

Christianity and islam essay

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



Paper Due Date

Evolution of Christianity

Christianity had its origins out of Judaism around 1st century C. E. Its foundation is on teachings, death, resurrection and life of Jesus Christ and his followers named as " Christians."

Concept of Christ's Body point to life's central aspect - belief of appearance of human body three days after death and continuation of its life in church's central sacrament, the Eucharist where ritual involving gestures and words leads to a wheaten small disk forming the body within context of liturgy's ritual.

Christianity is divided in to three branches Eastern Orthodoxy, Protestantism and Roman Catholicism within these three major categories there are multiple subcategories. The crucial part of Christianity, which nurtured the early development of Christianity- beliefs, philosophy and values, consisted of Jewish people or stock. The influence of Jewish people has been dominant throughout early days of Christianity.

Evolution of Islam

Religion of Islam is monotheistic which developed in the 7th century C. E. in Middle East. Islam means " submission" or " surrender" and was founded on the basis of Prophet Muhammad's teachings, an expression to surrender willfully to Allah, the sustainer and creator of this world.

Quran is Islam's sacred text which contains Prophet's teachings which were revealed by Allah to him. Islam's two divisions are Shi'a and Sunni both of them has different means to maintain authority. Islam's unifying

characteristic is the 5 pillars which are Islam's Fundamental practices. These 5 pillars are ritual prayer, fasting, Zakat (charity), Hajj (Mecca Pilgrimage) and Faith's ritual profession. One interesting Pillar is the " third pillar, requiring believers to generously give their wealth to maintain the community and to help the needy, reflected the Qurans repeated demands for social justice". Another significant aspect of Islam is importance of sacred cities of Medina, Mecca and Jerusalem.

When Muhammad migrated to Medina from Mecca, the date formed is considered the beginning of Islam year or calendar. Expansion of Islam began immediately from its origin of Arabian Peninsula and at present has significant followers in Asia, Africa, Americas and Europe.

Reasons for Expansion of Christianity

Since its inception in 1 Century C. E Christianity expanded over the coming centuries. The reasons for its expansion were:

Firstly, Only Christianity was a missionary religion in those times in Roman Empire. Other religions like Pagans and Jews did no recruiting for their religions.

Secondly, Christianity as a religion was exclusivist. Christianity unlike other religions gained adherent once someone converted to it and lost one when someone changed their religion from Christianity.

Thirdly, Women had equal status in Christianity a contrast to Roman Society and Judaism.

Fourthly, there is no primary evidence related to Jesus which ancient generation can use in defense of Christianity.

Fifthly, Christianity only had Judaism as its competitor and since Judaism was

only a Text driven religion with no missionaries.

Sixthly, once Emperor Constantine decided to convert to Christianity, many villages decided to convert to Christianity at once.

Reasons for Expansion of Islam

Mainly Islam spread due to Arabian expansion as wherever the Empire went they spread the religion and converted the people of that Country.

Making of Arab Empire

- Arab state ended up growing to include parts of Egypt, Persia, Mesopotamia, India, Rome and Byzantine civilizations. Many of these converted to Islam and the Arabic language and culture started spreading as Islam brought forward a new-wave of civilization.

- War and Conquest

- Conquests done by Arabs ended up becoming long-term raids.

- Greater mobilization due to levels of political organization.

- Arab Expansion due to War

- Sassanid Empire was defeated on 650's and Half of Byzantium was won.

- Spain was conquered by 700's and attack on France was done.

- Expansion to east reached Indus River.

- Chinese Army was beaten in 751 as Battle of Talas River which ended China's expansion to the west and helped in converting Turkic population to Islam.

- Expansion Reasons

- Economic: Capturing routes of trade and regions of agriculture.

- Individual: Social Promotion and Wealth

- Communal: Umma was held together due to conquests.

- Religion: Conquered states were not imposed with Islam as Arabs believed Islam as their religion but by 8th century they started seeking converts.

Key Actors in Early Success of Christianity

New Testament over Old Testament

New Testament was needed for Christians to differentiate them from the Jews and their Old Testament during 2nd Century. New Testament consisted of texts which church found to be sacred.

Constantine's Conversion

Constantine is one of the heroes in formation and popularity of early Christianity. Constantine not only converted to Christianity but also became the patron of church. Constantine served as a Messiah in non-apocalyptic church.

Council of Nicea

In 325 Council of Nicea took place to respond to teachings of a priest at the church of Alexandria. He suggested that Jesus did not hold Full divinity and was a supernatural figure not God in its sense. The Council of Nicea mediated this dispute and the council chose the side which stood for Jesus and its full divinity.

Key Actors in Early Success of Islam

- Prophet's Teachings and Qur'an

Muhammad started teaching Islam in public and in privacy in Mecca. Once Men and Women started accepting Islam, the number increased all across Mecca and Muhammad started teaching Islam publicly in markets of Arabia.

- Empire's Tools

Once Muhammad settled in Medina many tribes started to follow his teachings and moved to Medina for protection. An army was formed and Muhammad started raiding tribes nearby. Soldiers were inspired to fight due to paradise they were promised such as status, forgiveness, virgins, watered gardens, expensive clothes, milk, honey, slaves, horses and rivers of wine.

3. Removing Options

- Destruction of Shrines and Ka'bas.
- Destruction of Independent Mosques
- Rejection of Other Prophets

4. Incorporation of Pre-Islamic Religion

Transition process was made easy by incorporating most of the values of pre-Islam religion. Idols were replaced by Muhammad himself as people has to "submit to him" as their God.

Adaptation of Christianity in United Kingdom

First phase of this process started with Ireland. Since 5th century Christianity had started to proliferate due to cultural and commercial interaction with Britons who were Romanized.

Second Phase took up Scotland and this done through St. Columba who was a practicing exile and had set up monastery at Scottish island of Iona, converted Picts travelling across Scotland in 560s.

Third phase had England a Anglo-Saxon nation, Christianization spread once Northumbria's King Edward married to Eadbald's Sister and accepted the religion.

Adaptation of Islam in Africa and India

Merchants and Teachers were the main agents for Islamization of Africa not the scholars from the prominent nations of West Africa. Omanis were Kharijites and many older Swahil communities and slaves were Sunni.

In India growth of Islam as a religion was due to 4 main theories:

Immigration Theory, according to this theory most of the Muslims of India descended from immigrated Muslims of Iran and People who sailed Arabian Sea and settled in India.

Religion of the Sword, this theory stresses on the fact of military role in diffusion of Islam in Indian Subcontinent.

Religion of Patronage theory, Many Indians converted to Islam to get the benefits of religious favors from the ruling class like bureaucratic promotions, Tax Relief, etc.

Religion of Social Liberation theory, many communities in Indian Subcontinent were oppressed by the high-caste Hindus and suffered for Years. Many people of these communities escaped oppression by switching their religion to Islam. This is often considered as the most influential reason for spread of Islam throughout the Indian Subcontinent

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