

Beliefs in Society

Ideology, science and religion					Religion and social change/ stability		
<b>Ideology</b> = set of ideas and values shared by a social group.	<b>Pluralist:</b> there are many social groups, each with their own ideologies, and all equally valid.	<b>Marxist:</b> ruling class impose the dominant ideology to working class using ideological state apparatus (Althusser)	<b>Patriarchal:</b> ideas that support and justify the power of men (Feminist)	<b>Political:</b> ideas that provide an analysis of how governments use power	<b>Functionalist perspective (conservative force 1): helps reinforce value consensus</b>	<b>Durkheim:</b> Life divided to sacred/ profane; totemism = more pure; religion reinforces collective conscience; civil religions replace supernatural beliefs – are these religion?	Evaluations: - Downplay social change - Religion can be divisive eg wars - Ignores diminishing religiosity
						<b>Malinowski:</b> Religion provides explanations for difficult things and security in uncertainty eg death, birth	
						<b>Parsons:</b> Religion underpins and reinforces core values and socialization; gives people ‘mechanism of adjustment’	
<b>Defining religion</b>	<b>Functional/ inclusivist</b> (Durkheim): broad definition , focusing on function– anything seen as sacred	<b>Substantive/ exclusivist</b> (Bruce; Berger): Narrower, focuses on content of religion: belief in supernatural; ‘sacred canopy’ (Berger)		<b>Features of religion:</b> 1. Beliefs in a god 2. Theology eg bible 3. Practice eg prayer 4. Institutions eg church 5. Consequences	<b>Marxist perspective (conservative force 2): opium of the people</b>	<b>Marx:</b> religion as ‘opium of the people’ – relieves pain of poverty by offering escape after death, solution to earthly problems and justification for social class	Evaluations (Neo-Marxists; Gramsci) - Religion can be used to challenge ruling class and for change eg Christian churches in civil rights in USA
						<b>Marx:</b> religion as a means of social control and power used by ruling class – eg Hindu caste system, Catholic church – barrier to change, conservative	
<b>Ideology and religion</b>	<b>Similarities:</b> Both offer a means of understanding, interpreting, explaining the world.		<b>Differences</b> Religion not tied to a social group, unlike ideology; ideology does not require belief in supernatural.		<b>Interpretivist perspective (conservative force 3)</b>	<b>Berger (1990):</b> religion provides a ‘universe of meaning’ – beliefs and values that help people make sense of the world. Provides theodicy – framework to make sense of big issues eg life and death. Also a sacred canopy, protecting people from uncertainty/ pointlessness of life.	Evaluations: Berger argues sacred canopy is lost in postmodern society
<b>Science as a belief system</b>	<b>Popper (1935):</b> Scientific method (hypotheses and falsification) means theories in science are open to challenge; not facts	<b>Science</b> is an open system – scrutinised Religion is a closed system – faith	<b>Kuhn (1962):</b> Science is not so objective – scientists are influenced by paradigms, science is therefore socially constructed – form of ideology?	<b>Feminist perspective (conservative force 4)</b>			
<b>Has science displaced religion?</b>	Aldridge (2007): Cote’s stages: 1. Theological stage – supernatural beliefs 2. Metaphysical stage – abstract ideas 3. Scientific stage - science replaces theological/ metaphysical explanations			Weber – disenchantment with the world in scientific stage	<b>Religion as a force for social change</b>	Weber - The Protestant Ethic and Spirit of Capitalism - Calvinism promoted hard work, self-denial, pursuit of profit and reinvestment of profit - Weber argues this provided the rationality, ideas and ethics to develop capitalism in West Europe - Therefore religion can cause change	McRobbie (2001) Robinson (2001) 4 factors to determine change: nature of beliefs; significance of religion; social involvement in religion; authority of religious organizations
				Popper – religion cannot be proved or disproved so science should replace religion.			
<b>Postmodern approach</b>	Lyotard (1984) – science, ideology, religion all metanarratives – no claim to truth	Science – a metanarrative, caused more problems than it has solved		Religion – spirituality as consumer product; Bauman’s vacuum of meaning in postmodernity	Bruce (2008) and fundamentalism: growth of Islamic fundamentalism shows religion can act as a conservative force by supporting social change		

Religious organisations			Religion and social characteristics			Secularisation and globalisation					
	Key ideas	Debate	Gender:	Religion and patriarchy	Why?	Secularisation thesis	Wilson (1966) process of religious thinking, practice and institutions losing significance Data on secularisation is unreliable and hard to collect accurately				
<b>Churches</b>	Bureaucratic; world-accommodating; inclusive; higher social class over-represented; monopoly of truth	<b>Bruce (1996)</b> concept of church is outdated – most societies have religious pluralism and church lacks power it onc had	women are the biggest consumers of religion	<b>Aldridge (2007)</b> women legally inferior in Quar’an	<b>Halman +Draulans:</b> family life	<b>Causes of secularisation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Functions of religious organisations now carried out by welfare state eg education</li> <li>Science and rationalisation have displaced faith in understanding the world</li> <li>Decline of metanarratives</li> <li>Religious pluralism</li> </ol>				
<b>Denominations</b>	Eg Methodists; world-accommodating; open membership; no monopoly truth			<b>Walby (2007)</b> religions emphasise traditional role	<b>Davie:</b> God seen as forgiving/ feminine						
<b>Sects</b>	Eg Jehovah’s Witnesses; world-rejecting; no hierarchy; tight social control of members; alienated minority groups; claim monopoly of truth			<b>Woodhead (2002)</b> Catholic ban on contraception	<b>Bruce:</b> nurturing roles as mums						
<b>Cults</b>	Eg Scientology; world-affirming; followers not members; little social control; open to all but wealthier members; tolerant of other religions.			<b>Holm (1994)</b> menstruation seen as dirty in Hinduism	<b>Davie:</b> women closer to life/ death						
<b>New Religious movements</b>	<b>Baker (1989):</b> concerned with spirituality; young supporters; charismatic leader; believe they are chosen; short-lived. Example: Heaven’s Gate	Can be world-rejecting (most controversial), accommodating or affirming.	<b>Ethnicity:</b> minority ethnic groups are more religious in the UK  <b>Age:</b> Religiosity is lowest under 34 and highest over 55	<b>Bruce:</b> community solidarity	<b>Mirza:</b> rise of Muslim identity UK: British foreign policy Decline of other identities Multicultural policy	<b>Evidence for secularisation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Decline of religious thinking/ belief. <b>Bruce (2002)</b> science has undermined faith</li> <li>Decline of religious practice BUT <b>Davie (2002)</b> – doesn’t mean decline in belief</li> <li>Decline of religious institutions - Martin (1969) disengaged from society</li> </ol>				
<b>New Age groups</b>	<b>Bruce (2002):</b> focus is on self; everything connected; self is authority; therapy; global cafeteria			<b>Sutcliffe (2003)</b> diverse range of idea that lack premises				Social deprivation	Older people:		
<b>Growth of cults/ sects:</b>	<b>Dynamics of sects:</b>			<b>Social class:</b> Lack of reliable data; inclusivity of religion				Tight-knit family structure	Become more disengaged from society as they age	<b>Evidence against secularisation</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Many people still show signs of religiosity. <b>Heelas et al (2004)</b> ‘spiritual revolution’</li> <li>2. Decline in church attendance doesn’t mean decline in belief: <b>Bellah et al (1996)</b> rise in more private worship instead</li> <li>3. Religious institutions still have a lot of power, eg faith schools, property ownership</li> </ol>
<b>Wallis:</b> cults as key to success	<b>Niebuhr (1929)</b> sects are short-lived usually, because: it’s difficult to maintain fervour; need charasmatic leaders; religious diversity; appeal of sect							<b>Roof (2001)</b> expanded spiritual marketplace	<b>Johal:</b> creates hybrid identity		
<b>Weber:</b> marginality		<b>Lyotard:</b> decline of metanarratives			Facing illness and death more acutely						
<b>Heelas:</b> vacuum of meaning		<b>Bruce (2001):</b> declining religious education									
<b>Wilson:</b> social change					<b>Religion in the contemporary world</b>	<b>Stark and Bainbridge (1996)</b> religious market theory ie religions compete for consumers <b>Norris and Inglehart (2011)</b> existential security theory- survival can be taken for granted					
<b>Glock and Stark:</b> protest							<b>Impact of globalisation on religion</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Meyer et al (2011)</b> deterritorialization of religion – not linked to place eg Islam</li> <li><b>Huntington (2002)</b> more clashes between different religions; Kurtz (2012) ‘culture wars’ between different religions</li> <li><b>Singeton (2014)</b> Rise in fundamentalism</li> <li>Spiritual supermarket expanding</li> <li>Religion as resistance to cultural imperialism</li> </ol>			
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