

Chapter 1 Beliefs in Society

Topic 1 Theories of Religion

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 11

1. False (substantive definitions of religion are exclusive).
2. Durkheim sees sacred things as set apart, special and forbidden; profane things are seen as everyday and ordinary.
3. According to Durkheim and Mauss, religion is the original source of categories of thought, such as notions of time and causation.
4. A belief system that attached sacred qualities to society itself, e.g. a faith in the 'American way of life'.
5. It ignores the conflict that religion often produces; it neglects various types of religious oppression.
6. A lack of control over the means of production.
7. By justifying the caste system, e.g. a person cannot question his or her position, as it is believed to be deserved as the result of good or bad behaviour in a previous life.
8. Male-dominated priesthood; segregation of women; taboos about women; male gods and prophets; unequal rights and treatment.
9. For Muslim women, by using the hijab to enable them to enter the public sphere; in evangelical groups, by sharing experiences and finding support e.g. in Bible study groups; by becoming priests e.g. in the Church of England.

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Topic 2 Religion and Social Change

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 19

1. Those whom God had chosen to be saved were ‘predestined’ – even chosen in advance of birth.
2. Living a disciplined, simple, hard-working life in this world (as opposed to other-worldly asceticism in a monastery).
3. Because they could not know if they were chosen to be saved.
4. The orientation of Hindu asceticism was other-worldly, rather than this-worldly.
5. The way in which the ruling class are able to maintain control over society by ideological means, including religion.
6. They provided moral legitimacy; meeting places; a source of unity; an organisation for campaigning.
7. Helping the poor; fighting oppression; promoting change in society.
8. Predicting the end of the world as it is now; the overthrow of oppressors; a ‘golden age’ to come; pre-political movements.
9. Because religion often preaches liberation, as well as supporting the status quo.

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Topic 3 Secularisation

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 27

1. 40%
2. 30%
3. Because of the rise of rationality and the growth of science and technology.
4. A pluralist society, containing religious diversity.
5. Where one faith and one set of beliefs covers the whole society and is shared by all.
6. The influence and functions of religion are transferred to other institutions, such as education and welfare.
7. Where religion provides support and a sense of community for migrants and minority ethnic groups.
8. Traditional Christian beliefs and glorifying God declines and religion is 'psychologised' or turned into a form of therapy. The purpose of religion changes from seeking salvation in heaven to seeking personal improvement in this world.

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Topic 4 Religion, Renewal and Choice

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 37

1. Having religious beliefs but not attending a church.
2. Experiencing religion ‘second hand’ or at a distance. Attending church for rites of passage, but not on a regular basis.
3. ‘Pilgrims’ focus on their own individual spirituality and development; ‘converts’ join religious groups for a sense of community and belonging.
4. Religion provides us with supernatural compensation for things we cannot achieve in this life.
5. There has never been a religious monopoly in America; America has a vast array of religions on offer; there is religious competition on television; religious groups are often very wealthy; religious adherence in America is more flexible – people change more often from one group to another; adherence to civil religion is required of politicians; American society is more unequal.
6. It focuses on the decline of religion in Europe, and ignores other societies where religion still thrives.
7. Diversity and supply do not necessarily increase the level of religiosity; some societies have high levels of religious participation despite a monopoly by one church; religious market theory misrepresents the idea of a religious ‘golden age’ in the past.
8. The feeling that survival is secure and therefore there is less need for religion to provide reassurance.

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Topic 5 Religion in a Global Context

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 45

1. The strict literal adherence to scripture; tradition; compulsory, unquestioning lifestyle.
2. Resistance identity is the response of those who retreat defensively into fundamentalism; project identity is the response of those who become involved with forward-looking social movements.
3. Abortion; gay marriage; gender equality; secular education.
4. Give one example of secular fundamentalism. Nationalism; cultural racism
5. Because of increased contact through globalisation, and the increasing importance of religious identity, following the decline of political differences.
6. Hostility is based on political issues rather than religion; it does not take account of divisions within 'civilisations'; the theory itself promoted hostility and stereotyping.
7. Values concerning self-expression, such as diversity and gender equality.
8. Religion spread by colonial conquest; evangelical and fundamentalist religion driven by mass following.
9. Hindu belief that India is superior to other nations because of its Hindu values.

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Topic 6 Religious Organisations, Members and Movements

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 57

1. Where religion gives meaning to deprivation and helps people cope with it.
2. Both churches and sects see their interpretation of faith as the only correct one; both have a moral code to which members must adhere. Important differences are that sects are usually smaller; they have less ritual and hierarchy; churches are usually open to the whole community.
3. Examples such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Scientology, Quakers, Christadelphians, Plymouth Brethren, or other examples from the chapter.
4. A cult where there is no formal membership; a person can be a part of the cult simply by going to a meeting or exhibition or reading a book.
5. It reflects an emphasis on consumerism; it is strongest in the most developed parts of the world; it emphasises individualism.
6. Because women are closer to birth and death; are concerned with the socialisation of the young; are controlled by the patriarchal nature of religion; have been less involved with other aspects of life, such as political and economic activity.
7. Religion can provide support and a sense of community for new migrants.

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Topic 7 Ideology and Science

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 65

1. Where scientists set out to prove a statement wrong.
2. Communism; universalism; disinterestedness; organised scepticism – all are norms to which scientists must adhere when pursuing scientific knowledge.
3. It cannot be overturned by evidence because the believers accept basic assumptions that cannot be challenged.
4. Because scientists reacted to his new theory by immediate rejection, rather than testing it via scientific means.
5. Ideological thought justifies the status quo; utopian thought justifies social change.
6. Ways of thinking (of the oppressed) that are the product of ideology (of the ruling class).
7. Because they would not be attached to any particular interest group and therefore could represent the interests of society as a whole.
8. Ruling-class ideology and consciousness arising from exploitation and struggle.