

Culture and religion essay examples

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



Introduction

Culture and religion have been known to be inter-related, and this relation has influenced the basic way of life that we live. Some religions seek isolate the believer from the cultural beliefs one initially held while some religions allow the blending of the culture with it. In the past few years, the world has been involved in a war with an idea based on religion with the United States of America (U. S. A) leading the war against Islamic extremists. While the U. S tries to impose a democracy form of leadership in the Middle East, it is also known that the local population has a culture that allows a monarch kind of leadership (Siiairp 23). Thus there seem to be clash of religion and culture that is considerably impacting the social life of the society.

On the other hand, religion is defined a set of beliefs that gives the humanity the opportunity to try and provide an explanation of the universe and the natural occurrences involving some supernatural forces (Fallon and Riley 14). According to Fallon and Riley, these beliefs always require adherence to some predetermined set of rules (16). Religions are identified by two key features with the first one mainly being the need for faith to believe in what is conceivable but not tangible. The other key feature is that religions seek to influence and affect the manner in which the believer lives and relates in the society. Some of the religions are known to impose very steep punishment for misconduct that is worse than general judicial process would impose (Siiairp 49). In this respect, some argue all religions are irrational and rigid and should be dealt away with.

The relationship between religion and culture can be discussed in a wide spectrum. While culture is said to have existed since the beginning of time, it

is the same culture that allowed religion and general acceptance of a supernatural being (Siiairp 32). Humans are social creatures; therefore, a living and working together is inevitable and thus natural laws of social conduct including respecting others and their property is the acceptable thing to do leading to a common set of beliefs; culture. It is with these core values in mind that most religions are based. Religious leaders have always expressed the general ideology that religions are used to enhance what was right in our cultures making religion an acceptable aspect of the society (Fallon and Riley 50). For instance, it was not acceptable in medieval England to murder which the religion of Christianity strongly holds to be so. However, Fallon and Riley argue that most religions are based on old writings that require a lot of assumptions, translations and interpretations. These interpretations and translation cannot be always consistent or certain making religion divisive. These divisions can run so deep that can lead to unwarranted animosity in the society. Therefore social lives of the different believers will not be acceptable to each other due to these varied interpretations. The situation is further aggravated by those who take advantage of these assumptions to make false myths creating their own sects within a religious establishment (54). But the world live in a changing one, and adaptation to the new world is key. It is with these in mind the religion has been given priority as compared to culture.

Some cultures are however oppressive against members of the society. For instance, in Africa, a long standing culture allows violence against women and girls and this problem had reached unacceptably epidemic proportions. A study was conducted in Zambia to find out the cause escalating violence

against women in the country. It was found that culture allows men to beat up their women as punishment for mistakes. This problem was so severe that the government of Zambia developed a policy to use Christianity to fight this problem. In the policy, religion was said to provide a way of soothing and making people feel that they are a part of something. It further suggested the use of congregational methods to solve problems in marriages as well as a means to a third party influence to the marriage. Other commissioned studies have also blamed culture for the violence against women in other part of the world such as the Middle East and Eastern Europe. Some scholars argue that religion has played a pivotal role in transforming these societies to respect the women (Siiairp 60).

It is without doubt that the aspects of religion and culture are inter-twin and that one lead to another. But of importance is the need to practice acceptable religious practices that our cultures would blend. Bertrand Russell described a good religion to that expresses eternal truths, making this clear in his famous essay, " A Free Man's Worship". While rejecting the paranormal or supernatural existence of higher power, Russell liberally admitted that he desired a deeper meaning to life. He suggests that religion should not be the ultimate reason for irrational actions like wars (Russell, 23).

Works Cited:

Fallon, Timothy and Philip Riley. Religion and culture: essays in honor of Bernard Lonergan, S. J. SUNY Press, , 1987.

Russell, Bertrand. Autobiography. Routledge, 1998.

Siiairp, J C. Culture and Religion. General Books LLC, 2010.