

Religion has been part of the human's evolution throughout our history. The role it plays differs in every culture but for each one it has a huge impact on their culture, and it helps a community build their identity for the people that belong to that group. As we have been able to see this on other cultures in different times in history. We are also able to see it in ancient Japan. From that we can analyze it and try to understand it and role it played in ancient Japan, and how the people lived their everyday life with these beliefs. For instance, did people feel have strong beliefs on their religion. Also, were any other religions that tried being implemented in their beliefs to people or did everyone seem to believe on one thing.

During the ancient history of Japan, Buddhism played a big role in religion. They were people that needed to be respected because they were people that guided them through the good path. In some way they were the chosen ones to carry on the wise words. For example, it was believed that if you disrespected a monk then you were asking for trouble. As we were able to see in "Miraculous Stories from the Japanese Buddhist Tradition" when you disrespect a monk then things do not go well. As Kyoko said, "At this he became angry and immediately went to the temple to bring his wife back. The officiating monk saw it and tried to enlighten him preaching the Buddhist doctrine. However, he would not listen to the monk, saying. None of your nonsense! You vulgar monk, you seduced my wife! Watch out or you'll get your head smashed. He brought on his own death, immediate retribution, since he was so evil minded as insult the monk unreservedly and not to refrain from wicked lust. Even if you have a hundred tongues in your mouth and utter a thousand words, never speak ill of monks. Otherwise you will incur immediate penalties" (Kyoko, 62). Missing around with the monk did not go well for the person causing the trouble. It was better that if did not like them or believe in their practices then just avoid them because the consequences were not good.

Not all the time did Buddhist had to do with bad things that happen to people. In other occasions they were the hope people were looking to try and improve their life. As Kyoko said, "In the reign of Emperor Shomu, there lived a woman on the west side of Daian-ji in the capital of Nara. She was extremely poor and, being without any means of livelihood, suffered from hunger. Having heard that the Sixteen-foot Buddha of Daian-ji was ready to grant wishes immediately, she bought flowers, incense, and lamp oil, and went to make a petition before the Buddha, saying. "As I did not produce good causes in my previous lives, I am suffering from extreme poverty in my present body. Please give me some wealth to save me from dire poverty" (Kyoko, 65). We could see that the Buddhist were seen as helpers and people would look up to them to get answers for their payers.

In some other situations people had someone they liked and loved them to guide them through life. For example, in the history of the kingdom of Wei. There was a person they worship. Her name was Pimiko, it was presumed she had some kind of special powers. For instance, it was believed "she occupied herself with magic and sorcery, bewitching the people" (Accounts of the Eastern Barbarians, 7). She was able to manipulate the people to think she had some kind of power and from that she was able to gain her power and rule in the way she wished. She did a very nice job with that because no one was willing to challenge her powers for being scared of "powers". Overall, Pimiko was a very loved person among her group. This was able to be seen when she passed away, "When Pimiko passed away, a great mound was raised, more than a hundred paces in diameter. Over a hundred male and female attendants followed her to the grave. Then a king was placed on the throne, but the people would not

obey him” (Accounts of the Eastern Barbarians, 8). As we could see, people saw Pimiko as a great leader and respected her, and they did not care if she really had those powers or not. Pimiko was forever loved and missed when she passed away.

The way that the religious beliefs in Japan mixed was that both had some type of mysterious power. This power differentiated them from the rest of the people and for that reason they became the leaders of their religious beliefs. If non-believers or people that mess around with them, then they would face the consequences of the powers. Also, we can see that the people were stronger believers of their leaders. For example, with Pimiko many people did not support their leader after she had passed away. Pimiko was very loved and respected and it was seen also when she died and with the amount of people that showed up to her grave. People really were believers of their religion.

The continuity I saw between the examples was the power their leaders' poses was the key to them being able to teach/persuade their beliefs into people since they were different from the rest of the population in their culture and classes. With examples I provided I was able to notice that in one religion has the ability to do good and bad things with their powers. While the other one only had the power to like punish people for their bad doing. Other than that I was not able to notice much differences between religions. They were pretty much clear on how they impose their religion to the people and how the people accepted what these people were telling them.

Overall, we were able to see how some religious beliefs impacted the people's life during this time. We saw that there was a lot of spiritual and supernatural things that made the religious beliefs unique. Now we have the privilege to learn about this and we can compare it to our religious beliefs. In my opinion, I think that every religion has something that connects to the others and because of that we will always share something as humanity. Also, we have the ability to learn from other religions in the past to help us understand the lifestyle the people from that time lived. I believe that as humanity we will always depend on religion to help us keep hope of life and thank it for when some type of miracle occurs. Religion has existed in the past, present and it will exist for the rest of humanity in this world.