Islam judaism and christianity common aspects and conflicts research paper exampl...

[Religion](#), [Bible](#)

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Islam, Judaism and Christianity are popular religions across the world. Martin (3) noted that these religions represent almost half of the world's religious believers, with Christianity and Islam coming first and second on the world's most popular religions respectively. They have some features in common, but continue to fall into conflict often just like it has been throughout their history. This paper has two parts. First, it notes the common elements to all the three religions. In the second part, it evaluates both historical and contemporary conflicts with respect to these religions, and the efforts that have been undertaken to reduce these conflicts in the modern society.

Similarities

Islam, Judaism and Christianity have a number of things in common. According to Dirks (1), the three religions share more similarities than was thought off. The City of San Diego Public Library identified some of the things that are common to these religions as noted next. Studies have evidenced that all the three religions began in southwestern Asia, often referred to as the Middle East today (Muhammed). The history evolving around these religions appears to be confined within this same geographical region in Asia.

These religions regard Jerusalem, which is found in the Middle East region, as at least an important landmark if not an emblem of sanctity or ' holy city' (Firestone 4838). Firestone wrote that Jerusalem has been associated with the three religions at different and at times parallel instances through their history.

Another common element to all the three religions is that they are monotheistic. This means that they believe in one god (City of San Diego Public Library). According to Dirks, Muslims, Jews and Christians all believe in one God, an aspect of the religions that represents a strong common feature. Each of them attests that the world was created by God as accounted for in the book of Genesis in the Old Testament. The foundation of the three faiths is based on the Creator, who is the only Supreme Being as accounted for by each of the three.

Even though there exists some differences in the prophets the three religions honor as special figures, Dirks noted that a number of prophets are honored by all the three. Moses, a prophet in the Old Testament, is an example. Moses is considered an important historical figure in all these religions. Another such prophet is Abraham. In their old testament, Christians uphold Abraham as an important ancestor. The Old Testament constitutes the Torah for the case of the Jews, and therefore they also view Abraham as a great prophet. Likewise, Muslims honor Abraham. Dirks (1) observed that the three religions are at times referred to as ' Abrahamic religions' since they trace their history to a covenant that God made with Abraham in the Old Testament, which they all attest to.

Islam, Judaism and Christianity all believe that there is life after death. All of

them expect to live in some form after this life on earth comes to an end. According to Muhammed (23-100), the Christian religion believes that there will be life after death, to begin with the Day of Judgment, which will result in existence in Heaven or Hell. Muhammed also noted that Islam has the same belief that after this life on earth, Day of Judgment will be followed by life in Heaven or Hell. For the case of Judaism, life after death will materialize upon the coming of the Messiah, though not immediately upon death.

Conflicts

Many conflicts have evolved around religion for a very long time. Firestone acknowledged that many historical and contemporary conflicts have been identified or at least associated with religious wars. On his part, Fine (1) concurred that ' although political violence is not a new phenomenon, there are critical differences between historical and current instances of such violence '. The list of these conflicts, Gregg (13) noted, is endless and ranges from the Muslim and Jewish violence in the Middle East, to the Iranian Revolution and the Christian Crusades. These conflicts can be identified with specific time periods as inferred from above (Greg 13). Historical conflicts regarding the three religions can be differentiated from contemporary conflicts for the reason discussed in this section.

In the historical context, religious conflicts resulted in most cases from instances when two or more groups came into contact under different circumstances (Gregg 13-504). This also applies to the monotheist religions discussed in this case. In such circumstances, Peters noted that the conflicts were directed towards defending a group's faith. According to Fletcher and

Iyigun (5), studies have revealed that demographic structures of Europe, the Middle East and Asia still show instances of ' a multitude of ecclesiastical and cultural clashes that occurred through history' thanks to religious differences. One example is the war that has resonated through history with respect to Jerusalem, which the three religions considered an important or holy city. The Crusades, as put by Gregg (20), designate a period in which Christians attempted to take control of the Holy Land. Jerusalem has been a hot contest for these religions till recently. This is reflexive of what constituted religious conflict in the past. Other important events in history that show how attempts to defend religion became casuals of conflicts include the Arab-Israel wars and Iranian Revolution.

Contemporary conflicts among these religions have taken a different direction from the historical perspectives. According g to Fine (1), recent conflicts have been centered on political violence, consequently being referred to as religious political violence. Violence has been construed from being mainly secular to more of religious political violence. Martin (1) identified this disguised practice as ' fundamentalism'. In his work, Fine (2) argued that today, ' modern religious fundamental politics illustrates how religious leaders use holy texts to serve political agendas'. The motives are nonetheless to compromise with the peace and freedom of the target religion. Fine observed that this is reflected by the increasing acts of terrorism, and the use of religion to justify acts of violence in among conflicting groups.

A number of attempts have been put forward to reconcile the conflicts because they continue to pose serious problems to humankind. Martin (3)

wrote that many societies today have adopted the concept of pluralism in a bid to reduce the conflicts. This involves helping people understand that they can co-exist with others of different views, without necessarily having to ascertain whether their beliefs are right or wrong. According to Martin, Christians, Muslims and Jews in the U. S and elsewhere are learning to appreciate the benefits of pluralism. Interfaith dialogue is another modern day practice that helps foster an understanding of other religious practices. All these are promoted with a view that conflicts among the three major Abrahamic religions are mitigated.

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