

Oughts in ancient cultures



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Ought's in Ancient Cultures Order No. 273709 No. of pages: 2 20988 Ancient cultures are full of beliefs, proverbs, words of wisdom and superstitions, some which are relevant even today and some of which are not. In this essay we're going to analyze some of these beliefs after critically reviewing some of them, to understand why many of these moral prescriptions are not so desirable.

A good example to begin with would be the ' Declaration of Independence' which is nothing but a collection of moral judgments whether we accept it or not. According to the Declaration, " all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness." It also states that it is the people who empower the government and as such have certain rights and duties which they could perform free of will. But looking at the present state of affairs it makes one wonder if our founding fathers were intelligent personalities or if they were foolish and irresponsible individuals.

Though the documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the U. S Constitution, the Bill of Rights and the Preamble that were presented by them are universally regarded as timeless and safeguarding moral obligations, yet how far these good intentions are actually workable leaves a lot to question. In the same way the Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations states that " human rights should be protected by the rule of law" and human beings should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood", but does these high ideals cater to or satisfy what is taking place today? Though some may be convinced, the majority are not.

The first article of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO, 2002) proposes that it must be recognized and affirmed for the benefit of

present and future generations, for it is a continuous source of exchange, innovation and creativity ... as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature. However, another document by the UNESCO (UNESCO (2003). points out that, globalization ... by highlighting the culture of economically powerful nations has created new forms of inequality, thereby fostering cultural conflict rather than cultural pluralism thereby portraying conflicting views. In Many ancient cultures were filled with such moral prescriptions and we shall take into consideration a few of them.

Romans – They believe that –“ Death is to be chosen before slavery and basic deeds.” In other words it is better to die than stoop to lowly deeds. In the teaching of morals the Romans feel that “ Nature and Reason command that nothing uncomely.... and “ nothing lascivious be done or thought.”

Hindus – In Hindu mythology it is advocated that, “ One should never strike a woman; not even with a flower, showing that a woman should always be held in high esteem and should be treated gently. Another teaching is that, “ He who is asked for alms should always give”, showing that we should be generous to the less fortunate around us. All these are lofty thoughts and ideals but it is left to be considered if we follow them or not.

References

UNESCO (2002). Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001271/127160m.pdf>

UNESCO (2003). Cultural Diversity in the Era of Globalization, http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=11605&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html