Sample essay on what role does religion play in appaih's theory

Introduction

Globalization has led to a significant level of interconnectedness which has resulted in the erosion of cultures and the unification of people from different regions. The result of this has been the idea, in some people, that traditions and cultures are under threat from globalization. Appaih notes that although globalization can result in homogeneity, it can at the same time pose a threat to it. He gives an example of his hometown Kumasi, which is very heterogeneous despite the fact that it is a city. He outlines the various languages that are spoken within the area, that include German, Burkinabe, Indian, Nigerian, Chinese, Lebanese and many others. In addition, he describes the various tribes that dominate the area, which include the Hausa and the Asante people who have dwelt in Kumasi for centuries. Appaih points out that the villages in the vicinity of Kumasi are however more or less monocultural, where one language is predominantly spoken and in most cases live in homesteads without electricity. He explains that even so, it is common to find radios in homesteads, hear conversations about current affairs and witness the inhabitants of these areas indulging in the habits of the city people, such as drinking Coca-Cola and Guinness. Religion is at the center of Appaih's theory because it serves as an indicator of people's reaction to globalization and its influences with regards to their own religion. While most people long for global unity, they oppose the obscurantism that it is likely to bring onto their religion. This essay examines the role of religion in Appaih's theory.

First, the role of religion may be realized by identifying the effects of embracing new lifestyles and trends brought about by globalization. To some

extent, religion has also been changed by globalization. To examine the change in religion involves examining how it has been empowered or diminished as a result of the developments from globalization. Appaih advances the view that even though the enclaves of homogeneity have diminished in distinction over time, this has been more or less a positive development (Appaih 2). Such developments include the access to better medicines, learning institutions and clean drinking water. Furthermore, in areas where such developments are still absent, the state of affairs is frowned upon rather than celebrated. Even so, in cases where losses or differences have been felt as a result of embracement of new trends and lifestyles, yet even more ways of expressing difference, such as new slangs, hairstyles and even religion have been advanced.

Therefore, Appaih explains that those who feel that their identities are under threat from a changing world are simply conservatives who are not ready to embrace new developments. Apart from the changing world, relationships are also changing. Appaih gives an example of the social order during his father's time, which required him to farm a piece of land granted by the chief, build a house, raise a family and feed and clothe, as well as educate, arrange for marriages and organize funerals from farming proceeds, and ultimately hand over the responsibilities and the farm to a new generation (Appaih 2). However, due to changing times, it is no longer possible to raise a family on cocoa farming, and therefore, the successful farming family set up has had to be replaced with the children getting an education then proceeding to seek working opportunities in cities. As such, " we cannot force their children to stay in the name of protecting their authentic culture

[]" (Appaih 2). It is Appaih's contention that homogeneity conclaves cannot be preserved for their own sake, but must be adapted to make economic sense where appropriate.

Thirdly, religion provides a better look into Appaih's theory because it is an aspect of society, whose preservation or denudation serves as an illustration of the effects of globalization. By using the example of religion, Appaih is able to show how influences from other places in the world have resulted in change or preservation of religious practices or beliefs in a particular region. With respect to religion, Appaih notes that there are practices and beliefs that have long defined religious practice. Even though some of them are rooted in the proscriptions of religious scripts, there are those that can be considered barbaric, crude and outdated. A good example is religious practices that place the life of believers at the mercy of the religious fraternity. Practices such as stoning condemned sinners to death, burning them at the stake, or chopping off their organs, have been overtaken by events. In the present world, human rights and equality are recurrent themes across the world. The clamor for the recognition of the right to existence of every human, as well as respect of life is a sign of the current state of human civilization. Generally, communities that ignore such rights are in their minority, and are frowned upon as being retrogressive. It is a matter of general consensus the world over that human rights override any cultural, traditional, or religious beliefs that contravene them, and in cases where there is conflict, the international human rights laws take priority. Indeed, within the most progressive societies, religious proscriptions take a backseat to legal standpoints on contentious issues. It is for this reason that

mainstream religions such as Christianity, have adopted a modern approach to preaching and enforcing religious doctrines. It is no longer the case that suspected witches are burned at the stake, for example, as this would be an unlawful act.

As such, Appaih's contention that globalization can result in homogeneity, but at the same time pose a threat to it- even though this threat is not necessarily a bad thing- resonates with the above example. With respect to the Christian religion, it is apparent that the globalization resulted in the radical and barbaric elements- by 21st century standards, being dropped from its religious practice world over. This is an effect of globalization. The model of Christian religious practice is more or less the same worldwide thanks to globalization. However, the homogeneity in the practice of Christianity has been threatened by globalization as well. To illustrate, the Anglican Church in the United States and London has more or less endorsed homosexuality through ordaining gay pastors. However, the Anglican churches in conservative parts of the world, such as Africa, have strongly resisted the move, resulting in threat of divisions. However, like in the case of the abandonment of the successful farming family lifestyle, globalization has resulted in more good than bad for the church, as the willingness to conform Christian religious practices and beliefs to modern times has ensured not only the survival, but also the flourishing, of the religion.

Thirdly, religion is used to show how modernization can pose a threat to homogeneity. Religious unity, such as that wielded by the Muslim global community known as the Ummah is an example of the use of the commonality of religion to propagate disunity and to turn against the west.

Proponents of such acts often become westernized and pick up ideas from the West only to end up turning them against their originators, while preserving their religion. Appaih provides a good example of this by indicating that some of the most Westernized people from the adversaries of Western democracies are always on the frontlines in opposing the West. In Ghana, for example, it was the bourgeoisie, who were educated in Western countries who were at the forefront in excoriating the British colonial masters. The role of religion in showing this is achieved by indicating how people are reacting to incursions of the modernized world in terms of their religious backgrounds. People who turn Western ideas against the western countries always seek to preserve their religious origins in as much as they become compatible with the practices of the west. Appaih (4) notes that the behavior of people in the developing world is complex because they react to the inward movement of the modern world not by applying the values espoused by liberal democracies but by reversing them. The people who practice this behavior may be referred to as counter-cosmopolitans. This is because they believe that people in all nations should enjoy human dignity. They share such ideals with other like-minded people in many countries, who speak many languages. They make use of technology but resist temptations of shallow nationalisms of their mother countries and their humble beginnings on kin and kith. These people decline traditional religious authorities (while wanting to see them preserved) and agonize on whether the evil state of the world can be reversed or whether it is an exercise in futility.

Conclusion

Many people believe that globalization has introduced strong links and flow of ideas between people from distinctly different countries and regions. However, Appaih notes that it could foster homogeneity as well as challenge it. Appaih provides different examples and arguments to advance his theory. The role of religion in this is clear. Appaih uses religion to identify the effects of new Western lifestyles and trends brought by Globalization. This involves looking at how religion has been strengthened or weakened by the influences of globalization. Appaih compares the developments such as access to better medicines, learning institutions and clean drinking water to religion and notes that new forms of religion have been advanced. He indicates that those who feel threatened by the changing world are only conservatives. The use of religion provides a better examination of Appaih's theory. He uses religion as an aspect of society whose erosion or preservation serves as an illustration of the impact of globalization in a given region. With respect to religion, Appaih notes that there are practices and beliefs that have long defined religious practice. He notes a change in barbaric and outdated religious practices as a result of globalization. He also uses religion to show how modernization can threatened homogeneity by drawing upon examples from the Muslim Ummah and the inversion of Western ideas to turn against their originators. Overall, the role of religion on Appaih's theory cannot be overemphasized.

Work Cited

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