                           |    |                                                                                   |
|----------|---------------------------|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>B</b> | Descriptive or Essay Type | 40 | Explanation, comparison, interpretation, analysis and organised academic writing. |
|----------|---------------------------|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## Official Syllabus Areas

### 1 Major World Religions

- History, sacred texts and scriptures, philosophies, doctrines and practices.
- Sectarian developments, growth, reform and revivalist movements.
- Pilgrimage traditions and holy or sacred places.
- Multi-dimensional study of Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and various indigenous religions.

### 2 Early Religious Traditions

- Animism, myths and taboos.
- The distinction between the Sacred and the Profane.

### 3 Ancient Civilizations

- Basic knowledge of the major ancient civilizations of the world.

### 4 Thinkers and Theorists

- Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, M. N. Srinivas, William James and G. W. F. Hegel.
- Ibn Sina and Al-Ghazali.
- Their influential social, political, philosophical and religious ideas.

### 5 Religion Reformation and Social Change

- Religion and reformation; dynamics of change and social realism.
- Bhakti and Sufism.
- Socio-religious reform movements of nineteenth- and twentieth-century India.

## Expanded Preparation Guide

The following framework clarifies the official syllabus for systematic revision. Candidates should prepare both factual information for Part A and comparative, analytical arguments for Part B.

### Comparative study of religions

- Origins and historical development; founders and major personalities; key beliefs concerning ultimate reality, human nature, salvation or liberation and the afterlife.
- Canonical texts, rituals, festivals, ethics, institutions, sects, reform movements, pilgrimage and sacred geography.
- Similarities and differences among traditions without reducing their historical and cultural distinctiveness.



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## Early religion and key concepts

- Animism, myth, ritual, taboo, symbolism and community practices.
- Sacred and Profane as categories for understanding religious space, time, objects and conduct.

## Civilizations and religion

- Religion and society in ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Indus Valley, Chinese, Greek and Roman civilizations.
- Connections among political authority, sacred institutions, law, culture and social order.

## Thinkers and theories

- Marx on religion and social relations; Weber on religion and social action; Durkheim on religion and society.
- M. N. Srinivas on Indian society; William James on religious experience; Hegel on religion and history.
- Ibn Sina and Al-Ghazali in Islamic philosophy, theology and intellectual history.

## Reform and social change

- Bhakti and Sufi traditions, devotional expression and social implications.
- Major nineteenth- and twentieth-century Indian socio-religious reform movements, leaders, institutions and objectives.
- Religion, modernity, social realism, identity, reform, revival and change.

## Preparation Strategy

**For Part A:** Revise founders, dates, scriptures, doctrines, sects, sacred places, thinkers, concepts and reform movements through timed MCQ practice.

**For Part B:** Write comparative answers with a clear introduction, relevant examples, balanced analysis and a focused conclusion.

**For revision:** Prepare concise religion-wise profiles and thinker-wise concept sheets, then connect them with broader questions of civilization and social change.

## Quick Revision Checklist

- ☐ Hinduism
- ☐ Jainism
- ☐ Buddhism
- ☐ Sikhism
- ☐ Zoroastrianism
- ☐ Judaism
- ☐ Christianity
- ☐ Islam
- ☐ Indigenous religions



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- 
- ☐ Sacred texts and scriptures
  - ☐ Philosophies doctrines and practices
  - ☐ Sects reform and revival movements
  - ☐ Pilgrimage and sacred places
  - ☐ Animism myths and taboos
  - ☐ Sacred and Profane
  - ☐ Ancient civilizations
  - ☐ Marx Weber Durkheim and M. N. Srinivas
  - ☐ William James and Hegel
  - ☐ Ibn Sina and Al-Ghazali
  - ☐ Bhakti and Sufism
  - ☐ Indian socio-religious reform movements
  - ☐ Essay and comparative answer practice

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