

Religion is a hobby, end of story.

As long as people don't interfere with my freedom on "religious" grounds I don't care, except that wherever anyone goes you're limited by and confronted by (not confronted WITH, confronted BY) religion. By default that makes me anti-religion until basically me and everyone around me can live their lives as they see fit. Do whatever we want on any day (because one random day, which is one full earth rotation and 1/365th of a solar orbit, every, single one, none is special) without every store being closed because of some outdated religious principle.

In Mississippi they abolished the right to abortion. In this day and age. Now, I don't personally care because, as we say in Dutch, it's a "far away from my bed show", but to think that this might be a precedent for other states in the USA, and might thus influence other religious nuts in other countries to pressure for shit like this...

Or maybe it's also the fact that every local store has been bought up by Turks in my city and you need to go to a fucking big store all the way at the mall to get some PORK.

It could also be the fact that people like me (archaeologists) can't do their jobs, that we have to change reports and adapt our findings not to upset "christian beliefs" about the earth being made in like 4008BC or something.

This is why, whenever I get the chance I love to point out how pointless religion is. I may have even said it before in this thread ages ago, I dunno, but I'll just say it again for fun.

Religion is something you see starting to exist around the time humans became sedentary, at ANY rate. The moment you find humans making any kind of home, whether it's temporary or permanent, you will start finding depictions, figurines, "symbols" that don't seem functional. This is in direct relation to the amount of settling a certain group or unit of people does/do. Completely nomadic hunter-gatherers have shown no sign whatsoever of attributing any meaning to anything that is not functional.

As soon as humans become sedentary, social interactions change. People have to do things together, and organize, to maintain whatever they have, to survive. The more sedentary a group of people is (we cannot speak of "societies" at this point since there are no real established cultures at this time) the more this need arises, because they are far more dependant on each other. Religion is the one binding and unifying social element that keeps these groups together. Patterns start occurring that have simply NO functional sense, other than to gather people together for one common goal.

Now, this is at a development stage where humans have no real scientific knowledge of the world they live in. They live with sort of the same mentality as animals, they take whatever happens in life for what it is, and just keep on doing their thing. Slowly you can see society changing over time, where after a few thousand years after a great deal of humans have become fully sedentary, you can see a distinguishment between objects in the context of ownership. Seals and personal stamps.

People start identifying themselves with what they own, and this is when real cultures start to

appear. Villages distinguish themselves in their style, and as different villages adapt themselves to different lifestyles and different environments, they view life from different perspectives, and form their mythology around those perspectives. Thus you get different cultures and religions associated with them, and it's all functional, everything is binding.

Now when Sargon formed the first ever empire in mankind, things start to change. This is around the time that writing starts to appear, and we see societies start using and experiencing religion not as a way to bind people, but as a sign of power, or as a way to exert control over people. Kings attribute themselves with godly symbols, and base their authority on their association with them.

In this way religion is still a functional element of human society, since it helps preserve the status quo, it's still a binding element, though a bit more of a forceful one.

Basically, ever since then, humanity has been finding out more and more about life, about how our bodies work, about how everything around us works, how physics influences every little bit of our lives. Basically, ever since Sargon, religion has been a tool of power, used by those who want to control, and lived by those who want to give meaning to their lives. The more people know about their lives however, the more control they have over it, and the less control the religious leaders will have. That is why so many scientists were persecuted by the Catholic church in the 15th/16th and 17th centuries, because they knew this. Whether they ACTUALLY believed in God is irrelevant, they knew that they would lose power if people knew more about what was actually going on.

For instance, take the bible. The bible you know today IS NOT the original scripture written down by the supposed Jesus Christ and his disciples. It's actually written down by the council of Nicaea that a conscious decision was made (in the 4th century that is) to omit and/or add certain parts to the bible to enunciate certain elements of Christianity. In those days there were two big philosophies, Aristotelian and Platonic. Aristotle basically claimed that, everything that is, is as it is, is bound by natural rules, and that you should do your best to live within them, guided by virtues that are generally agreed upon to be... well, virtuous. Plato believed that everything in this world is modelled, or made after an ideal (on a higher plane), and that all you can do in life is live up to that ideal, in whatever you do. Both philosophies go MUCH deeper than that, but that's it in a nutshell.

In the councils that followed basically established Christianity along a Platonic guideline, mostly set forth by Augustine on Hippo. This decision was pretty much finalized at the second council of Nicaea, where it was decreed that altars were required to contain relics, and that houses of worship required icons, preferably high. In almost any pre 18th century church, all the artwork requires you to look UP. This stems from Nicaea II.

Anyway, I love it when Christians say: WELL THIS IS IN THE BIBLE or EXPLAIN IT TO ME WITH THE BIBLE, when conscious decisions were made by conscious human beings with certain interests to DECIDE FOR THEIR OWN what would and wouldn't be in the bible, what they wrote THEMSELVES (so not the disciples) and anyway, Jesus Christ was just a man, just a rebellious Jew who had his own ideas and wrote them down, as did his followers. All perfectly normal, ordinary, human beings, just like everybody else.

This was all done in a time when scientific knowledge was NOT common. When people NEEDED guidance by nature. When people simply believed things on authority of others because they did not know better.

In this day and age, when all that we know about life, and living, and the way religion has evolved, we do not need it. The guiding principle of our lives is the realisation of the human potential, your own, and humankind as a whole. I personally believe that putting energy in a fictitious entity is a waste of valuable time and energy you could use to enrich and improve your own life and the lives of people around you.

I again personally do not mind what ANYBODY believes, it's your life, but when all this outdated and obsolete crap gets shoved into my and other people's lives then that wall of respect crumbles.

Modern day "religion" should be humanity's potential.

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