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Q6(c)

Give your comments on the growth of religious revivalism in the present day context

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2021 · Sociology GS 1 · 10 marks · Religion and Society

Religion and Society: Sociological theories of religion; Types of religious practices: animism, monism, pluralism, sects, cults; Religion in modern society: religion and science, secularization, religious revivalism, fundamentalism.

Core demand of the question

- Discuss religious revivalism in the contemporary world
- Keep the discussion within a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Revivalism is intensified public faith, not simple return to the past.

Secularisation is unfinished; public religions persist.

Insecurity, effervescence, and media feed growth.

Gender and caste often harden inside revivalist we-groups.

COVID mixed online worship with communal blame.

Introduction

Religious revivalism is the public return of intense, organised faith against a story of simple secular decline. It is not a copy of the medieval parish. It uses media, parties, and markets. Bryan Wilson's **secularisation** is unfinished. José **Casanova**'s public religions are the better present map.

Body

What is being revived

- Ritual density, strict ethics, and a claim that the sacred should order law and identity.
- Charisma and cult-like teacher movements sit beside large inherited communities that the **Census** still counts.

Why now

- Giddens's late modernity produces ontological insecurity. Revival offers a firm we.
- **Durkheim**'s effervescence travels in rallies, televised pilgrimage, and digital satsang.
- **Weber's disenchantment is uneven**: science sits beside prosperity gospels and political theologies.
- Globalisation and migration make religion a portable ethnicity as well as a faith.

Forms and limits

- Fundamentalist projects seek a lost purity. Other revivals are consumer and therapeutic.

- Gender and caste inside revivalist publics often tighten control even as numbers grow.
- **COVID-19 mixed closed shrines, online worship, and blame of the other:** revival and risk society together.

Discussion

- Revivalism is a contemporary social fact, not a leftover.
- It does not prove that modernity failed. It proves that meaning and power still use the sacred.

Flow diagram

Secularisation story -> Unfinished
Revivalism -> Public mediated political
Ontological insecurity -> Revivalism
Effervescence media -> Revivalism

Conclusion

Contemporary revivalism is public, mediated, and often political. **Casanova**, Giddens, **Durkheim**, and **Weber** explain demand and form. **Census** communities persist beside cults and campaigns. Read it as modern sacred politics, not as a return of the village unchanged.

Facts & figures

Casanova

Public religions: faith re-entering politics and civil society instead of shrinking to the private soul.

Secularisation

Wilson and others: differentiation that may shrink religion's scope; empirically mixed.

Ontological security

Giddens: a stable sense of being; threatened in late modernity and sought in firm identities.

Census religion

Indian series showing large named communities alongside new urban religious markets.

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