

## REVIEW ARTICLE

**Religious, Constitutional Laws and Literature of English-Speaking Nations**\*P.M Diaz<sup>1</sup><sup>1</sup>Ponjesly College of Engineering, Nagercoil, Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, India.

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**ABSTRACT**

For any country to be well categorised and organised, laws are been framed which is followed by the citizens living there. The aim of this article is to bring out the effects of such laws enacted by the government for the well-being of the people. The article deals with literature and religious methods of the English-speaking nations. Most of the writers in English literature have penned their views regarding religious issues. There are several books written which portrays the traditional and conventional practices performed on behalf of religion. Following up religious factors might be beneficial but practising certain rituals and traditions often seems to be optional and carrying out arguments on any religious matters would be totally senseless. A country would construct laws and norms and it is expected that all the citizens must abide to the laws framed. This can be in politics, sports, religious centres, etc. These factors are briefly summarised in this article and it is clearly dealt with the scope of bringing effective results on the acceptance of such rules. The laws which have their ill effects over the life of the people are also discussed and the impact of English over the influence of other languages is outlined.

**Keywords:** English-speaking nations, Religion, Law, Politics, Literature.

**1. INTRODUCTION**

Most of the countries like Angola, Armenia, Sri Lanka, Nepal, India, Nigeria, Japan, Portugal and Russia are secular countries, where any desired religion is followed. Religious teachings are not included even in school syllabus since there is freedom of religion. The term secular was provided in the Indian preamble in 1976. In these countries there is no official language unlike non-secular countries such as Cambodia, Greece, Algeria, England, Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, etc. In non-secular countries, religious principles are followed which serve as the prime law. In non-secular countries including Iraq, Djibouti, Pakistan and Mali, Islamic law is considered as their formal law. Some of the English speaking countries are United States, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Sweden, Israel, Denmark, Sierra Leone, Republic of Ireland, New Zealand, Liberia, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Suriname, Gibraltar and Nauru of which 90% of average people speak English.

Though English speaking countries are given importance in this article, the prime role is categorised on religious and constitutional laws of the countries other than those specialised in English. Hence there is no need in overlooking the whole article in the mind set of countries which prefer English. The general abstraction of religion and politics are described which are followed by the hypothesis on the basis of literature.

**2. LITERATURE**

Great scholars, researchers, novelists, writers have made enough contributions by writing their thoughts on different themes such as corruption, human rights, discrimination, education, poverty and so on to shake the country by their works. Several efforts have been taken by the authors and poets who influence the countries world-wide by their contributions. For example, the writings in times of pre independence have had their effect on most of the countrymen to lie down their lives for the sake of their country. Such

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productions are acclaimed for years and the values of them are unforgettable. This is how literature is made. Some of the writings from English speaking countries are summarised as it is the sole concept of this article.

### **2.1. Ghana: The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born**

[1] "The beautiful ones are not yet born" is a worth-able novel which describes about corruption and how it affects the nation. The prime character mentioned in the novel is an unnamed man who says no to any form of corruption. But his honesty is not valued by anyone. Even his family members do not approve his habit of refusal to illegal money. While his co-workers and other politicians become rich and enjoy their luxurious lives out of the corruption they are involved in, this particular man could not even meet the basic needs of the family. He is abused by everyone around and his pathetic life is elaborately discussed in "The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born". The author, Ayi Kwei Armah says that the beautiful ones are yet to be born because all the workers other than the man of main lead in the novel lead a corruptive life to bring shame to their own country. Thus authors like him have given an effective contribution for the betterment of ones' life, for they act as a role model to the future generations and other countries. The author urges the readers to live an honest and dutiful life without minding the rewards and acceptance.

### **2.2. Jamaica: Comparison of Ian Fleming's novels**

[2] Ian Fleming's "Casino Royale", describes the state affairs where a man plays as a secret agent and a spy where books such as [3] "Live and Let Die" and "Moonraker" deal with American colonisation and its strength respectively [4]. These novels are appreciated for their extremely thrilling concepts. [5] In "Diamonds are Forever", the smuggling of diamonds and the way by how this illegal act is overcome is narrated.

### **2.3. Federated States of Micronesia: My Urohs**

[6] In "My Urohs", Emelihter Kihleng uses her imagination to bring the beauty of Pacific Island in the minds of readers. She also describes the culture and issues of her community. "My Urohs" embodies with the

relationship and the social problems like racism along with the historic view of the island.

### **2.4. Austria: Beware of Pity**

[7] Stefan Zweig's "Beware of Pity" is the story about a soldier where he feels pity of a girl since she is physically challenged. The soldier once asked her to dance with him unknowingly that she could not do. This makes him to feel guilty and he finds solution to compensate his shameful act. The novel portrays the reasons to endure sympathy on others and the resulting ill effects.

### **2.5. Switzerland: The Black Spider**

[8] "The black spider" by Jeremias Gotthelf is a horror novel which depicts the fate of a woman who has a deal with a devil. Prior to her agreement of offering an unbaptized child to the devil in turn of its help, she could not realize the fact of her mischievous behaviour. This novel is translated from its original language to English by Susan Bernofsky.

### **2.6. Norway: Shallow Soil**

[9] In the "Shallow Soil" Knut Hamsun reveals the nature of two noble men and their behaviour when they are subjected to the same act of betrayal by their women. One forgives and accepts her woman where the other ends his life over disappointment. The novel presents a wonderful clarity and rhythm while narrating the incident which is really a boon to the readers.

### **2.7. Finland: Seven Brothers**

[10] As the name suggests, the novel is based on the story of seven brothers who live together in their ancestral home. As they do not want to live by the rules of their village, they decided to go apart and live by their own. Soon, they realise it is not fair to live a life as they do. They begin to practise reading and start working. Returning to their own village, they become good citizens by adopting all the rules and laws of the village. The author has given a clear view of how those seven young boys have turned into dutiful fellows. It is stated that freedom alone can't lead to a better country but along with certain restrictions.

### **3. RELIGION**

It is the religion and its policies which influence most of the people. Some madly become the followers of any religion or religious people. Such kind of addiction is unfair since it is the root cause to initiate quarrels and riots in most cases.

#### **3.1. Secular and non-secular countries**

In secular countries like India, Austria and Canada, citizens are allowed to follow any religion or principles. All religions are treated in an equal manner.

Norway, Denmark, Greece, Iran and England are some of the countries where certain religions are preferred to others. In some countries like Maldives, people who do not belong to state religion are not supposed to vote in election and they have no rights as the state religious people have. There is no freedom of religion and other religious people must not hold public positions and they do not claim citizenship either. Saudi Arabia where the majority of population is Sunni Muslims, even other divisions of Muslims like Shia Muslims are discriminated and all the citizens must be Islam according to the law. The official religion of certain countries like Afghanistan, Bahrain, Comoros, Jordan and Kuwait is Islam. In certain countries like Brunei, promoting other religions other than their own is prohibited.

In countries like Bhutan and Cambodia the prime religion is Buddhism whereas, England, UK, Argentina, Costa Rica, Denmark, Greece and Iceland are said to be Christian countries with Roman Catholicism as the chief domain.

#### **3.2. Religion and books**

[11] In "The Religions Book" by Shulamit Ambalu, five main religions of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity and Islam are well portrayed. The primal, ancient and classical beliefs from pre-history to modern periods are described.

[12] The "Kids Book of World Religions" by Jennifer Glossop and John Mantha depicts several concepts of religions from India, Middle East, East Asia and from other continents. It is given that Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism have originated from India, where Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Zoroastrianism and Baha'i from Middle East and Taoism, Confucianism

and Shintoism from East Asia. The book includes a clear idea of different festivals, the reason behind the celebration of festivals and special days and the important practices of the religions.

[13] As far as, Michel Foucault's work "Religion and Culture", is concerned about the religion, theological principles, culture and feminism. The entire book relies on deep analysis of religious philosophies and its related studies. The citations from other notable works are also enclosed within.

[14] James Franklin Harris's "Analytic Philosophy of Religion" encapsulates the philosophical analysis of G.E. Moore and Bertrand Russell. Pragmatism, idealism, positivism and verification criteria are some of the topics the book conveyed.

[15] The book of Noel B Reynolds, W Cole Durham, depicts that religion is different from freedom where religious thoughts subjected to justice and human rights may not often concern with freedom. Thus "Religious Liberty in Western Thought" presents an ideal concept relating to the modern world. Man's faith and moral conscience must not be confined to his religious area alone but should be experienced throughout. On any matter, religious wars are not allowed in any form causing disturbance to the society.

[16] In "The Psychology of Religious Behaviour, Belief and Experience", the theoretical explanations of the research from social surveys and field studies are provided. It brings the room for the study about psychology and sociology. Religion in the sense is a reality to experience freedom of fellowship and inspiration, but most of the people turn such things upside down and make total chaos without considering what it actually mean. It's a common saying that religious people must depart from the world and its well-being but it is not the ideal concept. It is fine to move along with the world and the struggle and such arguments are purely unworthy.

### **4. POLITICS**

Most of the countries are ruled by their constitution. Malaysia, Jamaica, Japan and Canada are some countries where the government with monarchs are the head. In Vatican City, only men have the right to vote. Likewise, each country drafts rules owing to its culture and globalisation.

#### **4.1. Politics in books**

[17] "Aristotle's Politics: Living Well and Living Together" describes the general problem of political life and its solution where political knowledge is been differentiated from the ethical knowledge. The book is written by Eugene Garver, with a view of human aspects that encloses the common need of every man to lead a similar life. It says that people live in harmony when everything is well around and urges the readers to be generous, just and polite even when things go wrong. It illustrates that the prime source of political life is knowledge, which is fairly analysed in times of war and calamities. It also suggests that a political man should be noble, wise and of good character.

[18] The book of "Language and Politics" by Noam Chomsky presents the interviews of the author regarding various concepts. In one of the interviews on "Anarchism, Marxism and Hope for the Future", Noam Chomsky encloses his view on anarchism and other political affairs. It states that human freedom lies with political power, relationship among men, ownership and management. In another interview of "Communism to Terrorism and the Drug War", Chomsky insists that illicit drugs can be prevented and stopped by political powers. The author asks the government to take action for the prevention of cocaine and other such products and to promote on education and rehabilitation.

[19] The moral and ethical duties which are to be followed by the political parties are mentioned in "Political Conduct" which is the work of Mark Philip. The politician's ideal character and virtue are to be taken into account. Mark Philip demands that politics must be valuable in terms of norms and values where priority should be given to people rather than rules and regulations. It does not mean that rules should not be a matter of serious issue. They are the ones which make a citizen perfect and should not be violated.

#### **4.2. Literature of state laws**

[20] The book by Pauli Murray unfolds the discrimination of people by their race. It deals with the state laws against discrimination and segregation. In spite of these laws, racism still continues and grows as a major issue. People must be made aware of such rules that have been framed for their

benefit and should be brave enough to fight for justice.

[21] Laws must be confined to education. It is always necessary to be dependent on constitutional laws. Those who violate it must be brought before the court to be judged by themselves. These are the matters inscribed in "A System of the Laws of the State of Connecticut: In Six Books". Zephaniah Swift states that laws must direct one in right way and such laws are to be constructed in every domain.

[22] "The Laws of Armed Conflicts: A Collection of Conventions, Resolution and Other Documents" states that any bombing activities over civilian people must be strictly prohibited. It mainly deals with the welfare of military reformers. Here, safety zones are considered where no such attacks are permitted. It also includes references to genocide.

[23] Ankhil Reed Amar describes "The Bill of Rights" within the context where the ones who framed the constitution are given importance. The author writes his own point of view. He does not support the concept of suppression of minority by others but provide equal rights to all.

#### **4.3. Theocracy**

Theocracy is a form of government where god or deity is considered to be the ruler. For example, Vatican City is ruled by the church and in countries like Tibet and China too such theoretic principles are well formed.

##### **4.3.1. Theocracy in literatures**

[24] Here the supreme power of the nation goes to the religious leader who controls the entire country. He has the power to select further leaders under his authority. For example, Islamic states where Prophet Muhammad's principle and teachings are said to be their state rule because people consider that as the law of god. The constitutional rules are framed according to it and even other religious people cannot oppose to such laws. These sorts of political rules in accordance with theocratic governance have been accepted by the public as well. Hence they cannot be separated from the law book of the country. In parliament too religious party men get preferences in these theocratic countries. For instance Shari'a is a main source of legislation in the Islamic country of Kuwait. Even press

conferences are not supposed to be conducted on religious holidays.

Italian laws are checked whether they are confined to canon and Catholic moral postulates. These are the contents of the book “Constitutional Theocracy” which is the work of professor of Political Science and Law, Ran Hirschl.

[25] According to Frederick Clarkson in “The Struggle between Theocracy and Democracy” the public must not restrict themselves in election alone, but should actively participate in all political aspects wherever possible. It represents that the role of people does not limit with just electing the leaders, but should be capable even to raise voice against any illegal activities of the state. The constitutional democracy of the United States includes the literal interpretation of the Bible. It is said that any constitutional law must not lead to violence other than bringing peace among the nation. The government law should go along with religious rule to maintain harmony and all religions must be taken into account.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The article illustrates a distinct approach on religion, constitutional law and politics which are the principal classifications of a country. For any religious country, the central theme would be based on their reverent book. It means, for instance, for an Islamic country, the constitutional law would be based on their religious book where the majority of the population would be Islam. Whatever may be cause, it would be supported only by that particular people and not others. In such circumstances, the minority may not find enough freedom to practise their law or may find difficult to cope with. This situation could be overcome by setting up principles and policies which are public oriented rather than religion centric.

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