
Module 2533: CULTURE AND SOCIALISATION
Option A: Religion
Unit Three: Religion and Social Change

Sociology Department, Greenhead College, Huddersfield

Learning Objectives

By the end of this unit you should be able to:

1. Identify and explain the main features of Durkheim's view on the role of religion
2. Outline the main features of Marxist and neo-Marxist explanations of the role of religion
3. Identify and explain Weber's view of the role of religion in society
4. Establish the main features of a feminist perspective on religion

Key Skills

The activities in this study guide will give you the opportunity to develop the following key skills:

1. Communication: oral presentation, report-writing, discussion
2. ILT: using the Internet, CD Roms, word-processing software
3. Working With Others: paired work, group research, small group presentations
4. Improving Own Learning: self-evaluation, target-setting

Use this box for important information - personal targets, deadlines, assessment etc

Planning your work

The activities in this guide will help you to cover all the key ideas in this unit. You may not have to do them all. You will discuss activities with your teacher to determine which can be done as a class, in groups, or individually. You will also discuss how your work is to be presented and assessed.



Resources

The following resources are suggestions only. Your teacher may wish to add to or amend the list. You will find that particularly useful resources are indicated in the margin, e.g. R1 means use resource 1.

Books:

- R1 Taylor et al *Sociology In Focus*
- R2 Kirby et al *Sociology in Perspective*
- R3 Haralambos and Holborn *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*
- R4 O'Donnell *A New Introduction to Sociology*
- R5 Bird *Investigating Religion*
- R6 Selfe and Starbuck *Religion*
- R7 Best et al. *Active Sociology*
- R8 Fulcher and Scott *Sociology*

Internet

- R9 Hewett School <http://www.hewett.norfolk.sch.uk/curric/soc/religion/rindex.htm>
- R10 Sociology Site <http://www.hartland64.freemove.co.uk/socindex.htm>
- R11 Sociology Central <http://www.freemove.virgin.net/chris.livesey/home.htm>
- R12 ATSS <http://www.atss.ac.uk>
- R13 Sociosite <http://www.pscw.uva.nl/sociosite/TOPICS/index.html>
- R14 Socioweb <http://www.socioweb.com/~markbl/socioweb/>
- R15 The Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk> Click on 'Archive'
- R16 The Source <http://www.statistics.gov.uk>

Extract

- R17 Religion as a conservative force - Functionalism
- R18 Religion as a conservative force - Marxism
- R19 Religion as an agent of social change
- R20 Religion as change promoter
- R21 Examples of social change

CD Rom

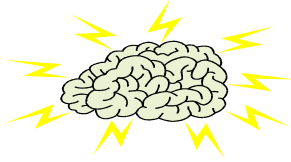
- R22 The Guardian and Observer
- R23 Social Trends

Video

- R24 Liberation Theology in South America

ACTIVITY ONE: Introducing Social Change

Margin Notes



Task One

In pairs, come to an agreed definition of the terms *social change* and *progress*.

When you have done this look at the examples of social change in R21. Identify the social change referred to and decide whether or not it represents progress.

Use this space for ideas

ACTIVITY TWO: Introducing Religion and Social Change

Task Two:

Your teacher will present a brief overview of the main sociological approaches to religion and social change. Listen carefully to the points being made and note them down.

ACTIVITY 3: Sociological Approaches to Religion and Social Change

Margin Notes

The following is an activity for groups of four. You will be expected to research and write-up material on four main approaches to religion and social change.

How you organise the following tasks is up to you - you could either take a task each and collate your material at the end, or you could attempt all four tasks individually. The majority decision is binding !

Task Three: Functionalist Approaches

You will need to research material on:

A. Emile Durkheim:

- The role of the sacred in society (R2, R3)
- Totemism (R2, R3)
- The functions of religion (R6)
- Evaluation of Durkheim (R3, R6)

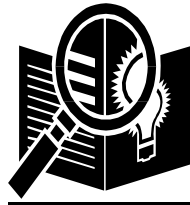
A. Bronislaw Malinowski

- Religion and social solidarity (R2)
- The role of religion during life crises (R2, R3)
- Evaluation (R2, R3)

A. Talcott Parsons

- The role of religion in maintaining value consensus (R1, R3)
- The role of religion in maintaining social order (R1, R3)

A. Evaluation of the functionalist approach (R3, R7)



Use this space for ideas and planning



Task Four: Marxist Approaches

You will need to research the following:

- The role of religion in capitalist ideology (R1, R3)
- Religion as an instrument of social control (R1, R3)
- Evidence to support Marxist approaches (R3)
- Religion as a radical force: the neo-Marxist views of Gramsci and Maduro (R1, R3)
- Evaluation of the Marxist approach (R1, R3, R7)

Use this space for planning and ideas

Margin Notes

Task Five: The work of Max Weber – Religion as a force for social change

You will need to research material on the following:

- The 'Protestant Ethic', 'pre-destination' and salvation panic (R1, R3)
- The spirit of capitalism (R1, R3)
- Evaluation of Weber (R1, R3, R7)

Use this space for planning

Task Six: Feminist perspectives on religion

You will need to research material on the following:

- Jean Holm - gender inequalities in major religions (R3)
- Simone de Beauviour - explanations for gender inequalities in major religions (R3)
- Nawal El Saadawi - how Islam is used as an excuse to oppress women (R3)
- Helen Watson - the positive meaning of veiling for Muslim women (R3)

Use this space for planning

ACTIVITY FOUR: Summary Sheet

Margin Notes



Task Seven

Using the materials produced in the previous activity, complete the summary sheet for Religion and Social Change. You will need to revise this material for a short-answer test in the first lesson of next week.

ACTIVITY FIVE: Religion, Feminism and Research Methods

R1, R2, R3, R7

Task Eight

Create a new heading of 'Structured and Unstructured Interviews' in the Research Methods section of your file. Then make a larger A3 copy of the table below and use the resources listed opposite to complete it.

Remember to deal with theoretical advantages and disadvantages first (i.e. issues of reliability, validity etc) and then practical advantages and disadvantages (i.e. issues of cost, time etc)

Advantages of structured interviews	Examples of advantages	Disadvantages of structured interviews	Examples of disadvantages
Advantas of unstructured interviews	Examples of advantages	Disavantages of unstructured interviews	Examples of disadvantages

Margin Notes



Task Nine

From the work you have completed in task eight, you should be aware that unstructured interviews are used by interpretivist sociologists who wish to understand the meanings and interpretations that individuals give to their own actions and the actions of others.

Your task is to design and carry out a piece of interpretivist research using unstructured interviews.

Your aim is to explore whether or not males and females have different interpretations of God and religion. For example,

- ❑ you may wish to replicate Helen Watson's research by interviewing two or three female Muslim students about the meaning they attach to the wearing of the veil and other traditional religious garments.
- ❑ Alternatively, you may wish to explore the extent to which people believe religious institutions reinforce male dominance in society.

You can, of course, come up with your own idea, but check with your teacher first. The point is that you must use unstructured interviews.

Use this space for planning

Margin Notes



Task Ten

You now need to formally write up your piece of research. A formal sociological research report requires the following sections:

1. A **rationale** - this is where you explain the aims and objectives of your particular piece of research. You also need to place your research in context with existing sociological literature. In other words, you will need to find out what other research has been carried out on your topic area by doing a literature search.
2. A **methodology section** in which you explain the theoretical and practical reasons for using the method you have selected, and how this relates to your aims and objectives.
3. An **analysis** of your results - what do they indicate to you, how are they similar to or different from existing research. Do not just describe your findings.
4. The **conclusions** you have drawn
5. An **evaluation** of your research design, the research process, and your role as a researcher. Also, what would you do differently in a similar piece of research ?

You will need to complete sections 1-3. As this will be a brief research report, each section should be no longer than 300 words. All reports must be word-processed.

Use this space for planning

ACTIVITY FIVE: Evaluation

I feel confident in the following areas of this unit	I need to improve my understanding of the following areas of this unit	I am going to improve my understanding of these areas by doing the following

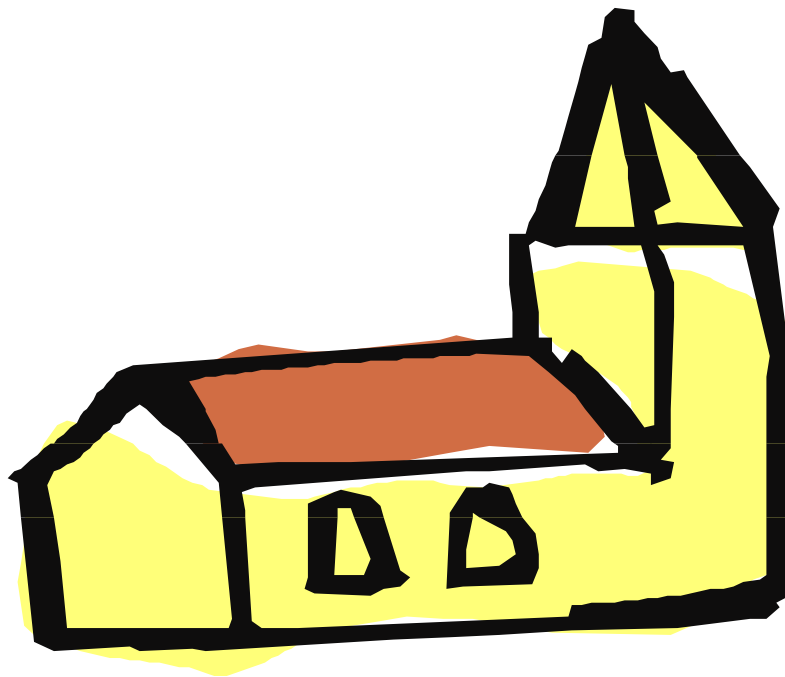
KEY SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Key Skill	Evidence
Communication	
Working with others	
Information Technology	
Improving own learning	

Sociology Department Greenhead College

**OCR Sociology
AS Module 2533
Culture and Socialisation**

Option A: RELIGION



**Unit Two:
THE SECULARISATION
DEBATE**