

Eating christmas in the kalahari

Sociology



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This article affirms how tough it is to interact with people of different beliefs and how its personal interpretation can differ between people. In the introductory, the author highlights his reason to visit Kalahari as to research hunting along with the economy of the Kung Bushmen. Despite having this aim, Richard failed to understand what the Christmas season meant in the Kalahari. For that reason, he was disappointed by what was going on as he had no clue of what Christmas meant to these people and some of the customs practiced. His expectations were shattered as the tribe disagreed with his beliefs. The author forgot what he had learned in his ethnography that people differ in culture and all should be respected regardless of their differences. There were differences in what Christmas meant to each season in that Richard's culture believed in gift-giving while Kalahari people opposed the idea. The author was shocked by the cultural differences of what the Christmas season meant to his culture and that from Kalahari. From his point of view, Christmas was the time of friendship and exchange of gifts where people appreciate one another after a long journey of twelve months. Suddenly, the culture of King Bushmen appeared unfamiliar and unknown to him as there were many differences from his culture. This occurrence reinforces the idea of cultural relativism whereby it was difficult for the author to forget his culture and values but easy to misunderstand Kalahari's culture. In discussing this, we will discuss how the author became subjective rather than being objective to understand what was happening. Looking at cultural relativism, views of all customs, ethics, and beliefs should be considered right as it is prohibited to judge another culture. A miscellany of cultures should not be considered good or bad rather should be neutral by grasping the concept that all cultures are essential in expressing human

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existence. In cultural relativism, there is nothing good or bad thus they are all either good or bad culture. Its objective is that no culture is social solidarity or superior to another as all are equally legitimate.