

Religion Sem 1 Exam Prep:

Module 1 Essay plan

“Impact of social factors on how people interact with religion”.

Intro:

- The nature of interaction between people and religion is multifaceted and underscored by the interplay between a myriad of social factors which have the ability to either support, hinder or obstruct the way in which people interact with religion. The most prominent social factors which influence how people interact with religion in contemporary Australian society include the growth of a materialistic culture which hinders people’s interaction with religion. The prevalence of materialistic ideals within Australian discourse that hinders how people interact with religion and finally Australia’s multicultural society, which supports people’s interactions with religion. Ultimately each of these social factors have the capacity to influence a person’s interaction with religion in positive or detrimental ways.

Body 1: how a materialistic culture hinders people’s interaction with religion.

- The cultural trend of materialism is a social factor which hinders the way people interact with religion in Australia.
- Materialism is the belief in the “Primacy of material world,” as opposed to spiritual notions promoted by religion (TANed, 2018). In this way materialism dismisses the metaphysical realms that religions are often founded on such as the “existence of god and the soul.” (C. Gutburlet, 1911). As a result, those with materialistic beliefs tend to find it difficult to engage with religious concepts that involve spirituality and faith, thus hindering their ability to interact with religion.
- Materialism also “emphasises self-centredness,” (KS Mickens, 1993), a notion that conflicts with the communal nature of many world religions. Most religions promote the sentiment of helping one-another, and placing the needs of the group above your own, however a materialistic mindset encourages a more individualistic view that undermines the sense of community and togetherness promulgated by religion
- Additionally, materialism fosters a consumerist mindset, which is explicitly the prioritisation of the pursuit of material possession, wealth and immediate gratification over spiritual and religious endeavours. Consequently this makes religious practices and beliefs such as acts of “charity, prayer, solidarity,” appear redundant to those with materialistic mindsets. (TANed, 2018)
- Thus it can be said that a materialistic culture hinders how people interact with religion through its promotion of ideologies such as self-centredness and consumerism. In addition to cultural aspects, there are also political social factors which can hinder interaction with religion

Body 2: how secularism hinders people’s interaction with religion

- Secularism is a political ideology that hinders how people interact with religion in Australia.
- The Australian government follows a soft secular approach meaning it calls for a separation in government and religion
- Secularism believes that religious beliefs are “Epistemologically illegitimate.” (B, Kosmin)
- And that religion is a deterrent to societal development as it “invokes needless fear and guild, hindering progress, fostering social division and violence.” (N. Thompson 1998).
- Thus secularism promotes the a view on religion that makes it appear outdated, and detrimental
- People hearing this from the government are more likely decrease their own reliance on religious opinion and are more likely to treat religions such as Catholicism with a critical attitude as there is a level of distrust.
- The growing secularist ideology was demonstrated in the 2020 census where more than 38% of people identified as following no religion, a drastic increase from figures gather 4 years earlier where the figure was 25%.

- Thus it is seen that secularism hinders how people interact with religion in Australia, however it must also be noted that not all social factor hinder peoples interactions with religion, in fact many social factors actually support.

Body 3: How multiculturalism supports peoples interactions with religion

- Multi-culturalism is a social factor that supports peoples interactions with religion in Australia.
- Multiculturalism refers to the acceptance and promotion of a myriad of cultural and religious traditions within a single society.
- This started getting promoted within Australia after the abolishment of the White Australia policy in 1973
- Since then, Australia has seen huge influx of immigrants from various cultures, in 2020 “29.8 % of the [Australian] population was born overseas.” (ABS, 2020)
- Among these immigrant “40.7% of them were affiliated with non-Christian religions.”
- Multiculturalism promotes the recognition and acceptance of religious beliefs and practices within Australian society, thus fostering an environment where people can comfortably practice their religious traditions, this freedom of expression in turn enables different people to learn about different religions, thus increasing the likelihood they find a religion they resonate with, thus supporting interaction with religion.
- Also supports the establishment of religious institutions such as temples, mosques etc. The provision of religious infrastructure enables people of faith to gather in a communal space and engage in meaningful and conversation, this enriches individuals religious experiences positively
- Currently over 340 mosques, 200 Buddhist temples and 140 Hindu temples Australia wide (Australian Treasury Dept, 2011)

Conclusion

Module 3 Essay Plan

“How one religious belief, teaching, ritual or practice developed over time.”

Intro:

- Religious beliefs are constantly evolving in response to pastoral concerns and the social climate of a time
- One religious belief that has developed over time is the CDoC belief in the sacrament of marriage.
- The Catholic belief of marriage finds its roots in the book of genesis where God established the sacred union between man and woman.
- Since then, the belief has evolved, guided by the influence of several historical factors, most notably the work of St Augustine of Hippo, who outlined the three-fold goodness of marriage in his dissertation “De Bono Coniugali”, The Council of Trent which established marriage as one of the seven sacrament, defined procreation as its primary purpose, made reforms to the nature of marriage celebrations. Most recently, the Second Vatican council influenced the development of marriage when it asserted that marriage is a vocation of human life.
- Ultimately, these people and historical events have helped deepen the Church’s understanding of marriage and have helped develop it in response to pastoral and societal concerns, establishing key features of marriage that ultimately define it today.

Body 1: How St Augustine of Hippo helped develop marriage

- One influential factor that has greatly influenced the development of marriage in the early church is St Augustine.
- He was a theologian, philosopher and Bishop of Hippo from 354-430 AD.
- St Augustine created a document titled “De Bono Coniugali.” Which expressed the 3 fold goodness of marriage as sacrament, fidelity and procreation.
- Essentially document suggested that marriage should be seen as a sacrament, as he saw it as a “Sacred covenant between man and woman that symbolised the union between Christ and the Church.”
- He also asserted the need for fidelity in marriage
- based on the words from Ephesians (5:31-33) which emphasizes the profound unity between man and women through the metaphor of Jesus connection to the Church
- Thus Augustine asserted that we should emulate this in marriage and remain faithful to one partner as Jesus remained faithful to the church
- Finally he spoke on procreation as the primary purpose of marriage as this act reflects God’s creative power and enables the word of the Church and kingdom of God to spread forever

Body 2: How Council of Trent helped develop marriage

- A significant historical event in the history of the Catholic Church that contributed greatly to the development of the key features of marriage
- This ecumenical council ran from 1545-1563 and was called by Pope Paul III in response to challenges posed by the protestant reformation (Britannica, 2023)
- This council developed the belief of marriage as it:
- Officially consecrated it as one of the seven sacraments “truly and properly one of the seven sacraments... instituted by Christ the lord.”
- Established it as a covenant by upholding the indissolubility of marriage
- Also emphasized that for marriage to be valid, it must be overseen by a bishop and two other witnesses

- Officially affirmed that the primary purpose of marriage is procreation, and the importance of raising children in the context of a stable and loving family- paying heed to the contributions of St Augustine
- All this info from (P Reynolds, 2016)

Body 3: How Vatican II helped develop marriage

- Another historical event that contributed to the development of the sacrament of marriage as a catholic belief
- 21st ecumenical council, ran from 1962-1965, called by John XXIII and ended under Paul VI
- Developed sacrament of marriage by helping develop a fuller theology of marriage:
- Asserting that “conjugal love is sign to others of Christ’s love for the Church.” (Gaudium Et Spes)
- Recognised the need for improved pastoral care in the lives of married couples, in this way the Church recognised the challenges of married life and began to help married couples deal with- important in the context of the time.
- Also said marriage is a vocation

Conclusion

Module 2 Essay Plan:

- How a religion uses a particular structure and/or process to address important issues
- The significance of one religious event and/or issues from the past

Intro:

- Throughout its history, the Roman Catholic Church, a denomination of Christianity has implemented several structures and processes to address important issues in society
- One specific structure in the CDoC is the ecumenical structure which has been utilised 21 times over the last 2000 years, most recently with the 21st ecumenical council also known as Vatican II
- Council took place between 1962 and 1965, called by John XXIII and ended under Paul VI
- Its conception was greatly influenced by the contextual paradigms of the 20th century
- The council used an ecumenical structure to support its operation
- Produced 4 constitutions, 9 decrees and 3 declarations which worked to address internal issues such as a lack of liturgical participation, and the long standing divide between christian denominations as well as the external issue of anti-semitism
- Ultimately the Church sought to implement the ecumenical structure through the Second vatican council so they could respond to issues of the time and thus ensure the relevancy of the church and the continuation of Christian dogma.

Body 1- Key Features of ecumenical structure and introduce vatican II

- An ecumenical council and its various processes enable the Catholic Church to respond to important issues
- An ecumenical council is defined as an irregular meeting of the entire episcopate in communion with the Pope
- Only the Pope has the power to commence, suspend or dissolve an ecumenical council, and his absence automatically postpones a meeting
- An ecumenical council is viewed as the highest legislative authority within the Church, and any productions are considered canon law within the laity
- There have been 21 ecumenical councils throughout history, the most recent being the Second Vatican Council (or Vatican II)
- Vatican 2 was held from 1962-1965 and resulted in the creation of 16 documents, each addressing important issues of the time.
- These issues, both external and internal, were a result of the period of time that the council was held.

Body 2- context of why it was called

- Occurred between 1962-1965
- A period of great social upheaval
- Social climate was influenced greatly by the second world war which caused great destruction
- The world was still stunned by the horrors of the war just past and its unimaginable genocide, combined with the unexpected success of totalitarianism and communism, atheism and materialism. John XXIII knew this caused alarm, confusion and fear for many modern people.
- Pope John XXIII called the council due to such issues in an aim of "Aggiornamento" (to bring up to date) and "Ressourcement" (returning to authoritative sources)
- Through the council, he 'opened the windows of the church' to respond to the issues in society.

Body 3- How vatican II dealt with lack of liturgical participation

- One prominent, internal issue dealt with by vatican II was the issue of decreased liturgical participation
- This was addressed by the vatican council through the document they produced titled "Sacrosanctum Concilium."
- The document called for extensive revision of the nature of worship within catholicism so that the laity could experience a more definitive involvement in the celebration of mass so that the practice could "Impart an ever increasing vigour to the Christian life of the faithful. (#1)
- The document outlined key changes:
 1. Priest should face the laity when performing mass, so laity can gain better understanding of the symbolic actions of the priest
 2. Enabled mass to be spoken in local dialects, thus enabling people connect more to the teachings of the bible
 3. Increased breadth of biblical literature- exposes laity to more teachings
 4. Enabled people to better understand the gospel and how it relates to their lives

Body 4-

How the Roman Catholic Church responded to increased levels of antisemitism in the world

- Rise in anti-semitic **bad** ideologies during world war two
- Entails the belittling and degrading of the jewish faith "(Fuck you lockie-Jacob Dyne)"
- Went directly against word of God, "Love thy neighbour" and "God created all in the image and likeness of himself"
- Many Catholics were themselves antisemitic in Nazi Germany
- 2nd Vatican council addressed this issue with the document, Declaration on the relations of the church to non christian religions
- clearly stated "The lord shines upon all people, there beliefs matter not" - Nostra aetate
- This improved the catholic outlook upon other religions especially those of jewish faith