



education

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**NATIONAL
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GRADE 11

RELIGION STUDIES P2

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This memorandum consists of 7 pages.

QUESTION 11.1 Mission

- The word 'mission' comes from the Latin word 'mittere' meaning to send
- From early Christian faith the word was associated with Christ sending his disciples out to preach the Christian message
- The words 'mission' and 'missionary' are often used to refer to all religions that attempt to convert other people of their teachings
- Bahai faith, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam have been called missionary religion
- In some circles the word 'mission' has a negative connotation
- It is viewed by others as an aggressive way of advancing a religion, even if it involves siding with oppressive economic and political structures
- Attempts have been made to give a new content to the word 'mission' such as 'an attempt to alleviate suffering'
- Some Christians, Buddhists, Bahai's and Muslims reject the term altogether
- Despite several objections to the word 'mission', it is still a useful term to refer to the organised attempt to spread one's religion to other people outside one's faith

Evangelism

- The word 'evangelism' is derived from an old English word 'evangel', which means gospel
- Evangel was put together from two Greek words, 'eu' meaning good and 'aggelion' meaning news
- The word 'evangel' means good news
- Evangelism refers to the spread of good news to lapsed believers.
- Mission refers to the spreading of the good news to non-Christians.

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1.2 Religious pluralism

- Religious pluralism refers to positive social acceptance of many different religions
- Judaism emerged from the context of the ancient Middle East where there were various religions
- During the classical and medieval periods, the important Jewish thinkers questioned the relationship between Judaism and other religions
- Philo, a Greek-speaking Jewish philosopher, viewed the various religious traditions as evidence of one divine word
- A Jewish theologian, Moses Maimonides (1135 – 1204) taught that Judaism was the only religion that was revealed by God
- He rejected all other religions according to the interpretations at that time because other religions practised idolatry
- In terms of the Mosaic Law, regarding idolaters, this meant that they had to be avoided
- In the modern period, the Jews started to associate themselves with the gentiles
- Frans Rosenzweig (1886 – 1929) emphasised that the relationship between people, the word and God, forms a single large whole

- According to Rosenzweig, totality has only been revealed in Judaism and Christianity
- Abraham Herchel (1907 – 1972) and others are opened to the idea that all religions should be seen as the manifestations of God's word
- They tend to give credibility to the ideas of Philo
- These scholars regard variety in the religious word as a positive element
- It strengthens the total religious community in its opposition to a secular society
- With the emergence of the state of Israel in 1948 and the adherence to the ideal of Zionism, a stricter and perhaps less tolerant form of Judaism, is being promoted
- This brought the challenge of religious pluralism to Judaism into focus once again
- Zionism is a political movement that supports a Jewish homeland in Israel

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QUESTION 2

2.1 Conflict theories and their criticism

- The conflict theorists do not glorify conflict
- They contend that conflict plays a crucial role in social life
- A Greek philosopher Heraclitus (6th century BCE) stated that strife is the mother of all things
- A German Mystic, Jacob Boehme, believed that struggle lies at the root of all things
- Modern conflict theorists agree with functionalism that society and religion are supposed to be a smoothly operating system
- Functionalism is criticised for not taking sufficient account of conflict
- Karl Marx is the leading figure in conflict theories. He saw societies as inter-related systems.
- Karl Marx focussed on economic arrangements of society and on the relationship between classes. He saw conflict between different classes as inevitable. He also argued that religion is manipulated to serve the interest of the ruling class. He viewed religion as the 'opium' of the people
- This is used to keep the workers in check
- Karl Marx agreed with Durkheim that religion is a unifying factor. It serves classes that are revolutionary seeking power or already are in power
- Conflict theories are criticised for starting from the false position. They have a one-sided basic view that over-emphasises the role of conflict
- Conflict theorists under-estimate the importance of altruism and voluntary spontaneous cooperation in human life. They fail the test of correspondence and usefulness.
- The Marxist conflict theory overlooks the fact that religion often did not simply support class interests, but also went against such interests. It also overlooks the role played by religion in society.
- Marxist conflict theories portray economics as stronger than religion.

- Critics of conflict theories argue that religion and economics influence each other (30)

2.2 Influence of world faiths

- The traditional religions of the sub-Saharan African had no complex organisation of priests and monks unlike the major religions or the agrarian world
 - They did not have sacred writings to serve as the core of a common faith
 - As a result the African Traditional Religions could not easily defend themselves against the missionary inroads of Islam and Christianity
 - People in rural areas generally continue to practise African religion the old way
 - In urban areas, many converts to Islam and Christianity tend to mix African Traditional Religion with the elements of these religions
 - At one stage the African people embraced Islam and Christianity for non-religious reasons
 - For many Africans it became a status symbol and a sign of being modernised
 - With the advent of the political independence in Africa, Christianity was associated with colonialism
 - Missionaries were also criticised for not allowing Africans to take leadership roles in the church
 - In many parts of Africa, African Initiated Churches came into being, which represented a mixture of Christianity and African Traditional Religion (20)
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QUESTION 3

- 3.1
- The religious communities can form committees to tackle crime
 - There can be an inter-religious cooperation to fight crime
 - They can invite former inmates to address the youth about the evil nature of crime
 - They can establish religious outreach programmes to address the communities
 - They can also contribute to the moral re-generation initiative
 - They can conduct inter-faith prayers for the reduction of criminal activities
 - They can participate in Community Policing Forums
 - They can teach about the sanctity of life and the consideration of other people's lives
 - They can establish rehabilitation centres for ex-inmates, provide counseling for victims of crime and they can also instill religious values which could positively shape the lives of young people (20)

3.2 Historical development of African Traditional Religion

- ATR is mad eup of many different belief systems and practices
- The San practised a form of African Traditional Religion more than 2 000 years ago
- This makes it the oldest religion in Southern Africa
- Around 2 000 years ago African herders from the north moved to the south of Africa
- They brought with them some of the many ATR practices that are still practised by the various African groups
- Most African societies did not produce written history to document the early history of ATR
- ATRs are just as dynamic and changing as any other faiths
- Different people came into contact with one another and traded ideas and material goods. Amongh Tshivenda-speaking people, there are traditional hyns in Shona. These hymns indicate that Tshivenda- and Shona-speaking people had a close contact and exchanged ideas long ago
- In African societies the events are not recorded in a written form, but have been transmitted through oral tradition
- The ancient stories regarding beliefs and creation myths, are handed down orally
- Changes have taken place in ATR more recently
- Among the Zulus, there was a rigid distinction between the Isangoma ('Diviner') and an Inyanga (Traditional healer)
- During the 20th century, the distinction faded away, but it has not disappeared completely
- Some Isangomas are also using herbs and plants to treat people
- There are now several practising white Sangomas. This shows that ATR is not static, but dynamic.
- African religion has also moved beyond the borders of its countries of origin. The African slaves who were taken to the Americas, took their religion with them. In those countries, it has therefore mixed with other religions like Christianity.

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[50]**QUESTION 4**

- 4.1
- Ecumenism comes from the Greek word 'oikoumenikos'. This word means 'of the inhabited world'.
 - Ecumenism can be defined in two ways. It can be synonymous with inter-religious dialogue and it may also refer to achieving unity among various sections within the same religions
 - Religious dialuge refers more to a conversation between two or more religions
 - In Christianity, the formation of the World Council of Churches is an example of ecumenism. Churches operate from different socia, economic, cultural and political conditions
 - The World Fellowship of Buddhists is an example of ecumenism in Buddhism
 - Dialogue is highly valued among religious groups.

- Ecumenism is not highly valued. In these interactions, religions learn a lot from each other. They also appreciate difference amongst them
- These interactions may not mean cooperation between or among religions
- Religion studies can lead to a better understanding and respect among people of various religions
- This subject can indirectly promote macro-ecumenism

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- 4.2
- A ritual refers to a special act performed at a special time in a special way
 - It can be religious or secular
 - Sacrificial ritual is an offering made to the divine. It is made with a special outcome in mind
 - It is often a thanks giving or done with a hope of good fortune, good rain, et cetera
 - It may include the slaughtering of an animal or the offering of things like flower or food
 - In African Traditional Religion, a chicken, a goat or an ox is customarily offered, depending on the occasion. Serious occasions need a bigger animal
 - Muslims usually offer sheep or goats. They do this during the festival of sacrifice.
 - Emphasis is on symbolising the willingness to give up things. Especially the submission to Allah
 - The meat is distributed among friends and the needy are also offered the meat

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[50]**QUESTION 5**5.1 Representational and Presentational Symbols

- A representational symbol is a symbol that stands for something else. It can also function as a sign
- When a cross is used on a building, it indicates that the building is a place of worship
- A presentational symbol is something that is similar to the thing it represents, for example a street map is a presentation of a real landscape
- In religion, a presentational symbol is similar to the thing it stands for, for example in Orthodox Churches, there are icons in which the sacred is said to be present
- A presentational symbol need not be something solid that one can touch. It can also be a sound, a word, chant, a gesture or a posture
- The OM sign among the Hindus is believed to carry sacred energy
- In the Hare Krishna, the followers chant the name of Krishna. They believe that Krishna is present in the sound of the chant

- The fish symbol is believed to be coming from the Greek word 'ichthus' meaning fish. In the Greek language, it is the word you get if you take the first letter of each word in the phrase: 'Jesus, Christ, God, Son, Saviour-Yesus, Christos, Theos, Huios, Soteria'.
 - It is believed that it was used as a secret sign during the time of persecution
 - Around the 3rd century, a cross became the preferred symbol of the Christian faith. Christians believe that it represents the victory of Jesus Christ over death
 - In the Roman Catholic Church, the cross (crucifix) often has a representation of the body of Jesus on it
- In the Protestant churches, the cross is left plain and they believe that it emphasises Christ's resurrection

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5.2

- In some countries for some time, religion was pushed back into its own private sphere
- Religion had lost its influence it previously had in politics
- During the late 20th and early 21st centuries, there has been the rise of new religious activism in world politics
- Examples of this rise are 'religious right' in the USA, the resurgence of the Orthodox Church in Russia, evangelical Christianity in African and Islamic fundamentalism
- The immigrants' religion to the USA, Britain and France has become a focus for identity and political involvement
- The following are the reasons for the resurgence:
 1. The global resurgence of religion is part of the larger crisis in modernity
 2. Modernity could not answer questions about the origin and destiny of human life
 3. The above-mentioned issues fall into the domain of religion
 4. Trade and access to the internet have contributed to blurring of boundaries and reinforce the impression that we live in a global village
 5. Religion emerges as an important support mechanism for providing and protecting identity
 6. The rise and risks of the global economy and the political instability brought uncertainty to secular life
 7. Religion has become an establishing factor that provides people with the sense of direction and destiny

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[50]**TOTAL: 100**