

The Dark Side of Spirituality 2: Religion and Nationalism in a Time of War

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Religion and Spirituality

1. Is religion one form of spirituality? Or is spirituality a component of religion?
2. Formal v. Informal Spirituality
 1. Formal behaviours and disciplines; Special places; Institutionalized; Specific goals
 2. Informal or "Lived" Spirituality: Spontaneous behaviours; "Everyday" environments; Idiosyncratic/Creative; Individuals, networks, webs; Open goals
 3. Interaction: formal / informal forms of spirituality

Religion and Nationalism

1. The "nation" as "imagined community" (Benedict Anderson)
2. The nation-state
3. National identity and solidarity

Nationalism

- Popular sovereignty: legitimacy for the state comes from "the people"
- Participation by the people in the process of government
- Penetration of government into lives of people
- Identification of people with nation-state
- Effectiveness of the state: monopoly on legitimate violence
- Consensus of people around basic values, history, project of society

4. Nationalism and Religion

Putin, Orthodox Christianity and Russkiy Mir

1. Timeline of Ukraine Invasion
2. Reasons for invasion: "Genocide" in Donbas region; Accusations of Nazism; Defence of Russian civilization; Defense of traditional values; Stop Ukraine from joining NATO and Western expansion
3. Vladimir Putin, b. St. Petersburg (then Leningrad) in October 1952
4. Putin in historical context: Post-Soviet crisis of 1990s
 - a. Putin's model: patriotism, collectivism, solidarity, and derzhavnost (destiny to be a great power)

Faith in Russian Public Life

- No separation of Church and State
- Moscow as the 'Third Rome'
- 19th century nationalism: 'Orthodoxy, Nationality, and Autocracy'
- Under Communism, church was persecuted then controlled
- Putin: Orthodox Christianity to serve Russian nationalism and expansionism

5. Religion, Nationalism and Secularization Theory
6. Post-communist growth of Orthodoxy (From 31 to 72% between 1991 and 2008)
7. Putin and Restoration of Orthodoxy
8. Putin's use of Orthodox history and spirituality
9. Putinism as Ideology

Narendra Modi and Hindutva

1. Ram Mandir temple in Ayodhya, 22 January 2024
2. History of Ayodhya Temple controversy
3. India today: 1.37 billion people; ~80% Hindu; Home to 200 million Muslims
4. Hinduism and India's experience of conquest and colonization

Hinduism, Colonization, and Modernity

- adapting Hinduism to Western culture,
- rejecting the West in favour of tradition
- complementing western materialism with Indian spirituality
- identifying Hinduism with Indian nationalism and independence movements

5. Gandhi, Hinduism, and Indian nationalism
6. Hindutva ("Hinduness") as resistance to colonization

Hindutva

- Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS—National Volunteer Organization)
- Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP—Indian People's Party)
- Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP—World Hindu Council)

7. BJP and Hindutva in Indian politics
8. Hindutva and the ambiguity of religion and nationalism

Religion, Nationalism, and Globalization

1. Mark Juergensmeyer on Globalization and Religious Nationalism
2. Gregory Baum and a contextual ethics of nationalism
3. The ambiguity of nationalism and cosmopolitanism

Putin, Modi, and Populism

- a Manichean vision of the world: authentic, good people vs manipulative, self-interested elite
- conflicts defined in cosmic proportions with moral significance (a spiritual quest)
- necessity of a dramatic, systemic change, and
- justification of non-democratic means

