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[Religion](#), [Islam](#)



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Executive summary of O’Malley’s book

This book is all about the history of the western culture. The four cultures that are highlighted are basically about Christianity. The four cultures discussed in this book are from the ancient Mediterranean world of Athens and Jerusalem. The four cultures include; prophetic culture, academic or professional culture, humanistic culture and artistic culture.

The prophetic culture is characterized by protest and alienation. It is a great gathering of the Jansenists and the Puritans and all those given to crusades. (pg 7) The reformers in this culture lamented of the corruption in the high places. The cultures main aim was to transform the unfaithful and corrupt system into a genuine system of governance. This culture unmasks the greatest abominations among folks and claims the greatest purity. If this culture must repeat itself then there is a great promise of better tomes to come. (pg 10)This makes the culture to be a culture of great expectations.

Academic culture on the other side is the culture of Plato and Aristotle which is characterized by certain learning style. The philosophy of Plato is infiltrated in the Western pattern of thought of modern times. This vital influence originated from the school of Athens. (pg 10)It is from these schools of Athens or School of Rome that the early Christians were influenced in certain crucial ways. The relationship between the Athens to Jerusalem took on its medieval formulation of relationship between the reason and revelation. This was nothing abstract relationship of the Bible and Aristotle. Aristotle is not appreciated only for his works on logic, metaphysics and ethics but also his natural philosophy is highly appreciated. In this culture great emphasis are laid upon how certain style of learning and discoursing was launched. (pg 11)This birth of knowledge was received in the most aggressive and reflective form in the universities in the middle ages. This new style of learning is analytical, questing and questioning relentless and also restless in which most academicians use nowadays. This style of learning is not satisfied with initial answer to some certain problem but it goes deeper to ask further question and probably propose another perspective. It is important to observe that when the prophetic culture is the shout, the lament, the bark the command, the paradox and the bark, the style of academic culture is the logical, rigorous, left brain discourse that moves to resolution. Prophetic culture glories in dichotomies of highest level of generalization like God and Devil or good and evil while the academic culture glories in close examination of the particulars that lead into precise distinctions formulated in sharply defined concepts. (pg 12)

Human culture is the story of great literature and of the modes in which it

was interpreted and studied. The type of education that is characterized in this culture is called humanistic education which is characterized poetry drama history and rhetoric. Scholars of this system of education became profoundly learned in the philosophy of Plato Aristotle and Stoics.

(pg14)Again, these teachings were not so deep so as to lose their grounding in the culture in which they were brought about in. In this culture the humanist of the renaissance powerfully reinstated when they revived ancient literary masterpiece and made literature a focal point of the curriculum. In academic culture the implicit watch word was good argument. The watchword for this culture is good literature. (pg 15)This culture is also responsible for the creation of powerful machine of indoctrination and propagation, grammar school, Young Ladies academy and the Gymnasium. Artistic culture is characterized by culture of dance, painting, sculpture, music and architecture. The inhabitants of the empire imbibed the myth of Rome's greatness and its sublime destiny through this material culture. Through this culture Christians are born which formed a door fro the artist culture for him to go through. (pg 19)Increased Christian size necessitated more space in which to gather for the worship ceremony. Constantine building program in the fourth century became the arts to adorn and ceremonies consonant with their magnificent settings. This culture is mute except for the music. The sacrament became an important symbol in Christianity. The mass which is essentially a mime belongs to preeminently in this culture. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is celebrated and its actions follow a pattern which is highly ritualized. The words of the liturgy unlike in the culture they are highly stylized for the sublimity of the occasion.

This culture is the integral story of the west and is absolutely central to the Christian world.(pg 22)

Definition of culture; it is the sum total of peoples way of life, that is, what people think, what they do, their products which is a shared social phenomenon. Culture has to be learned as opposed to being biologically inherited. Culture involves arbitrary assigned symbolic meaning to specific objects found in certain cultural backgrounds. Through culture man is distinguished from animals through his capability to assign an arbitrary meaning to any object. People can teach animals to respond tom certain cultural symbols created by the human which animals cannot. Culture consists of those practices relative to the behavior and the products of human actions. The actions are passed on from one generation to the other independent of the genesJohn H. Bodley (1943) U. S Anthropologist.

Primary description of Muslim culture

Islam means surrender to God. This religion was promulgated in Arabia by Prophet Muhammad in the seventh century. A Muslim is anyone who submits totally to the will of God. Islam believes in one God and no other than Allah hence I slam is strictly monotheistic. Muhammad is the only mortal prophet. Islam forms the second largest religious community in the world next to Christianity. The greater majority of Islamic people are found in Southeast Asia, North and Sub-Saharan Africa and west. A great multitude of Islamic people inhabit central and south Asia. This great geographical diffusion means a significant cultural heterogeneity and racism for Muslims, but all of them are bound by a common Islamic religion and sense of belonging to as single spiritual realm whose entities are united by the fear of God.

Islam originated in Arabia in the early seventh-century. Before Islam came into being, the Arabian history was viewed as age of ignorance. At this particular age, tribalism was at advanced stage at the time Muhammad was preaching Islam. Since then Islam has subsequently attached great significance traditional qualities such as courage, loyalty, honor and magnanimity. This in turn has eradicated pre-Islamic nomadic practices and pagan religious believes. The localized monotheistic influence of the Christianity and Judaism, as well as the polytheistic practices of these pre-Islamic Bedouins of the desert form a great important part in the advent of Islam. Various nomadic worshiped their own deities and obeyed various spirits.

Prophet Muhammad forms a key significance in Islam. He was born at Mecca in the Quraysh tribe in 570A. D. Ta the age 0of six he lost his mother and he was brought up by paternal uncle. Muhammad spent his youthful age in caravan trade with Syria. At the age of 2 he married Khadijah a rich widow who bore him a couple of children. Muhammad had a reflective way of life and used to retire to a hill near Mecca for solitary meditation. The age of 40 years Muhammad had his first vision with arch-angel Gabriel who told him that he was the messenger of God. Since that time Muhammad became the messenger of God receiving several visions from God which constituted Quran. Muhammad is considered to be the last of the prophets completes and consummates all other Devine revelations. The Quran is deemed to be directly emanating from God. This Book is holy perfect, infallible, eternal, complete and not Muhammad's own composition.

- The believe in absolute oneness, transcendence (surpassing nature)of God

and omnipotence of God.

- The existence of angels
- Revelation of scriptures to the world through divine messengers last known to be Muhammad
- The judgment day which is the last day is dispensed to all.
- The omniscience or the all knowing of God

Islam has five pillars of their faith which form a fundamental aspect of the religious duties prescribed by Islam. It is the duty and obligation of each of the Muslim to uphold the se five pillars which are;

Repetition of the creed

Prayer five times per day

Daytime fasting during the month of Ramadan

If possible pay pilgrimage to mecca at least once in a lifetime

It is also vital to note thatevery Muslim has to confess his faith by repeating his creedal formula several times. This is to affirm unity of godhood and the prophet hood of Muhammad.

Through bowing down to people in a congregation in the direction of Mecca and giving a verse to Allah that praises Him shows devotion and confirms submission to Him.

The donation of a portion of assets ranging from a tenth to a fortieth part of the total assets shows religious piety.

Islam has comprehensive and very categorical rules regarding the expected behavior of every Muslim. Islamic code of conduct must be observed strictly since it is as vital as obeying Gods will. This code of conduct was originally laid down to forge early Muslim who worshiped other gods apart from Allah.

The code of conduct was not just a reform but was basically to regulate almost all aspects of lifestyle back then.

Comparison between Islam and Prophetic culture

In both case there is recognition of Supreme Being who is God who uses chosen people to communicate with the earth dwellers specific divine message to His people.

The prophets or the special massagers involved had to address certain issues which needed some attention. In prophetic culture the main issue was social injustices while in Islamic culture it is the polytheism of nomads that were being addressed.

In both cases there is revelation of what the future holds for the people being addressed. In both cases there is proclamation of the judgment day which is to come.

The difference however, still exist

In Islam, they recognize only one God as opposed to Prophetic culture which believes in the Holy trinity of God the son, God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.

The prophetic culture is infiltrated by human influence like making of the graven images in the Catholic Church and changing of the Sabbath day from Sabbath day to the first day of the week. This is contrary to the Islamic culture where every doctrine and practices done are inspiration from God alone.

Insights derived from my culture

It is crucial to note that there is no culture that allows one to take advantage of the other. Islamic culture is there to address some social spiritual aspects of life in any given community. It is therefore my duty and obligation to become a faithful follower of this culture to be what is good and not what is evil. To share my culture with fellow community member in order to create a peaceful ecosystem should be my ultimate goal and desire. Every good that is created should be passed from one generation to the other at all cost.

Work cited

O'Malley, John W. 2004. Four Culture of the West. Retrieved from [http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Four Cultures of the West,-a0139966132](http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Four+Cultures+of+the+West,-a0139966132)

John H. Bodley (1943) U. S Anthropologist