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| **Religion in a Global context (Fundamentalism and Globalisation)**  |
| **Religious fundamentalism** |
| **What is fundamentalism?** Fundamentalism – Traditionalists who seek to return to the basics or fundamentals of their faith. A belief that theirs is the only true vision of the world.A belief in the literal truth of texts. Avoidance of dialogue and interaction with those who disagree with them. Fundamentalism is a response to globalisation; providing strict rules and regulations in a time of too much choice and freedom. | **Fundamentalism and modernity** Davie (2013) argues, fundamentalism occurs where those who hold traditional orthodox beliefs and values are threatened by modernity and feel the need to defend themselves against it. Giddens (1999) argues that fundamentalism is a product of and reaction to globalisation, which undermines traditional social norms concerning the nuclear family, gender and sexuality. It is a retreat into faith based answers and away from the risk is and uncertainties of a globalising world. |
| **Monotheism and fundamentalism** Like Giddens, Bruce (2008) sees the main cause of fundamentalism as the perception of religious traditionalists that today’s globalising world threatens their beliefs. However, Bruce regards fundamentalisms being confined to monotheistic religions (believing in a single almighty god – Islam, Christianity, Judaism) This is because these religions are based on the notion of Gods will revealed through a single authoritative sacred text such as the Quran or Bible. This is believed to contain the actual word of God and it lays down specific rules for believers to follow.In Bruce’s view, while all fundamentalists share the same characteristics such as belief in the literal truth of sacred text, different fundamentalist movements may have different origins. E.g: - In developed countries fundamentalism is a reaction to the increased permissiveness of society and the rejection of the church in decision making e.g. New Christian right in the USA (Make homosexuality , abortion and divorce illegal)- In developing countries fundamentalism is a reaction to an outside force trying to change religions role in society e.g. Iranian revolution started as a reaction to Western interference – non Muslim ideas on a Muslim population created great unrest. | **Cosmopolitanism** **G**iddens contrasts fundamentalism with cosmopolitanism – A way of thinking that embraces modernity and is in keeping with today’s globalising world. Cosmopolitanism is tolerant of the views of others and open to new ideas, constantly reflecting on and modifying beliefs in the light of new information. Cosmopolitan religion and spirituality emphasises the pursuit of personal meaning and self-improvement rather than submission to authority.In similar argument to Giddens, Bauman (1992) sees fundamentalism as a response to living in postmodernity as it brings freedom of choice, uncertainty and a heightened awareness of risk, undermining the old certainties about how to live that were grounded by tradition. In this situation, while some embrace the new freedom, others are attracted to fundamentalism by it claims of absolute truth and certainty. Evaluation:Beckford (2011) critics Giddens on several grounds:- Distinguish too sharply between cosmopolitanism and fundamentalism and ignore hybrid movements.- They are fixated on fundamentalism ignoring other important developments – including how globalisation is also affecting non fundamentalism religion such as Catholicism. - Giddens lumps all types of fundamentalism together, ignoring important differences between them. |
| **Secular fundamentalism** Davie (2013) argues that recent decades have seen the emergence of secular forms of fundamentalism. She distinguished between two phases of modernity: The first phase rise to religious fundamentalism: This phase stretched from the time of the philosophical movement known as the enlightenment in the late 18th century. This philosophy held an optimistic secular belief in the certainty of progress based on the power of science and human reason to improve the world. Religious fundamentalism is one reaction to this secularisation process. The second phase is giving rise to secular fundamentalism: Since the 1970’s the loss of faith in the major secular enlightenment ideologies such as liberalism and Marxism whose claims to truth and belief in progress have been undermined. As a result, these secular ideologies are themselves struggling for survival, just like traditional religion. And as with religion when it came under attack, some supporters of secular ideologies such as nationalism have also been attracted to fundamentalism. For example, in Western Europe, perceived religious challenges to liberal secular value shave provoked secular fundametlaist reaction (e.g in 2004 France banned pupils from wearing religious symbols in school, and in 2010 made it illegal for women to wear the veil in public  | **The clash of civilisations**According to Huntington (2002) global conflicts such as 9/11 have intensified since the collapse of communism and are symptoms of a ‘clash of civilisations’. In today’s world, religious differences between civilisations are a major source of conflict, this is because globalisation has made nation-states less significant as a source of identity, creating a gap that religion has filled. At the same time, globalisation increases the contacts between civilisations increasing the likelihood of conflict. Evaluations:Jackson (2006) sees Huntingtons work as an example of orientalism – a western ideology that stereotypes eastern nations and people as untrustworthy.Casanova (2005) argues that Huntington ignores important religious division with the ‘civilisations’ e.g. Sunni and Shia islam. |
| **Cultural defence -** Globalisation may result in changes either within or outside a society. Cultural Defence describes the idea that religion can unite a community against an external threat. This often gives religion a prominent role in politics. |
| **Poland** From 1945 to 1989, Poland was under communist rule, imposed from outside by the soviet union. During this time the Catholic Church was suppressed, but for many Poles, it continued to be a very important part of their national identity. The church did not always openly challenge the regime, but it did act as an important rallying point for opposition to the Soviet Union and the Polish Communist Party. | **Iran** Western capitalist powers and oil companies had long had influence in Iran, including involvement in the illegal overthrow of a democratic government in the 1950’s to install a pro-western regime headed by the Shah of Iran. During the 1960’s and 70’s, his successor embarked on a policy of modernisation and Westernisation. This included banning the veil and replacing the Muslim calendar. Meanwhile, modernization was widening with the gap between rich and poor, while protest was ruthlessly suppressed.Change was imposed rapidly and from above, causing great suffering. Under these conditions, Islam became the focus for resistance to the Shahs regime, led by clerics. The revolution of 1979 brought the creation of the Islamic republic, in which clerics held state power and were able to impose Islamic sharia law.However, Hynes argues that the Iranian revolution was not typical of the middle East, in that it was led by the religious leaders. In countries such as Saudi Arabia, the religious leadership is closely tied to the local elite, who in turn are tied to Western imperialism. As such, local religious leaders are opposed by local fundamentalists, who regard them as enemies of Islam. |
| **Religion and development** Globalisation – Cultures around the world are becoming more closely connected due to the global nature of corporations, the increase in immigration and the increased economic power of emerging nations such as China and India |
| **Hinduism and global consumerism:** India is 85% Hindu. Hinduism is a religion that has many representations of god, the choice of worship is dependant on a person need. Globalisation has brought on massive changes to Indian society.**Middle class Hindus**Globalisation should lead to secularisation – as more people in India become better educated society should become more secular (see Weber’s rationalisation debate, LT 9). However, Nanda observes that the opposite is true and the wealthy in India are becoming more religious.-Growth in religious tourism – people have the money to visit shrines - Religion is becoming a fashionable status symbol - Picking different gods to worship shows pick and mix cultureThe reason Nanda gives for the increase in religion is that Hindu norms and values have evolved to support the wealth generating middle class. Extravagant rituals to show wealth are given to gods which ‘spiritually balances’ people who earn a lot of money. Modern Hinduism has evolved to be supportive in an environment of great social change that globalised consumer capitalism creates (Malinowski’s times of crisis, LT2).**Hindu ultra nationalists**Hindus also use their faith as a form of cultural defence. Pushing the idea that Hinduism is the essence of Indian culture and identity. Hindus consistently attribute their success on the global markets to the superior values of Hinduism. In this sense they are creating a collective consciousness, as Durkheim suggests, that helps people fit into, and be successful in, the Indian and international community. However, this increases tensions with non-Hindu Indians leading to localised discrimination and social conflict. Also Hinduism is also starting to influence government policy with religious ideas such as astrology being taught in school and cows urine being bottled and used as a cure for AIDS. | **Capitalists in China**Redding argues that the emergence of the Tiger economies in the far East (China, Taiwan, South Korea) has been kick started by religion – in the same way Weber argues that Western industrialisation began. Redding argues that post Confucian values of hard work, self discipline, and self improvement is very similar to that of Calvinist protestants. However, it does not explain why India emerged at the same time as China. And there is no direct causal relationship between the rise of Confucianism and the rise in economic power. | **Pentecostalism in Latin America**Pentecostalism is another religion, based in Christianity, that preaches abstinence and hard work. According to Berger, Pentecostalism has lead to capitalism emerging in American countries such as Brazil. In Brazil and Chile there is a sizeable Pentecostalist middle class that work ethic is beginning to raise the country out of poverty. However, Berger concedes that Pentecostalism only operates as a force for social change in places where natural resources already exist. This suggests that religion alone cannot be the basis for social change. |
| **Critical point**: * Pentecostalism’s ability to change society is based on the society it operates in and there are lots of different types of Pentocostalist practise. This is due to the way in which the Pentecostalism blends in with local traditions. Although it preaches the same general message world wide it uses local spiritual ideas to reinforce their belief structure, often by renouncing local religions as the work of the devil.
* Pentecostalism has global popularity as it is favoured by the poor – there are more poor people in the world than rich.
* Pentecostalism also uses celebrity endorsements and road show speakers to impress in developing contries.
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