

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA  
 DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES  
 BA DEGREE PROGRAMME IN SOCIAL SCIENCES – (2024/2025)  
 FINAL EXAMINATION – LEVEL IV (SEMESTER I)  
 DSU4355 – RELIGION, SOCIETY AND CULTURE  
 DURATION: THREE HOURS (03 HOURS)



Date: 2025.04.06

Time: 9.30 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.

Answer five (05) questions only. Each question carries 20 marks.

1. Explain the sociological significance of religion in shaping individual behaviour and maintaining social order in contemporary society, using examples from daily life.
2. Evaluate the sociological contributions of Functionalism, Conflict Theory, and Symbolic Interactionism in explaining the importance of religion in contemporary society.
3. Critically examine the sociological interplay between religious institutions and religious movements in shaping societal norms and driving social change.
4. "Religion should not play any role in determining state activities." Critically discuss this statement using examples from Sri Lanka or any other South Asian society.
5. Discuss how religious pluralism promotes coexistence, freedom of conscience, and mutual respect among diverse faiths while addressing challenges such as exclusivism and moral relativism. Use examples from Sri Lanka or another South Asian country.
6. "Students of sociology should refrain from religious observations in order to engage in a scientific discussion and analysis of religion." Critically discuss this statement.
7. Explain the significance of religious revival movements in Sri Lanka in fostering a better society where everyone can live harmoniously.
8. "Many new religious movements are emerging in Sri Lanka." Describe two selected new religious movements, with a focus on their contributions to their followers.
9. Write short notes on any **FOUR (4)** of the following:
  - (i) Clifford Geertz' definition of religion.
  - (ii) The book *The Protestant Ethics and "Spirit" of Capitalism*.
  - (iii) The feminist perspective on religion.
  - (iv) The diversification of religious beliefs in a given society
  - (v) Anagarika Dharmapala as the founder of modern Sinhala-Buddhist society.
  - (vi) Civic religions.
  - (vii) The social significance of the Ramadan festival in Sri Lanka.

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