

# Syncretism

**A combination of separate concepts into one new, unique idea**

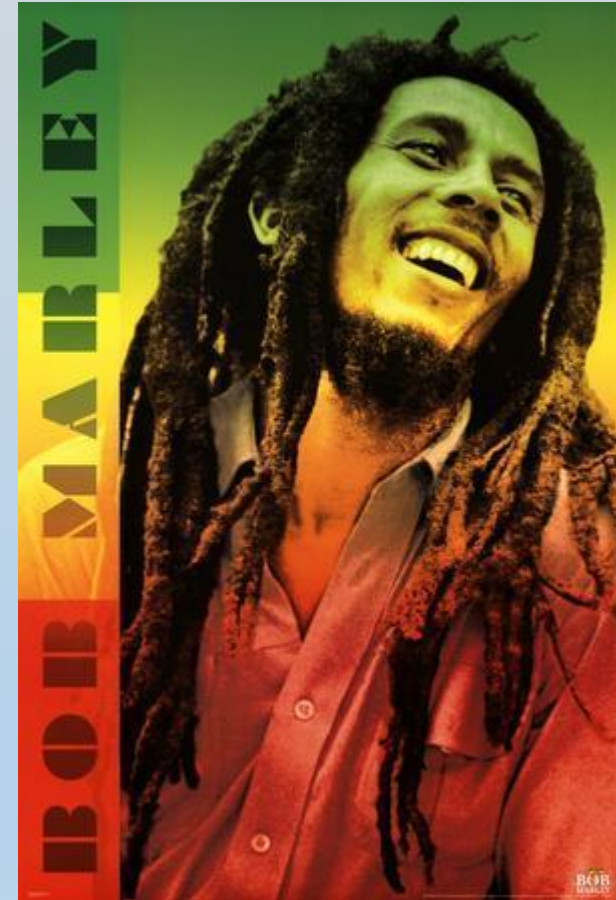


# What is Syncretism?

- **The combining or blending of different cultures or beliefs obtained from various origins and schools of thought.**
- **Religious syncretism exhibits blending of two or more religious belief systems into a new system, or the incorporation into an existing religious tradition of beliefs from unrelated beliefs.**
- **A new or distinct cultural system or religion is formed.**
- **Cultural Example: Rastafarian Movement**
- **Religious Example: Sikhism**

# The Rastafarian Movement

- A religious movement of Jamaican origin holding that blacks are the chosen people, that Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia was the Messiah, and that black people will eventually return to their Africa.
- Rastafarians have distinctive codes of behavior and dress, including the wearing of dreadlocks, the smoking of cannabis, the rejection of Western medicine, and adherence to a diet that excludes pork, shellfish, and milk.



# Sikhism



- The word Sikh is derived from a Sanskrit word meaning 'disciple', or one who learns.
- Sikhs believe in reincarnation and karma concepts found in Buddhism, Hinduism and Jainism. However, in Sikhism both karma and liberation "is modified by the concept of God's grace" Guru Nanak states "The body takes birth because of karma, but salvation is attained through grace"

# Positive Effects of Syncretism

**An excellent example is seen with the Mongols**

- **Transferred their capital to Khanbalique (Beijing) and settled down to a sedentary (peaceful) way of life**
- **Adopted the Chinese Dynastic System**
- **Adopted some Confucian and Daoist Practices**
- **Adopted the Chinese tax and postal systems**
- **Mongolian nomads were not allowed to pasture animals on Chinese farm lands**

# There are Negative Effects of Syncretism

- **Syncretism also reflects a stubborn resistance to blending or combining of cultural beliefs**
- **Both cultures hold on to certain long-lasting aspects of their culture and people become resistant and refuse to change their old ways**
- **Throughout history, many people, especially the elderly, are very reluctant to give their old ways of life.**
- **For many, Change is NOT an option!**

# Negative Effects of Syncretism

**The Mongols held on to many of their old ways and traditions**

- **New Mongol aristocracy preferred nomadic life, giving birth in traditional yurts**
- **Only a few Mongols learned Chinese**
- **Intermarriage was forbidden**
- **The Chinese examination system was discouraged and administrative positions were filled by foreigners**
- **Chinese scholars were not allowed to learn Mongolian language**
- **Mongolian culture prized merchants more than Chinese culture**

# Colonial Mexico painting by Miguel Cabrera



Identify Three (3) examples of syncretism in this picture.

1.

2.

3.



# Modern Day Syncretism

## Positive or Negative?





**THE END**