

Cambridge AS & A Level · Sociology 9699 · Notes

Religion as a source of social change

A2

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Read first: [Religion and social order](#)

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What you need to know

By the end of this topic you should be able to explain and evaluate:

1. **Weber's theory of religion and the rise of capitalism:** how a set of Protestant beliefs could have pushed people into a new way of working and saving.
2. **Other views of how religion and the origins of capitalism are linked:** Marxist and economic explanations, and the historical cases that fit Weber badly.
3. **Liberation theology** as a case of religion driving social change.
4. **Religious movements in political debates and struggles**, through case studies such as the evangelical movement in US politics and the role of the ayatollahs in Iran's 1979 revolution.

How the exam uses this topic. It has been asked in **2021 and 2022** only, three times: two 35-mark Paper 4 essays on whether religion drives or blocks change, and one two-part question from the Paper 3 of that time. The essays turn on one contrast: religion as a **conservative force** (holding the existing order in place, the functionalist and Marxist view in *Religion and social order*, listed under "Read first") against religion as a **radical force** (helping overturn it). This note supplies the radical side and the evidence to weigh it.

Understand it

Conservative or radical?

A **conservative force** keeps things as they are: it defends the **status quo** (the existing distribution of power and wealth) or traditional values. A **radical force** pushes society somewhere new. Religion can do either, and the interesting question is **when** it does which. Meredith McGuire suggested four things to look at:

- **Beliefs:** a faith that stresses justice, or a duty to remake the world, has more radical potential than one that stresses acceptance.
- **Culture:** where religion is central to how people think, appeals made in religious language carry weight.
- **Social position:** clergy close to the poor, or a church independent of the state, can speak against rulers.
- **Organisation:** a religion with its own buildings, networks and leaders can mobilise people when other organisations are banned.

Keep one more distinction in mind: change can aim **forward** (a new kind of society, such as more equality) or **backward** (restoring older moral rules). Both count as social change.

Weber: the Protestant ethic and capitalism

Max Weber (*The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, **1905**) asked why modern industrial capitalism first appeared in north-western Europe. He began with statistics from Baden in Germany showing that Protestants were over-represented among business owners and skilled workers, and traced the link to the beliefs of **Calvinism**.

The chain of ideas runs like this:

1. **Predestination.** John Calvin taught that God had decided before birth who would be saved (the **elect**) and who would not. Nothing a person did could change it, and nobody could know their own fate.
2. **Anxiety.** Believers were left with an unbearable uncertainty about their salvation.
3. **The calling.** Work in an ordinary job was treated as a duty to God, so doing it well was a religious act. Success in business came to be seen as a **sign** (never a cause) that one was among the elect.
4. **This-worldly asceticism.** Monks had practised self-denial by withdrawing from the world; Calvinists practised it **inside** the world: hard, disciplined, methodical work, with no idleness or luxury.
5. **Reinvestment.** Profits could not be spent on pleasure, so they were ploughed back into the business. Capital piled up, and with it a rational, calculating way of running an enterprise.

Weber called the resulting attitude the **spirit of capitalism**, and illustrated it with Benjamin Franklin's maxim "time is money". He did **not** claim that Calvinism alone caused capitalism. Material conditions (trade, money, towns, free labour) were needed too; the religious ethic was the extra ingredient that turned them into a new system. He described the fit between the beliefs and the economic interests as an **elective affinity**, and he said plainly that he did not want to swap a one-sided economic explanation for a one-sided religious one.

The comparative test. Weber studied China and India to check his idea. China had many of the material conditions, but Confucianism valued fitting into the existing order; in India, the caste system and belief in rebirth discouraged people from leaving their inherited position. Neither produced the same ethic, and neither produced capitalism first.

What happened next. Once capitalism was running, it no longer needed religion: competition forced everyone to work in its disciplined way, believers or not. Weber's image for this was an **iron cage**. So religion created a change and then lost control of it.

Why it matters for this topic. Weber shows ideas, including religious ideas, acting as a **cause** of change, not just a reflection of the economy. That directly challenges Marx's view that religion only follows economic change and justifies whatever order exists.

Other views on religion and the origins of capitalism

- **Marxist reply: the economy came first.** Karl Kautsky argued that capitalist trade and banking existed before Calvinism. The rising business class was drawn to Calvinism because it blessed what they were already doing, so the religion was **ideology** that justified capitalism, not its cause.
- **Tawney.** R. H. Tawney (*Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, **1926**) accepted a link but reversed much of the direction: economic and technical change came first, and Puritan teaching was gradually reshaped to suit the people who were growing rich. Influence ran both ways.
- **Capitalism without Calvinists.** Banking and long-distance trade flourished in Catholic Italian cities such as Florence and Venice well before the Reformation.
- **Calvinists without capitalism.** Scotland was strongly Calvinist yet industrialised later than England. Gordon Marshall (*Presbyteries and Profits*, **1980**) found that Scotland lacked capital and skilled labour, so the ethic was present but the material conditions were not. This partly **rescues** Weber: it is exactly his claim that both are needed.
- **Other ethics, same result.** Japan, and later Taiwan and Singapore, built successful capitalist economies in societies shaped by Confucian and Buddhist values rather than Protestantism, which suggests other values (or no religious ethic at all) can do the same job.
- **How good was the evidence?** Weber read the ethic from sermons and writings of religious leaders, not from what ordinary merchants believed; and Franklin wrote in the eighteenth century, when capitalism was already under way.

Liberation theology

Liberation theology is a movement within the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America that read Christianity as a call to free the poor from poverty and oppression, here and now, not only in heaven.

- **Where it came from.** From the 1960s much of Latin America was ruled by military governments and marked by huge gaps between landowners and peasants. At a meeting in **Medellín**, Colombia, in **1968**, the Latin American bishops condemned these injustices. The Peruvian priest **Gustavo Gutiérrez** set out the ideas in *A Theology of Liberation* (**1971**).
- **What it did.** Priests and lay workers set up **base communities**: small groups of poor people who read the Bible together and asked why they were poor. The church's commitment became known as the **preferential option for the poor**, a phrase adopted by the bishops at **Puebla**, Mexico, in **1979**. Clergy spoke out against torture and murder by the military regimes. **Óscar Romero**, Archbishop of San Salvador, was shot dead while saying Mass in **March 1980** after demanding an end to army repression; the Catholic Church declared him a saint in **2018**. In Nicaragua, several priests served in the government formed after the **1979** revolution.
- **The Marxist puzzle.** Liberation theology borrowed Marxist ideas about class and exploitation, yet it is a religious movement working for the oppressed: the opposite of Marx's "opium". **Otto Maduro** explained it with **relative autonomy**: religion is not simply a tool of the ruling class, and where clergy have some independence they can side with the poor. **Michael Löwy** (*The War of Gods*, **1996**) called it **liberationist Christianity** and saw it as a social movement as much as a theology. Engels had earlier noted religion's **dual character**: it can both pacify and inspire revolt.

How far did it change society?

- **For:** it gave the poor organisation and a moral language for protest, helped weaken military rule in the 1980s, and made human rights part of political debate across the continent.
- **Against:** the Vatican under Pope John Paul II (from **1978**) distrusted its Marxist ideas and appointed conservative bishops; the Brazilian theologian **Leonardo Boff** was ordered into a period of silence in **1985**. Many poor Latin Americans turned to **Pentecostal** churches instead, which offer personal transformation rather than political change. And the transitions to democracy owed much to economic crisis and international pressure, not only to the church.
- **A partial revival:** Pope Francis, the first Latin American pope (elected **2013**), met Gutiérrez in **2013** and pushed through Romero's recognition as a martyr.

Religion in political debates and struggles

The ayatollahs and the Iranian revolution of 1979

- **Background.** The Shah, **Mohammad Reza Pahlavi**, ruled Iran with US backing and a feared secret police (SAVAK). His **White Revolution** (from **1963**) imposed rapid Westernisation: land reform, secular schooling and votes for women, alongside great inequality from oil wealth. The cleric **Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini** attacked these policies and was exiled in **1964**.
- **The revolution.** Mass protests and strikes in **1978** forced the Shah to leave in **January 1979**. Khomeini returned on **1 February 1979**; after a referendum, the **Islamic Republic** was declared on **1 April 1979**, ruled under the principle of **guardianship of the Islamic jurist** (rule by a senior cleric as Supreme Leader).
- **Why religion mattered.** Mosques were the one network the Shah could not shut down; clergy had independence from the state and moral authority; and Shi'a Islam offered a language of martyrdom and resistance to injustice. Steve Bruce describes such cases as **cultural defence**: religion becoming the badge of a people resisting an outside power (here, the West and a regime seen as its puppet).
- **Evaluation.** The movement was a coalition: secular left-wing groups, liberal nationalists, students and bazaar merchants were all involved, and economic grievances (inflation, inequality) drove many protesters, so religion may have been the **vehicle** rather than the **cause**. Afterwards, religion became a **conservative force**: religious law, compulsory veiling for women and morality police. After **Mahsa Amini** died in the custody of the morality police in **September 2022**, nationwide protests turned against the religious state itself. One religious movement, in other words, was radical before 1979 and conservative after it.

The evangelical movement in US politics

- **Who.** Evangelicals are Protestants who stress personal conversion ("born again") and the authority of the Bible. From the 1970s many became politically active as the **New Christian Right**, against legal abortion, the teaching of evolution, the ban on organised prayer in state schools, and gay rights.
- **Organisation.** The Baptist preacher **Jerry Falwell** founded the **Moral Majority** in **1979**, which helped Ronald Reagan win the presidency in **1980**; it closed in **1989**, the same year **Pat Robertson** founded the **Christian Coalition**. In **2016** about four in five white evangelical voters backed **Donald Trump** (exit polls),

and in **June 2022** the Supreme Court, including three judges he appointed, overturned *Roe v. Wade*, ending the national right to abortion.

- **Change, but backward.** This is religion seeking to bring about change in order to **restore** traditional moral rules, so it is radical in method and conservative in aim.
- **Evaluation.** Steve Bruce (*The Rise and Fall of the New Christian Right*, **1988**) argued that the movement largely failed in the 1980s: the US political system demands compromise, most Americans did not share its views, and evangelicals could not easily ally with Catholics, Jews and Mormons who agreed with them on morals. Later evidence cuts both ways: same-sex marriage became legal across the USA in **2015** despite evangelical opposition, but the 2022 abortion ruling was a major success.

Other examples of religion behind change

- **The US civil rights movement:** Black churches provided its leaders, meeting places and networks; **Martin Luther King** was a Baptist minister.
- **The Reformation:** Martin Luther's protest of **1517** split Western Christianity and helped reshape European politics.
- **The labour movement:** in Britain, nonconformist chapels trained many early trade union and Labour Party leaders.
- **Gender:** churches that now ordain women (the Church of England ordained its first women priests in **1994**) both reflect and spread more equal attitudes, though feminists point out that many faiths still keep women from leading.

Religious movements today and the growth of new religious movements

Some writers link recent religious change to **globalisation** and **post-modernity**. **Anthony Giddens** saw fundamentalism as a reaction to a globalising world in which traditional certainties are questioned; **Manuel Castells** calls such reactions **resistance identities**; **Zygmunt Bauman** linked the appeal of fundamentalism to the anxiety of too much choice. On this view, religious movements are becoming **more** active in seeking change, but much of it is **defensive**, trying to protect a way of life. **Gita Sahgal and Nira Yuval-Davis** (*Refusing Holy Orders*, **1992**) argued that fundamentalist movements in many faiths share a project of controlling women, and that some are political projects using religion as cover.

New religious movements and secularisation. A **new religious movement** (NRM) is a religious group of recent origin outside the established faiths. **Roy Wallis** sorted them into **world-rejecting** (cutting members off from society), **world-accommodating** and **world-affirming** (offering success and self-improvement). Their growth can be read as **evidence of secularisation**:

- **Fragmentation:** **Bryan Wilson** argued that when one church no longer speaks for society, religion breaks into many small competing groups, and that splintering is itself a sign of decline.
- **Lost authority:** **Peter Berger** argued that once many faiths compete, no single faith can claim to be unquestionably true, so belief becomes a personal choice (the shared "sacred canopy" is torn).
- **Marginal and small:** most NRMs have few members, and world-rejecting ones stand apart from society, so they have little **social significance** even if they grow.

- **Consumer religion:** world-affirming NRMs often look like self-help products, chosen and dropped like other purchases.
- **Generations:** David Voas and Alasdair Crockett (2005) found each British generation less religious than the last, so NRM growth has not reversed the overall decline.
- **The other side:** NRMs may instead show that the need for religion persists in new forms (the full debate is in *The secularisation debate*).

Key facts and formulas

There is no formula list in Sociology. "Learn it" means you must remember it.

Key term	Status
Conservative force, radical force, status quo; McGuire's four factors (beliefs, culture, social position, organisation); change forward or backward	Learn it
Weber 1905: predestination, the elect, salvation anxiety, the calling, this-worldly asceticism, reinvestment, spirit of capitalism (Franklin's "time is money"), elective affinity, iron cage; China and India comparisons	Learn it
Alternatives: Kautsky (capitalism came first; Calvinism as ideology); Tawney 1926; Italian cities (Florence, Venice); Scotland and Marshall 1980; Japan, Taiwan and Singapore	Learn it
Liberation theology: Medellín 1968; Gutiérrez 1971; base communities; preferential option for the poor (Puebla 1979); Romero killed March 1980, saint 2018; Nicaragua 1979; relative autonomy (Maduro); liberationist Christianity (Löwy 1996); dual character (Engels); Boff silenced 1985; Pentecostal growth	Learn it
Iran: White Revolution from 1963; Khomeini exiled 1964; Shah left January 1979; Khomeini returned 1 February 1979; Islamic Republic 1 April 1979; cultural defence (Bruce); Mahsa Amini September 2022	Learn it
US evangelicals: New Christian Right; Moral Majority 1979 (Falwell), closed 1989; Christian Coalition 1989 (Robertson); Bruce 1988; same-sex marriage 2015; <i>Roe v. Wade</i> overturned June 2022	Learn it
Other cases: civil rights movement (King); Reformation 1517; nonconformity and the labour movement; women priests 1994	Learn it
Religious movements today: Giddens, Castells (resistance identities), Bauman, Sahgal and Yuval-Davis 1992; NRMs (Wallis: world-rejecting, world-accommodating, world-affirming) as evidence of secularisation (Wilson, Berger, Voas and Crockett 2005)	Learn it
Paper 4: two essays from different sections, each 35 marks: AO1 9, AO2 11, AO3 15, so $9 + 11 + 15 = 35$	Learn it

How to do it

We have tagged 3 questions for this topic (2021 and 2022), all different; none mixes types.

Question type	Questions
Evaluate whether religion is a force for, or an obstacle to, social change	2
Two-part question on religious movements, secularisation and social change	1

Paper 4 lasts 1 hour 45 minutes for two essays, so allow about 50 minutes for each, including 5 minutes to plan.

1. Evaluate whether religion is a force for, or an obstacle to, social change (2 questions)

Asked as: religion is a force for social change (1, 2022); religion is an obstacle to social change (1, 2021). The two quotations are mirror images, so the same material serves both; only which side comes first changes.

1. **Introduction.** Define social change, conservative force and radical force. Say the debate sets functionalists and Marxists (religion holds things in place) against Weber, neo-Marxists and case-study evidence (religion can overturn them).
2. **The conservative case** (first for "obstacle", second for "force for change"):
 - **Functionalism:** religion binds people to shared values and the existing order (collective conscience), so it resists change.
 - **Marxism:** religion as ideology and the opium of the people keeps workers resigned to their lot; established churches are tied to the state and to wealthy donors.
 - **Teaching:** believers are told to obey rulers and put up with hardship now for reward later.
 - **Iran after 1979:** a revolutionary religion became a theocracy that suppresses change.
3. **The radical case:**
 - **Weber:** the Protestant ethic helped create capitalism.
 - **Liberation theology:** the church siding with the poor against military regimes.
 - **Iran 1979:** clergy leading the overthrow of the Shah.
 - **Civil rights, the Reformation, the labour movement, women's ordination.**
 - **Neo-Marxists:** Engels's dual character, Gramsci's counter-hegemony and Maduro's relative autonomy explain why.
4. **Evaluate the radical case** (this is where the top marks are): Weber's critics (Kautsky, Tawney, Italian cities, Scotland); liberation theology's decline under the Vatican and against Pentecostal growth; Iran as a coalition of secular and religious forces; the evangelical movement seeking **backward** change, and Bruce's verdict that it mostly failed.
5. **Weaken the "obstacle" view from another side:** secularisation. Where few people attend or follow religious teaching, religion has lost the power to hold change back, so in secular societies it is hardly an obstacle at all.

6. **Conclusion**, for example: religion usually supports the existing order, especially when its leaders are tied to the state; it becomes a force for change under particular conditions (McGuire's four factors), and even then the change it starts may slip out of its control (Weber's iron cage, Iran after 1979).

2. Two-part question on religious movements, secularisation and social change (1 question)

Asked as: (a) explain why the growth of new religious movements may be seen as evidence of secularisation [9], then (b) assess the view that religious movements are increasingly seeking to bring about social change [16] (1, 2021, from the Paper 3 of that time; the current syllabus examines religion through 35-mark Paper 4 essays).

Part (a), explain [9].

1. Define NRMs and secularisation in one sentence each.
2. Give four or five developed reasons, each tied to secularisation: fragmentation (Wilson); competing faiths undermining any one faith's authority (Berger); small size and marginal position, so little social significance; world-rejecting groups opting out of society and world-affirming ones resembling consumer products (Wallis); NRMs not reversing generational decline (Voas and Crockett).
3. No evaluation is needed for "explain".

Part (b), assess [16].

1. **For the view**: new or revived movements entering politics (the evangelical New Christian Right; Iran's clergy; Hindu and other religious nationalisms); responses to globalisation and post-modernity (Giddens, Castells, Bauman); movements campaigning on poverty, gender and human rights (liberation theology and its heirs).
2. **Against**: much of this is defensive, guarding how a community already lives rather than building something new; liberation theology has declined since the 1980s; many NRMs are world-affirming or world-rejecting, focused on the individual, not society; some movements are political groups using religion as cover (Sahgal and Yuval-Davis); and "increasingly" needs a comparison with the past (the Reformation and the civil rights movement were older and larger).
3. **Conclude**: which movements, which kind of change, and compared with when.

Worked examples

All are new questions. Example 1 is a short "explain" answer; Examples 2 and 3 are 35-mark essays, marked by levels for each assessment objective. In the exam, write each bullet as a full paragraph.

Example 1

Explain why liberation theology may be seen as an example of religion bringing about social change. [9]

- **It took the side of the poor.** At Medellín (1968) the bishops condemned poverty and repression, turning the church from an ally of landowners into a critic of them.
- **It organised people.** Base communities taught poor people to discuss the causes of their poverty and act together, giving them organisation where unions and parties were banned.
- **It challenged military regimes.** Clergy publicly condemned torture and killings; Romero's murder in 1980 shows how threatening this was to those in power.
- **It entered politics directly.** Priests served in Nicaragua's government after the 1979 revolution.
- **It contradicts the Marxist view**, showing religion can resist ruling-class interests (Maduro's relative autonomy).

How it would be marked. Several developed points with concepts and examples, all tied to change, reach the 5–9 band; a description of liberation theology that never says what it changed stays in 0–4.

Example 2

'Weber's theory provides a convincing explanation of the rise of capitalism.' Evaluate this view. [35]

Introduction. Outline the claim: Calvinist beliefs produced an ethic of disciplined work and reinvestment that helped create capitalism.

For the view (AO1/AO2).

- **The mechanism is coherent:** predestination, anxiety, the calling, this-worldly asceticism and reinvestment explain **why** capital built up.
- **The comparative test:** China and India had material conditions but not the ethic, and did not develop capitalism first.
- **Weber was not one-sided:** he required material conditions too (elective affinity), which answers the charge that he ignored the economy.
- **Marshall on Scotland:** the ethic without capital and skills was not enough, exactly as Weber's two-part claim predicts.

Against the view (AO3).

- **Chronology:** Kautsky's point that capitalism came first, with Calvinism adopted as ideology.
- **Tawney:** economic change reshaped Puritan teaching more than the reverse.
- **Counter-cases:** Catholic Florence and Venice had banking and trade before the Reformation; Japan, Taiwan and Singapore grew without a Protestant ethic.
- **Evidence:** Weber relied on religious writings, not on what merchants believed, and Franklin wrote after capitalism had begun.

Conclusion. Weber convincingly shows that ideas can help cause economic change, but as a full explanation of capitalism's origins he is weakened by the timing and the counter-cases; the most defensible version is his own: religion as one cause alongside material ones.

How it would be marked. Accurate, detailed knowledge of Weber's chain and his critics (AO1 7–9), applied throughout to **how convincing** the explanation is (AO2 10–11), and sustained evaluation weighing the comparative evidence against the counter-cases, leading to a judgement (AO3 12–15).

Example 3

'Religious movements seek to restore the past rather than create a new society.' Evaluate this view. **[35]**

This is the hardest kind: it accepts that religion drives change, and asks **which direction**.

Introduction. Define forward and backward change; note that both are change, so the debate is about aims.

For the view (AO1/AO2).

- **US evangelicals:** the New Christian Right aims to restore traditional rules on abortion, sexuality and school prayer (Moral Majority 1979; the 2022 ruling).
- **Iran:** the revolution rejected the Shah's Westernising reforms and restored religious law.
- **Fundamentalism and globalisation:** Giddens and Castells see defensive reactions to the loss of certainty; Bruce's cultural defence.
- **Control of women:** Sahgal and Yuval-Davis show many such movements restoring patriarchal rules.

Against the view (AO3).

- **Liberation theology** aimed at a more equal society that had never existed.
- **The civil rights movement** sought new rights, not old ones.
- **Weber's Calvinists** helped create an entirely new economic system, without intending to.
- **Women's ordination** shows religions changing towards more equality.
- **Mixed aims:** Iran's revolution also promised social justice for the poor; even "restoring" movements create something new (a modern theocratic state had never existed before).

Conclusion. Recent high-profile movements mostly aim to restore, but history shows religion creating new societies too; the direction depends on who leads the movement and whom it serves.

How it would be marked. Detailed knowledge of several cases and theories (AO1 7–9), consistently applied to **restore against create** (AO2 10–11), and sustained evaluation that questions the either-or itself before reaching a judgement (AO3 12–15).

Common mistakes

- **Accepting the quotation without testing it.** Examiners report answers that simply agree religion blocks change. AO3 is worth 15 of the 35 marks: the other side must be argued in detail.
- **Touring theories of religion.** Outlining functionalism, then Marxism, then feminism, without saying what each shows about **change**, keeps answers low. End every paragraph on the quotation.

- **Letting the conservative theories go unchallenged.** Laying out what Durkheim and Marx said, then moving on, leaves an essay stuck in the middle. After each theory, ask what Weber, liberation theology or Iran does to it.
- **Treating all religions as one.** Strong answers say which religion, which organisation and which country, since a state church, a Latin American base community and a US megachurch can pull in quite different directions.
- **Using Weber only as description.** Weber earns the most when his critics are used too.
- **In an NRM "explain" question, never mentioning secularisation.** Describing NRMs is not enough; every point must say why it suggests religion is declining.

How to get the marks

- **"Evaluate this view" (35 marks):** marked by levels for each assessment objective. **AO1 (9):** the top level (7–9) needs wide, accurate knowledge (Weber, his critics, liberation theology, Iran, US evangelicals, neo-Marxist concepts). **AO2 (11):** the top level (10–11) needs every point applied to the quotation's word (**force for change** or **obstacle**). **AO3 (15):** the top level (12–15) needs explicit, detailed and sustained evaluation; evaluation by simply placing two views side by side stays lower.
- **Answer two questions from different sections** on Paper 4; it is out of $2 \times 35 = 70$.
- **The older two-part format (2021):** an "explain" part worth 9 marks (bands 0–4 and 5–9: named writers and concepts lift an answer into the upper band) and an "assess" part worth 16 (bands 0–6, 7–11 and 12–16; the top band needs knowledge, accurate application **and** assessment). $9 + 16 = 25$ marks in all.
- **Distinctions examiners reward:** forward against backward change; aims against outcomes (a movement may start change it cannot control); religion as cause against religion as vehicle; established churches against sects and movements.
- **Use the case studies analytically:** say what each shows about **when** religion becomes radical.

Quick check

1. Explain how the doctrine of predestination led, in Weber's account, to the reinvestment of profits.
2. Give two criticisms of Weber's theory and say whether each is a Marxist or a historical criticism.
3. How does Maduro's idea of relative autonomy help explain liberation theology?
4. Why can the Iranian revolution be used on **both** sides of a question on religion and social change?
5. In what sense was the New Christian Right a force for change, and in what sense conservative?

Answers

1. Calvinists could not know if they were among the elect, which made them anxious; they treated hard, methodical work in their calling as a duty and business success as a sign of being chosen; since luxury was forbidden, profits were reinvested, so capital accumulated.
2. Marxist: Kautsky argued capitalism existed before Calvinism, which was adopted to justify it. Historical: capitalism developed in Catholic Florence and Venice before the Reformation (or: Calvinist Scotland industrialised late).
3. Religion is not wholly controlled by the ruling class; where clergy have some independence from rulers they can side with the poor, as Latin American priests did in base communities.
4. Before and during 1979 clergy led the overthrow of the Shah (radical); afterwards the Islamic Republic used religion to enforce order and resist change, as the 2022 protests show (conservative).
5. It sought to change laws and win elections (a force for change), but its aim was to restore traditional moral rules (conservative in aim).

Past questions to try

- 9699/41/M/J/22 Q5: essay on whether religion is a force for social change.
- 9699/42/M/J/21 Q5: essay on whether religion is an obstacle to social change.
- 9699/34/M/J/21 Q7: NRMs as evidence of secularisation, then whether religious movements increasingly seek social change.