

Globalization: Theoretical Perspectives
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Lecture 49
Religion and Globalization Part – II

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Theorizing globalization and religion



- The place and significance of religious beliefs, practices and identities in the era of late modernity.
- The patterns of social stratification, politics and identity formation identified by Bauman, Beck and Castells map onto and hence underline the continuing relevance of some of the traditional concerns in the anthropology and sociology of religion.

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Welcome back to the class, we are continuing from the previous session. It is a continuous discussion on the topic, globalization and religion. So, in the previous class, we were having a very broad introductory remarks about globalization, it is changing character, it is the emergence of transnational religions, the emergence of the spread of religion into different parts of the globe and in this class, let us dwell more deeper into the questions of theorizing globalization and religion.

Now, what we are essentially looking at is the place and significance of religious belief, practices and identities in the era of late modernity and I hope that you remember the discussions that we had when we discussed Ulrich Beck, Anthony Giddens and Manuel Castells because all of them provide very interesting theoretical insights about how do we make sense of the kinds of transformations that we are witnessing in the contemporary period.

So, I hope you also remember the discussion about modernity and postmodernity and reflexive modernity or late modernity as exemplified by these scholars. So, I repeated several times or I mentioned several times, that most of the scholars whom we are discussing whether it is Bauman or Beck or Castells, they do not agree with the argument about the contemporary society as a completely postmodern society, but they present it as a kind of a late modernity or reflective modernity.


Bauman calls it as the liquid modernity. So, the argument is that the modernity has radicalized itself, but we require the framework of modernity to break, to make sense of that scenario. So, we are trying in this particular section, we are trying to understand what are the sociological explanations for the continuous or the continued relevance of religious beliefs, practices and identities in the era of late modernity.

So, the patterns of social stratification, politics and identity formation, identified by Bauman, Beck and Castells map onto and hence, underlying the continuing relevance are some of the traditional concerns in the anthropology and sociology of religion. So, this again needs to be presented as a reminder to many of the sociologists who believed very mistakenly, that when a society progresses, it will completely abandon or discard its traditional markers and then be and then we will move towards a kind of a completely modern society.


So, this is again a very myopic understanding, an understanding which took too lightly of the people's affinities and affiliations and the importance of tradition. So, we know that now, almost every sociologist agrees that this kind of a binary between traditional and modern, as modern is kind of a completely cut off or has nothing to do with the tradition, it is very simply erroneous conception.

So, we know that religions are important, religions are influential, a host of traditional ties and traditional forms of associations are important, so Bauman, Beck and Castells map onto and hence underlying the continuing relevance of some of the traditional concerns in anthropology and sociology of religion.

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- Critique of secularization thesis
- Different facets of the resulting social condition have been captured by Bell's notion of post-industrialism, Bauman's account of Fordist production-based economies becoming postmodern and consumption-focused, the emergence of self-consciously fluid identities since the 1960's as reflected in the ideological challenges and political subjectivities constructed by new social movements, the development of "the network society" and the emergence of "risk" as a defining characteristic of life under conditions of "reflexive modernization."



So, this again comes back to the whole question of critique of secularization thesis that I mentioned in the previous session something initiated by Weber but later we had several scholars who very confidently argued that the modern world, industrial world, especially the West will be out of religion very soon, because they believed that the modern people do not require religion or modern people cannot be religious.

So, that is why they could easily identify countries like India or the other underdeveloped or developing societies, as religious societies, superstitious societies, where people do not really make use of their rationality. For example, American scholar like Talcott Parsons, he argues that there is a very strong connection between development and the kind of value orientations and influence of religion.

So, the West was able to make a lot of progress mainly because they were able to use rationality, they were able to move out of the influence of tradition, whereas, in other societies in

underdeveloped societies, the hold of tradition is very strong people are superstitious, people are people follow blind beliefs, people are not ready to come out of their old shackles.

These arguments and by the 60s and by 1950s and 60s, this was a very strong argument that the whole world is undergoing the process of secularization. But later, we realize that is not the case and in a country like India, secularization is hardly applicable because we never were secular in that sense. Our constitution was secular, the term secular was introduced much later, not when the constitution was formulated.

But what we were trying to do is to have a constitution which is not being influenced by any single religion, we never wanted to create the wall of separation between religion and the politics. It simply did not happen or it does not simply happen in India. So, this secularization thesis may be one of the most debated, hotly debated topics in the field of sociology of religion.

So different facets of the resulting social condition have been captured by Bell's notion of post industrialism, Daniel Bell's argument about post industrialism we have discussed earlier, the post Fordist production procedure comes into picture because the Fordist production was seen as a major turning point and we are talking about the post-industrial society of Daniel Bell or the post Fordist where the major chunk of production no longer happens on the factory floors, rather it is happening in the realm of networks, it is happening through information, Castells's information society, Castells's network society.

So, those arguments and Bauman's account of Fordist production-based economies becoming postmodern and consumption focused, the emergence of self-consciously fluid identities, since the 1960s, as reflected in the ideological challenges and political subjectivities constructed by new social movements, the development of the network society and the emergence of risk as a defining characteristic of the life under conditions of reflexive modernization.

And all these points we have discussed, I would urge you to maybe go back to those lectures and then discussions and then understand what this all these points mean. Especially, we had elaborated discussion on risk society by Ulrich Beck, we discussed about how the emergence of self-consciously fluid identities, I explained that what it means to be a fluid identity, the whole question of who are you? Or who am I, that answer is no longer simple, because we are bombarded with numerous choices to find our affiliation.

It is not easy to define who we are, it is not very easy to pinpoint and then to create a core sense of self with respect your host of ideas, inclinations, your approaches, your positionality and a host of other stuff, whether you want to call it as a positive thing, as a negative thing, I do not know exactly, but definitely the sense of subjectivity, who you are, is definitely much complex in a late modern society compared to that of a traditional society or in an agricultural society or maybe in a tribal society, where these questions have a very strong, rigid, unified, singular answer, whereas, in the modern era, the answers are extremely complicated.

Who you are, what are your value orientations? What is your position towards sexuality, what is your position towards gender equality, what is your position towards belief systems, nationalism, political ideologies, consumption, fashion? So, our self, inner-self is kind of extended into each of these multiple areas and then we find ourselves as very complicated individuals having a real tough time to create a very solid sense of or a concrete sense of self. So, the networked society, all these points we discussed elaborately.

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- The social and psychological implications of globalization and postmodernity reveal the continuing or, more accurately, revived cultural relevance of religion: As an existential/cognitive coping mechanism in times of widespread (and socially determined) anxiety, and as a millenarian discourse as well as a source of group solidarity in the face of growing economic polarization and the resulting social marginalization of large sections of humanity.

- The late modern society and its implications on economy, subjectivity, community and so on



Now, the social and psychological implications of globalization and postmodernity reveal the country or more accurately revived cultural relevance of religion as an existential cognitive coping mechanism in times of widespread and social determined anxiety and as a millenarian discourse as well as a source of group solidarity in the face of growing economic polarization and the resulting marginalization of large section of humanity.

So, this is one of the explanations about why that people still belong to religion, why that people still cling on to religion, even in the late modern society? The answer is simple, that the late modern society put forward quite a lot of complications of anxiety, unpredictability and uncertainty that individuals request something to cling on and with the kind of questions, the kind of processes that we discussed earlier about the pervasive sense of risk, I hope you remember, Anthony Giddens talking about the runaway world.

The runaway world is a very interesting image, where the world is moving in a direction, which none of us have any idea about. We are not in control of anything. We are not in control of our own destiny. The world, the kind of a secondary consequence that is what the unintended, unforeseen consequences of our first modernity is what is now driving the world into unknown direction and it is running away and we are only trying to catch up.

We are not the masters rather, we are simply trying to follow. So, this sense of insecurity, this sense of lack of control, lack of ownership and authorship is having its own complications and this gets more multiplied with economic insecurity in which we live. We had a lengthy discussion in the previous class about how for example jobs, the permanent jobs of becoming a kind of less than less possibility.


How people are forced to move from one job to another, the pervasive influence of neoliberal economy. So, all these factors are what exactly they are saying. So, the social and psychological implications of globalization and post-modernity reveal the continuing or more accurately revived cultural relevance of religion and that is the cultural relevance of religion, as an existential or cognitive coping mechanism, as a cognitive or existential coping mechanism in times of widespread and socially determined anxiety.

So, this anxiety is not a problem of your individual psyche. It is not something that can be addressed by giving you counselling or giving you medicine. It is a socially conditioned or socially determined anxiety at a societal level, the kind of certainty that we have has come

down. As a society, there is a high amount of anxiety among people and as a millenarian discourse as well as a source of group solidarity in the face of growing economic polarization as a movement, which believes that there is a fundamental and ultimate solution to everything.

And that has been presented as an explanation, the late modern society and its implications on economy, subjectivity, community and so on exactly what we mentioned now. So, increasing relevance of religion is seen as a consequence or as a manifestation of this coping mechanism of people who are kind of drifting apart, drifting over, drifting in different directions as a way of staying together.

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• In place of the economic consequences of doctrinally induced "salvation anxiety" during early capitalism, we are now confronted with economically induced survival anxiety," for which religions appear capable of offering some form of antidote.

• What we appear to be witnessing is a "de-privatization" of religion, a global "desecularization of the world, an increase in anti secular movements and discourses disenchanted with the project of modernity and insistent on the political potential and public role of religious beliefs and practices.



So, in place of economic consequences of doctrinally induced "salvation anxiety", during the early capitalism, we are now confronted with economically induced "survival anxiety", for which religions appear capable of offering some form of antidote, interesting quotation. That is why I put it in inverted commas. So, what is he talking about the salvation anxiety?

I hope you are familiar with the Weberian argument about the spirit of protestant ethics and the spirit of capitalism, a very well known, famous book written by Max Weber, in which he argued that the certain religious dispositions had a telling effect on the emergence of capitalism. So, he is trying to make a theory of capitalism. He is trying to answer this question why is that capitalism emerged in the Europe during this particular time period of say, 16th, 17th and 18th century. Why did capitalism emerge only there?

Why is that capitalism did not emerge before, why did capitalism not emerge anywhere else and his argument or one of his explanations is that one of the reasons is the kind of the certain belief system, certain practices of Protestantism, the Protestantism instil a sense of salvation anxiety.

Because unlike Christianity within Protestantism, there is no guarantee for a believer whether he will go to hell or he will go to heaven, you know that in Catholicism, you can take confession and then you can get an assurance from the priest that if you do all the kinds of prescribed things you will go to heaven and confession is considered to be very important thing that will assure you a place in the sacrament, is something very important.

Whereas, for Protestants, it is there is a notion of predestination. You are decided even before you are born, whether you will go to hell or heaven. So, Weber argued very convincingly very, interestingly, that this salvation anxiety made most of this Protestant followers to develop a very rigorous and disciplined life in which they would be very conscious of spending money for personal gains and personal pleasure but lead a very systematic and disciplined life, as if they are the selected people.

So here, instead of this salvation anxiety of the period of modernity, of during early capitalism, what we are now confronted with economically induced survival anxiety, the complications as well as the negative consequences of this neoliberal capitalism. The way in which neoliberal capitalism has kind of questioned or dismantled quite a lot of traditional lives.

People are having a kind of a survival anxiety induced by politics, for which the religions appear capable of offering some form of antidote. So, people are clinging on to religion, as an antidote, as a solace, as a last straw, that they are clinging on to religion. So, what we appear to be witnessing is a de-privatization of religion. A global de-secularization of the world, an increase in anti-secular movements and discourses disenchanted with the project of modernity and insistent on political potential and public role of religious beliefs and practices.

Exactly, this is what we are looking at it, looking at everywhere, everywhere, there is a talk about cultural decadence, talk about, we are losing our values, talking about talk about a glorious past, from where we have, we are supposed to have fallen down and every such kind of religious movements, they put forward a blueprint, they put forward a, an alternative vision, a vision with very strong ethical and moral foundations, whether it is Islam or Christianity.

You take the publications or the propaganda material of any such kind of organizations; they are all rooted on certain core values, certain core values of morality and of ethics. Of course, they are all based on certain religious precepts, but that is presented as an alternative to this modern world, which is then presented as chaotic, corrupt, individualistic hedonistic and without any kind of values and starting with the like ISIS or this Islamic State, how even though they resort to extreme form of violence, at the end of that they present an alternative moral order.

So, is the case with every Christian fundamentalist organization, they have a utopian model in mind which is based on ethics and morality, of course, you can criticize that, but something that they present as an antidote as an alternative to that of the present-day, so-called orderless, valueless, a chaotic society, which has no moral values and other kinds of basis.

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- Re-appropriating Benedict Anderson's terminology, Bauman has suggested that our contemporary age of postmodernity is "also the age (...) of the lust [and] search for community, invention of community, imagining community," spurred by a perceived lack of shared meaning and group solidarity. Not altogether dissimilarly, Castells writes of "communal heavens" or "resistance identities" as reactions against the information age, symptomatic of a new conflict between "the Net and the self," between "networks of instrumentality, powered by new information technologies" on one hand, and "the power of identity, anchoring people's minds in their history, geography, and cultures on the other."
- whether the contemporary "desecularization of the world" constitutes, at least in part, a millenarian reaction against the effects and "human consequences" of globalization.



So re-appropriating Benedict Anderson's terminology Bauman, Sigmund Bauman has suggested that our contemporary age of post modernity is also the age of the lust and search for community, invention of community. Imagined community spurred by a perceived lack of shared meaning and group solidarity.

I hope you are familiar with Benedict Anderson's argument about the imagined community. How imagined community Benedict Anderson developed as a theory basically to explain the emergence of nationalism. So, why is that modern nation states began to emerge during the modern period and there were alternative explanations.

Say for example, there is an ethnic theory of nationalism which argued that all the people who belong to one ethnicity, they naturally become a nation. But whereas, Benedict Anderson argued that the modern state, modern nation state is a kind of an imaginative project with the dissemination of printed capitalism and with that of modern capitalism, people are able to create, construct an idea of belonging to a particular nation.

So, that Bauman says that, it is also the age of the lust and search of communist invention of commodity, imagining commodity spurred by a perceived lack of shared meaning group solidarity. So, we discussed how globalization really produces extreme form of individuation. It bombards you with alternative ways of being, it dismantles the communities, it actually bombards your ideas of what is good and what is bad, it actually floods your idea scape with the notions of belonging notions of affinity, a host of things from across the globe.


So that, many times take you out of from your own community, there is an argument about they are, people are lifted out of their contexts and then they are reinserted in certain other social and political context. So, spurred by perceived lack of shared meaning and group solidarity not altogether dissimilarly Castells rights of communal havens or resistance identities as reactions against the information age, symptomatic of new conflicts between the net and the self between networks of instrumentality powered by new information technologies on the one hand and the power of identity, anchoring people's mind in the history, geography and cultures on the other.

So, on the one side, you have the wide world, the net and the endless possibility of exploring the world and the other side, you have the power of identity, something which is anchoring you, something which is actually keeping you at your particular place to a particular set of

people, particular set of practices, particular set of geography, so that you try to develop a sense of your own self-identity.

So, this is something very important, whether the contemporary de-secularization of the world constitutes at least in part a millenarian reaction against effects and human consequences of globalization. So, this completely secularization of world where de-secularization in terms of rationality replacing religion and very important aspects such as institutions and politics is being seen devoid of religion. So, these things are seen as a reason why there are there is counter movement, millenarian movement reaction against such kind of human consequences of globalization.

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- The new religious consciousness in California of the 1960's and 70's as a reaction against a crisis in modernity, experienced as a crisis of meaning or the "inability of utilitarian individualism to provide a meaningful pattern of personal and social existence."
 - As a solace for those who were excluded by the 'spaces of flows'
 - A "culture of violence". Mark Juergensmeyer argues, regard themselves and the world at large as being embroiled in a "cosmic war" between the forces of good and evil. Violence is consequently constructed (and condoned) as a defensive strategy against encroaching (supernatural or, very often, "satanic") powers.



The new religious consciousness in California of the 1960s and 70s, as these reactions against a crisis of modernity, experienced as a crisis of meaning of the inability of utilitarian individualism to provide a meaningful pattern of personal and social existence. These are examples, especially in the western context that modernity broke your family ties, modernity disintegrated your community life, modernity disintegrated very close connection that people had with everyone and then took people to the extreme of becoming individualized nomads.

So, people are left to themselves, the whole sense of community is lost. So, a host of movements, religious consciousness in this example of California that one of the scholars talking about, but this is widely seen as why that many of these modern so called modern people, extremely wealthy people, educated people, professionals are turning towards religion as a solace of those who were excluded by the spaces of flows


And here, remember Castells. Now, a culture of violence, now one of the other forms, articulations of this sense of estrangement is, of course, what we see as terrorist movements as religious violence and Mark Juergensmeyer is a very important figure in that. He argues that many of these people who employ violence regard themselves and the world at large as being embroiled in a cosmic war between the forces of good and evil.

Violence is consequently constructed and condoned as a defensive strategy against encroaching supernatural or very often satanic powers, so if you listen to the people who blow themselves

up or the people who resort to terrorist activities in any country, religious terrorism, many times this is how they perceive it.



They are ready to sacrifice their life, they are ready to kill themselves because they are fighting a kind of a cosmic war, many times the US or the European societies is seen as embodiments of evil. Remember, the 911 attack; America was targeted, because it is seen as an as a place of evil in all sense, of money, of military, of corruption, of moral decadence, everything. So many times, this violence is often justified in that particular sense.

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- Is middle class religiosity been reshaped by "consumerist seduction?"
- Zygmunt Bauman argues that our current historical epoch, operates with a novel mechanism of discipline and control that relies less and less on the "panoptical schema" of industrial modernity analyzed by Michel Foucault. Instead, social integration is achieved through "consumerist seduction" reflected in people's ongoing reconstruction of their fluid identities through ever changing commodities and lifestyles.
- Consumerism, according to Bauman suffices to guarantee (relative) order and social reproduction.



So now, another set of maybe second strand of explanation here is that, is middle class religious city being reshaped by a consumerist selection? Second, if the first explanation was that this religion offers a kind of solace for highly individualistic, individualized people, second explanation is connecting with that of a consumerism again, a very interesting argument that how what is so how do we let us see, how do they make this connection between consumerism and globalization of religion?

Zygmunt Bauman argues that our current historically epoch operates with a novel mechanism of discipline and control that relies less than less on the panoptical schema of industrial modernity analysed by Michel Foucault. Instead, social integration is achieved through consumerist seduction, reflected in people's ongoing reconstruction of the fluid identities through ever changing commodities and lifestyles.


A very interesting argument that Bauman puts forward. So, Bauman argues that in a modern society, this panoptical schema is something developed by Foucault. Foucault argues that the modernity, the governmentality of the modernity or governmentality in modern period is based on surveillance, it is based on so, this nation state is there as a panoptical. It can see everything under it what is happening and there is continuous surveillance taking place all the time.

So, Bauman says that in a liquid modernity or in a late modernity, this social integration is not taking place through this enforced surveillance but it is taking place through the consumerist seduction, your consumption is presented or consumption has taken over the mechanism of uniting people together because everybody is so hooked up, everybody is so concerned about

consuming more and more, consuming it could be consumption of ideas, articles, wealth, leisure, it could be anything.


So, Bauman tries very hard to bring the focus or shift the focus of analysis of late modern society to that of the realm of consumerism. Consumerism according to Bauman, suffice to guarantee relative order and social reproduction. It is a very interesting and provocative argument, is not it? Because how do we otherwise think that consumerism can bring in some kind of a order and it can ensure the reproduction of society.

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- "the spiritual supermarket" connote except superficiality and hedonism- Shopping in supermarkets and shopping malls. Ritzer's "cathedrals of consumption" stands as paradigmatic of consumerism: A realm of self-indulgence underpinned by "the active ideology that the meaning of life is to be found in buying things and pre-packaged experiences." Faith is reduced to pick-and-mix or religion *a la carte*
- Religious faith is decreasingly seen as a sacred trust to be passed on faithfully from generation to generation, but as a cultural heritage on which people draw selectively and at their own discretion.
- the fundamental challenge to faith is neither reason nor rationalization, but cultural amnesia. The chain of memory linking the present to both the past and the future is in danger of being irreparably severed.

Believing without belonging



For example, an interesting argument about the spiritual supermarket connote except superficiality and Hedonism shopping in supermarkets and shopping malls. Ritzer's Cathedrals of consumption stands as paradigmatic of consumerism. So, here we are talking about how Ritzer describes this shopping malls and shopping supermarkets as cathedrals of consumption.

It is a very evocative phrase. So why did he define the shopping malls as cathedrals of consumption? What is something divine about them? Usually, we do not think that they are, anything divine is attached when we walk into a supermarket or into a mall. But Ritzer argued that there is something divine about it. It he described it as a cathedral of consumption, very important sites of consumption.

So, this stands as paradigmatic of consumerism, a realm of self-indulgence underpinned by the active ideology that the meaning of life is to be found in buying things and pre-packaging experience. Faith is reduced to pick and mix of religion, a la carte. So, this spiritual supermarket argument of Bauman and others is that in the modern era, you just like you walk into a supermarket and then with a trolley or with a bag or basket and then you pick and choose whatever you want, in the modern era religion presents itself as a supermarket.

I am saying the whole religious fears. So,, an atomized individual, an individual who has least amount of connection with his or her tradition and family, if he or she requests certain kind of spiritual connection, now has the ability to go and shop around or you can faith is reduced to pick and mix or a religion a la carte, we can order things or you can choose certain, you can try certain particular items and then try it out and then maybe leave it after some time and then search for something else.

And this is something extremely important, very important. Religious faith is decreasingly seen as a sacred trust to be passed on, faithfully from generation to generation, but as a cultural heritage on which people draw selectively and at their own discretion, a very important point.

If you talk to your maybe grandparents, you know that how different families had family structure, family deities, family worship patterns, traditional systems and usually very unconsciously we imbibe, we borrow those ideas from our parents and then we follow it and then we pass it on to the next generation. So, for hundreds of years, this transmission of religion, religious beliefs and systems has been very, very, almost intact.

I am not saying they never changed, but there was very strong continuity. But in this era of late modernity, this continuity is very systematically significantly targeted, it is weakened and as a result, what happens, the cultural heritage on which people draw selectively and on their own discretion.

So, religion becomes thing that you can really fashion you as you are the author, you can decide what kind of religiosity what kind of religious experience you want, what kind of affiliation you want? Another interesting argument is about, maybe I forgot to write it as a point, there is something called as a believing without belonging, so what does it mean?

You can believe in certain things without belonging to any institutionalized religious organization. You do not have to go to church, you do not have go to mosque, you do not have to go to temple, but you can have your own custom-made individualized belief system with the transcendental or with the God of your liking.

Now, the fundamental challenge to faith is neither reason nor rationalization, but cultural amnesia. The chain of memory linking the person to both the past and the future is in danger of being irreparably severed and this again, a point we discussed earlier, when we discussed the Castle's work, when he argues that the past is less and less relevant in our understanding about the future.

I am not repeating those points, but I hope you remember that the kind of cultural amnesia about the forgetfulness of the culture and again, if you try to address that, if you try to revive your culture, you will be manufacturing something different, something artificial, that is what is actually happening around us.

We want to construct an old past, but the old past is gone by so we try to create a new past and this new past may not have anything to do with the thing, it is all new constructions which are really indicative of the kind of present crisis that we are in.

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- Another argument: Far from being extinguished by global consumerism, religion becomes a potent cultural resource that can be drawn on selectively and creatively in pursuit of projects asserting cultural identity. Cut free from their anchorage in traditional communities of faith and the authority structures which govern them, religious ideals and symbols become increasingly volatile and destabilizing.



So, another argument is that far from being extinguished by global consumerism, religion becomes a potent cultural resource, that can be drawn on selectively and creatively in pursuit of projects, asserting cultural identity, cut free from their anchorage in traditional communities of faith and authority structures which govern them, religious ideas and symbols become increasingly volatile and destabilize.

So, this is yet another argument about the potential of religious identities, that religious identities, it is not really that it provides certainly an anchoring point for individuals, but also it provides the possibility for, people to constitute a collective and then act as a force.

So, religion becomes a potent cultural resource that can be drawn on selectively and create In pursuit of projects asserting cultural identity, that is what we are seeing in quite a lot of places where religion becomes a rallying point around which a cultural construction takes place, cut free from their anchorage in traditional communities of faith and authority structures which govern them, religious ideals and symbols become increasingly volatile and destabilizing in the modern era. Whether it is the case of Islam or Christianity or Hinduism, you see such kind of quite a lot of arguments.

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Manuel Castells: "Religion is a fundamental dimension of human existence (...) And religious identity is increasing all over the world as a source of meaning. It is only Europe that feels that it is beyond this need. This would mean the absolute triumph of reason, but we know that this is not the case; we know that people have some deeper feelings, about love, about search, about fear, about protection, that cannot be found in their immediate experience. America, and the rest of the world, has a more personal, flexible approach to religion, sometimes as a deep experience, but some times also as a consumer good or as soap opera, which makes religion more human and, ultimately, more effective in securing people in a world of fear and aggression."



Now, let us end this class with a final quote from Manuel Castells, a very, very interesting statement. He says religion is a fundamental dimension of human existence and religious identities increasing all over the world as a source of meaning. It is only Europe that feels that it is beyond this need.

This would mean that absolute triumph of reason, but we now know that this is not the case. We know that people have some deeper feeling about love, about search, about fear about protection that cannot be found in their immediate experience. America and the rest of the world has a more personal flexible approach to religion, sometimes as a deep experience, but sometimes also as a consumer good or as soap opera, which makes religion more human and ultimately more effective in securing people in a world of fear and aggression.

Very, very interesting point that the Manuel Castells very beautifully summarize why religion continues to be as a binding force, as a source of hope to large, millions of people in the globe. So let us stop here and then conclude with the next session. Thank you.