

Not sure

Religion



Syncretism In a broad sense, the term syncretism refers to the reconciliation of ideas (philosophical, religious, etc.) from different cultural backgrounds. It involves the synthesis of thoughts and different lifestyles. For example, the arrival of Europeans to America in the sixteenth century resulted in the mixture or miscegenation between ideas and customs from the old world and the Amerindian peoples.

Syncretism is basically a process through which identity becomes a cult from the convergence of rites and beliefs from different religious traditions.

An example is in the development of Catholicism. This was confronted with different beliefs competing with it, for example, the belief in God Mithras Sol. One form of syncretism that appealed to the Church was to introduce the image of the sun in the figures of Jesus and the Saints. This figure appears as a halo or ring around the head of the sanctified. Moreover, in many religious systems we can find some degree of syncretism.

Islam and Confucianism are clearly the hardest to syncretize with each other. Indeed they do have certain similarities between them, but still it is more difficult to syncretize the two as compared to Judaism or Buddhism with Confucianism.

Confucianism was brought about by K'ung Fu Tzu (Confucius). He travelled all over China and advised the rulers. He usually preached about morals and ethical values, and how political power should be exercised properly.

According to Confucianism it is important for a person to have etiquette; he should be righteous; he should act benevolently with everyone and this, Tzu considered to be the most important virtue; there should be love among family members; and lastly, a person should show his loyalty toward his country.

All these features are part and parcel of almost every religion, although in varying importance. Every religion teaches one to be good and treat others well too. However, Confucianism focuses only on this aspect of life.

Confucianism is not an actual religion with God to pray to. It is basically more of an ethical system that has clarified certain traditions and rituals to be followed at the important periods of one's life; for instance, birth, maturity, marriage and death.

Islam, on the other hand, is a monotheist religion. This means there is one God that the followers of Islam pray and worship. The Muslims believe that He created the universe and He is omnipotent. Islam is, comparatively, a very young religion. Muslims also believe in the previous prophets, Abraham, David, Moses and Jesus, and consider Muhammad to be the last of the prophets of God. However, they do not consider Jesus to be the son of God as it is their belief that God cannot be associated with anyone.

According to Islamic teachings Muslims are supposed to pray to God five times a day at prescribed times. They are required to give a small part of their money to charity. They have to fast during the month of Ramadan. Lastly, they are required to make pilgrimage to Mecca if their financial and physical situation allows them to.

Besides these rules, Muslims are expected to adhere to a strict code of conduct. They have to maintain a friendly demeanor with everyone. They are expected to help others and consider them their own brother. In Islam parents are to be given the highest status, after God.

Work Cited

Adler, Joseph A. Chinese Religious Traditions. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002.

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