

East vs. west

Business



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According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the term “ westernization” is defined as “ conversion to or adoption of western traditions or techniques.” I’m sure many of us have heard this term being widely used concerning affairs in the East. And westernization may very well have provoked mixed feelings within modern-day Eastern nations. So now – my theories. What is really dividing the East and the West? And for my first order of business – religion. Over in the East, westernization has often been blamed as the roots for all kinds of conflicts.

There is no doubt that westernization would have an impact on Eastern culture – the only issue is determining whether or not the effect was “ good” or “ bad”. To illustrate just one example, the muse of several Islamic extremist groups such as Boko Haram, ISIS, and others is their belief that westernization has corrupted Islam in the East. One of the earliest cases of this started around the 1960’s in the Middle East; Islamic countries began altering their cultures in order to fit within the standards held by modernization. The Shah of Iran, for instance, adopted the aspects of “ modernized” nations such as giving voting rights to women and forming political parties. As a result, however, a number of people protested against the Shah’s actions, and have been holding revolts and protests against what they called the “ westoxification” of their civilization’s long-held customs to this day. “ Westoxification.

” Clearly a negative perception of westernization. It is evident that a number of stereotypes about Westerners have been circulating within the Muslim population in the East, and vice versa. According to the Pew Research Global Attitudes Project, over 50% of Muslims in the East perceive Westerners as

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selfish, violent, sinful, and wild. Less than 50% of the Muslims do not believe Westerners possess qualities such as respect towards women, honesty, or generosity. In the West, however, few people say that Muslims are greedy or immoral, but that Muslims are, in fact, disrespectful towards women. In addition, about 50% of Westerners say that Muslims are chaotic, and roughly 58% perceive them as fanatical.

Now, those are a lot of numbers to take in – and I didn't write all of that to stuff your brain with facts. Westernization has gotten a bad rep by some people in the East – Muslims in the East are just one example, and these statistics just give an idea as to the stereotypes and irrational judgments that are now being made. There are countless other examples to be used – whether or not westernization is responsible for the climbing obesity rates in China, or homosexuality becoming present in India. And even though westernization can evidently be used as an excuse for the controversies which nations in the East are beginning to encounter, several other aspects which are arising in the East can be argued as a positive effect of westernization on Eastern culture. Another example of is the modernization of China, which has now become an economic global superpower.

Earlier this year, a prediction determined by the International Monetary Fund surmised that the rate of China's economic growth this year would be 7.5% – almost three times America's own 2.8% forecast. Then there is the fascinating education standards in India – in the year 2004, for example, 950,000 engineers graduated from China and India, whereas there were only 70,000 in the U. S.

So many questions can emerge while discussing the topic of westernization, and the unresolved issues of the East and West. Who is progressing? Who is falling behind? Who is better than whom? Who is to blame for the turmoil? An answer for any of these would require a more in-depth look into the topic, and even then the result would likely be no more than a reinforced opinion rather than a fact. And I would not resort to stating my opinion now because doing research for this one article would probably not deem me qualified to make a judgment. But as I said before – this blame-game going on between people of the East and people in the West has been sustained for years, and there is no way way of telling when it will even be nearly over.