

Caribbean Religions: Classification

Neo-African Religions -that have maintained a significant number of African traditions:

Dominican Republic – Santería, Vodou
Cuba: Santería
Trinidad and Tobago: Orisha
Granada – Orisha
Haiti – Vodou
Brazil (Bahia State) - Candomblé, Macumba
Puerto Rico – Santería

Ancestral Religions _religious that emphasize the reverence of ancestors:

St Vincent - Convince
Jamaica - Cumina, Convince
Cariacou and Granada – Big Drum, Shango, Spiritual Baptists
St Lucia - Kélé
Brazil – Candomblé, Macumba
Trinidad and Tobago – Spiritual Baptists, Shango
Montserrat – Tsombé

Revivalist Religions - Religions that combined neo-African with Protestant evangelical traditions:

Trinidad and Tobago - Spiritual Baptists, Shouters
St. Vincent – Streams of Power
Haiti – Native Baptists, Ethiopian Baptists
Brazil: Macumba

Divination Religions – Emphasize the reading into an object to predict the future:

Brazil - Macumba
Jamaica – Myalism
Venezuela – Maria Lionza
Puerto Rico - Espiritismo and various Spiritist sects

Socio-Political Religions – Emphasize social justice and political change:

Jamaica, St. Thomas, St. Vincent, Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti and other parts of the Caribbean – Rastafari

Other Imports:

Curacao, Bonaire, Aruba, St. Thomas, Barbados, Puerto Rico, and other parts of the Caribbean – Judaism

Islam – Guyana, Haiti, Trinidad

Hinduism – Trinidad, Guyana

These classifications are merely theoretical and the differences between these religions are not mutually exclusive because some of the teachings of one religion in one category are found in the theologies of others. Moreover, European religions such as Catholicism in the Latin Caribbean and the Church of England in the Anglo-Caribbean were imposed on the indigenous religious of Amerindian peoples of the Caribbean and those of the imported African slaves. Although Caribbean religions are legacies of the colonial order, they continue to occupy important social positions across all the social classes. Catholic and Anglican imposition contributed to the creation of hybrid or syncretic amalgamations for the vast majority of people who incorporated the European dominant modes into their own beliefs and practices.