

Against secularisation

- -Privatised religion: Followers of a religion belong to a religion but do not worship collectively or in an institutional setting (Believing without belonging- Davie). E.g. in 1991 52% claimed to believe in God. Hamilton (1998) - 10% didn't believe in God. Also people do not have to be members of religious organisations to be religious (Bellah). Robertson Smith: Emphasised practices over beliefs – religion is a form of cultural identity.
- -Measuring secularisation: Statistics are unreliable as definitions vary between sociologists, problems with comparisons, places of worship may lie about figures or may only count weekly rather than daily. Data may not be representative of the population, contain practical problems, validity of the data (e.g. in 19th century they may have attended church as a sign of respectability, social desirability bias)
- -Sacred retains significance: Although science can explain factors such as death, religion explains the 'ultimate meanings' of these events.
- -Secularisation theorists tend to focus on mainstream religion (churches and denominations). They ignore newer religions that have been gaining followers in recent decades.
- -Based on teleological assumption and the product of Marxist/rationalist ideology.
- -Ethnocentric view of religious developments, dismissing the persistence of religion in less economically developed countries as a result of their lack of modernity.

Secularisation -

- Bruce – Cultural identity: sees religion as a form of cultural defence and cultural transition which are reasons why religion is still thriving in a pluralistic structure.
- Cultural Defence: When an ethnic group uses religion as a sense of identity and uses it to maintain ethnic pride through religion.
- Cultural Transition: When religion is used to cope with the upheaval of migration.

Privatised Sphere: Religion is now performing functions for individuals e.g. psychological and helping answering the unknown by giving life meaning/ helps with social integration,

- -Kendal Project:

Woodhead and Heelas has religion declined and how far has the growth of spirituality compensated this

Distinguished two groups:

- Congregational domain- traditional/evangelical Christianity.
- Holistic milieu- spirituality and the New Age. 2000-> found 7.9% of the population attended church per week and 1.6% took part in activities in the holistic milieu.

However, traditional churches are losing support which is the opposite for the holistic milieu. They see the spiritual revolution has not taken place in Kendal but if the present trends continue the revolution will take place in 20-30 years.

Post modernity (consumerism)

Religious consumerism

Idea that we choose to construct our identities through what we choose to consume.

- Leger emphasizes it's also true of religion where we act as spiritual shoppers choosing religious beliefs and practices to meet our individual needs from the vast range available in the religious marketplace. No longer need to sign up- can pick and mix elements of diff faiths to suit tastes and make part of identity.
- Lyons view: Lyon: 'Jesus in Disneyland'
Trad religion giving way to variety new religious forms that demonstrate its continuous vigour.
Postmodern society = number features changing nature of religion: globalization, increased importance of media and communications, growth of consumerism. religion relocated to the sphere of consumption. People may cease to belong- not abandoned religion. Instead= religious consumers making conscious choices about which elements of religion they find useful.

Churches

- McGuire examines the factors that influence the role in that religion plays in society. For example, religions that emphasise adherence to strong moral codes are more likely to produce members who are critical of society and seek to change it.
- Bruce argues that the concept of a church is primarily useful in describing premodern Christian societies. The development of religious pluralism in modern societies makes it difficult for the state to lead exclusive support to one religion because a single set of religious beliefs is no longer taken for granted and reinforced by all groups in society.
- Robertson argues that there has been an increase in church state tensions throughout the world. There is little room for religious concerns in the world of international trade and diplomacy, so governments may come into conflict with the moral concerns of domestic churches.

Sects

preview from Notesale.co.uk
page 30 of 51

- Bruce acknowledges that sects may prosper in modern societies where people have more opportunity to form subculture, even with the greater toleration that exists within contemporary societies, however, some sects may come into serious conflict with the wider society. In the 1990's there were a number of instances involving the deaths of sect followers – for example, the deaths of more than 80 Branch Davidians in the siege at Waco in Texas.
- Wilson argues that Troeltsch's description of sects does not account for the increase in new religious movements and sects in Europe and the USA in recent decades. Some of these are examined below.

Cults

- Tend to be more individualistic than other organised forms of religion because they often lack a fixed set of beliefs
- They tolerate other beliefs and their own beliefs are often vague
- They often have customers rather than members, and customers may have relatively little involvement with the organisation once they have learned the basics
- Many aspects of the new age movement are based around cults

Religion and Gender trends

- Priesthoods of most religions are male
- More women than men participate in religious activities and believe in God, sin, evil, the Devil and the afterlife.
- 2005 =
 - 1.8 million women churchgoers
 - 1.36 million men churchgoers
- **Miller and Hoffman (1995)** - Women express greater interest in religion, have a stronger commitment & attend church more.
- **Bruce (1996)** – estimates that there are twice as many women than men involved in sects.
- **Heelas and Woodhead (2005)** – found that 80% of participants in holistic milieu in Kendal were female.

Recent Trends

Brierley (2005) – drastic decline in 30-45 women churchgoers. 16.4% fall in Sunday church attendance between 1990 – 2005.

Suggests that may be due to pressures – home, family, work. Likely to have younger family and 1 in 3 work on Sundays.

Callum Brown (2001) – Since 1960s, women rejecting traditional subordinate gender roles. Roles common in religion therefore rejecting traditional religion at the same time.

Religion and gender

- **Socialisation and Gender Role**

- Women are socialised to be passive, obedient and caring. (Miller and Hoffman)
- These qualities are valued by religions therefore women more attracted. Men with these qualities are also more likely to be attracted to religion.
- Women more likely to work part-time & have more time for religion.
- Church could be a source for gender identity.
- Caring for family increases for religiosity.

Women and the New Age

Steeles and Woodhead (2005)

May be because NAMs celebrate the 'natural' and healing – gives a woman higher status and sense of self-worth.

Bruce: Less aggressive and goal-orientated, more cooperative & caring. Fits with expressive emphasis of the New Age

Brown (2001) - argues that New Age 'self' religions – that emphasise individual experience rather than external authority – appeals to women's wish for independence and attract women recruits. Others may be attracted to fundamentalism because of certainties of a traditional gender role

Compensation for Deprivation

Glock & Stark (1969) & Stark &

Bainbridge (1985) – people may participate in religion because of compensators (social, organismic & ethical deprivation).

Glock & Stark – forms of deprivation all more common among women. Explains their higher level of sect membership.

- **Organismic Deprivation** – Women more likely to suffer physical & mental health problems thus seek healing through religion.
- **Ethical Deprivation** – Women tend to be more morally conservative thus more likely to regard world as being in moral decline & be attracted to sects (which often share this view).
- **Social Deprivation** – Women more likely to be poor