2.3 Religion, identity and power

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 30 marks**

KEY WORDS established church • secularism • legitimacy • social movement • minority

Objective

Study how religion shapes **identity** and **power** in society: religion and the state, religion in **social movements**, and religion as a marker of minority identity.

You must be able to:

- describe different relations between religion and the state
- explain how religion can support or challenge power
- analyse a religious social movement
- explain religion as a marker of minority identity
- evaluate whether religion mainly supports or challenges power

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

■ Religion and the state

model	example
established church	the Church of England: the monarch is its Supreme Governor; bishops sit in the House of Lords
strict separation	France's 1905 law separating churches and the state (*laïcité*)
religious state	Iran: under the 1979 constitution, a senior cleric is Supreme Leader
secular state with religious freedom	the US First Amendment (1791)

■ Supporting and challenging power

Religion can **legitimize** power (divine right of kings), and it can **challenge** it: the US civil rights movement was led largely from Black churches; Martin Luther King Jr. was a Baptist minister. In Poland, the Catholic Church supported the Solidarity movement in the 1980s.

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■ Minority identity

For minorities, religion can mark belonging and difference: dress, food, festivals and places of worship become signs of identity, and sometimes targets of discrimination.

Worked analysis. The civil rights movement used church buildings for meetings, sermons for motivation, hymns at marches, and biblical stories (the Exodus) to frame freedom. Religion gave **organization**, **meaning** and **moral authority** to a challenge to power.

2 Practice

2.1 Distinguish an **established church** from **strict separation**, with an example of each. [2]

2.2 France's law on separation was passed in 1905 and the US First Amendment was adopted in 1791. Calculate the difference, and explain **one** difference between the two models. [3]



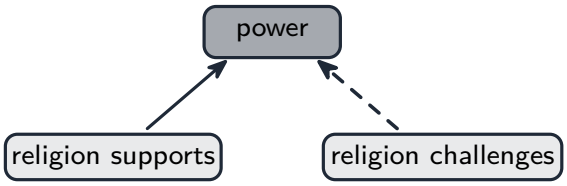
2.3 Explain **two** ways religion helped the US civil rights movement challenge power. [4]

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2.4 Explain how religion can be a marker of **minority identity**, and **one** risk this creates, with a real example. [6]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 *(Preparation essay.)* "Religion more often supports power than challenges it." Discuss with reference to **three** cases. [15]



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