

Rampant religious extremism in the world Date: \_\_\_\_\_

World as manifestation of human nature

## Outline

### 1. Introduction

Thesis statement: Rampant religious extremism in the world comes under the banner of human nature or nurture. The crux of the matter is humans are nurtured into propagating religious extremism.

Ergo extremist ideologies taught from generation-to-generation point towards nurture fueling religious extremism as opposed to human nature.

2. Misplaced ideologies contributing to rampant religious extremism  
3. Nurturing of individuals on a mass scale is the main culprit of rampant religious extremism (Thesis)

(a) Social institutions teach religious extremism

2. Religion is a source of identity and its

(b) Religion becomes a source of identity through socialisation and its protection leads to extremism

(c) Religious extremism largely manifests itself in brainwashed individuals

(d) Religious extremism is a reaction to grave injustices which are nurtured into humans

(e) Humans are inherently good and peaceful by nature

Human nature facilitates rampant religious extremism in the world (Anti-Thesis)

(a) Individuals are masters of their own thinking and not passive victims of society

(b) Religious identity and solidarity is a product of evolutionary psychology which constitutes as human nature

(c) Individuals have free will and can choose

religious extremism

- (d) Religious extremism may not always be reactionary but created in isolation
- (e) Selfishness and lust for power may be inherent and contribute to rampant religious extremism.

5. Rampant religious extremism is taught rather than and learnt rather than inherent (synthesis)

- (a) Religious extremism people are a product of socialisation and the id/natural instinct can be suppressed
- (b) Protection of social identity is intertwined with humans
- (c) If religious extremism curbed through strict measures, it would cease to exist as it would no longer be taught
- (d) Most religious extremist groups cite killing of innocent civilians in their social group for their reaction
- (e) <sup>social</sup> psychopathic tendencies are an anomaly and most people are taught good characteristics tolerance

6. CONCLUSION

### ESSAY

An action-reaction ideology has led to a ~~constant~~ perpetual quest for revenge. When one looks at the world's most famous terrorist attack, 9/11, beyond the 3000 lives lost, the billions of dollars of material damage

and the deep psychological trauma visited on the West, the ~~the~~ reason for the attack is lost in the smoke. Osama bin Laden delivered a message stating his reason for the attack - ~~against~~ the US killed innocent Muslim civilians and therefore (to him) this attack suffered as a reaction. To religious extremists, blinded by hate and vengeance, propagating their religious extremist ideologies are a means to not only protect their religious purity but also punish anyone who doesn't see through their narrow ~~own~~ worldviews. Ironically, most religions of the world teach tolerance, love and peace so it would be safe to say that these distorted extremist values are taught by other extremists. Rampant religious extremism <sup>in the world</sup> comes under the banner of nature or nurture. The crux of the matter is humans are nurtured into propagating religious extremism. Ergo, ~~extremism as opposed to~~ extremist ideologies taught from generation to generation point towards nurturing future generations fuelling extremism as opposed to human nature. The nurturing of individuals ~~of~~ on a mass scale is the main culprit of rampant religious extremism through social institutions, reaction to injustices and being brainwashed. On the other hand, human nature denotes that ~~that~~ individuals have free will and determine their own actions, evolutionary psychology may render humans naturally ~~extremist~~ and isolated incidents denote that extremism is not always ~~intrinsic~~. Therefore, All in all, religions

extremism is taught as people are taught to suppress suppress their feel instincts, most extremist activities are reactionary and even in the case of human nature - psychopathic tendencies are anomalies and contribute to so culture is the main culprit

Religious extremism has a myriad of different interpretations, where one would see the strict adherence to fundamental religious ideologies, other would see many such ideologies as outmoded in today's world. The reason why there has been an uptick in religious extremism could be a threat to religious identity in today's dynamic world. People feel threatened by constant change and hold on to the one thing that has stood the test of time, religion. Instead of moving and adapting with the modern era, religious extremists who have adopted rigidness fail to realise that religion is stringent but human beings can evolve and improve without letting go of their religious identity. For instance, co-education is viewed as un-Islamic but can really be devoted to the culture of sexism which promotes male literacy over female literacy. This religious ideology has no basis as Islam teaches all Muslims to go to the ends of the world to achieve good education, so co-education is the very least one can tolerate. These extremist ideologies are part of socialisation and nurture and have facilitated the rampant rise of religious

extremism. Therefore, rampant religious extremism  
 The main culprit of rampant religious  
 extremism in the world are social institutions  
 that instill extremist values. Social institutions  
 guide social behaviour and develop members of  
 society. If social institutions are steeped in  
 extremism, this will be taught. This can be seen  
 through educational institutions, particularly at  
 the primary and secondary level which have the  
 power to instill religious extremism. For example  
 Pakistan has seen an exponential rise in  
 religious extremism after the during the war on  
 Terror. This can be devoted to the rise of  
 religious seminaries (madrassas) in Pakistan.  
~~with~~ **Approximately 30,000 madrassas are**  
**unregistered so their curriculum cannot be**  
**screened.** In turn, religious extremists formally  
 taught in educational facilities are a major  
 reason for rise in religious extremism in the  
 Pakistan and spread in the world at  
 large.

Individual identity is linked to ~~religions~~  
~~the~~ one's religion and its protection leads  
 to religious extremism. A person's identity is  
 priceless as it differentiates him from others,  
 gives him purpose and instills stability in  
 his life. Through socialisation, one is  
 taught to associate himself through with his  
 religion and in some cases, this becomes  
 his main identity. If one's identity or in  
 other words, reason for being is threatened,  
 he would go to any length to protect it ~~to~~ to

ensure social survival. For example, Samuel Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' theory (1992) denotes a clash of certain civilizations to ensure legitimacy and survival. In the case of Islamic Civilization, the clash would occur with western civilization which is seen as a threat. Hence, protection of religious identity is nurtured into individuals and leads to <sup>prompt</sup> religious extremism.

Unfortunately, the most religious extremists are individuals who start off as young, impressionable individuals who are brainwashed into adopting extremist ideologies. Usually, poor and desperate people seek a means to curb their hunger and attain shelter with a strong social group to survive and are usually pulled into the ditches of religious extremist groups. Over time a process of brainwashing ensues that will narrow and ideologies into these vulnerable groups which shows the power of nurturing. For instance, ISIS and Al-Qaeda target poor poverty-stricken individuals by promising them basic necessities like food and shelter. Thus, religious extremism manifests itself through nurturing and brainwashing impressionable individuals.

Unsurprisingly, coping mechanisms are a result of trauma and religious extremism is one such manifestation. A world drowning in violence, war and injustice will lead to certain groups that were

wounded more than others who develop extreme coping mechanisms. Some nations were ~~written~~ have been victims of war and violence for decades and have turned to religious fundamentalism to protect themselves. For instance, the Taliban have been in power in Afghanistan after the war on Terror. This war led to the collapse of Afghan society along with its economy. In turn, the Afghan Taliban turned to religious extremism ~~in the form of~~ <sup>and</sup> which includes public executions, apartheid of women to cope with past trauma and also ensure they do not have to face ~~past~~ <sup>re-live</sup> re-live past experiences. ~~Here,~~ Therefore, rampant religious extremism is a product of nurture through negative experiences such as past trauma.

Human nature for the most part, is inherently good and peaceful. Humans value peace and progress over war and conflict. This can be concluded ~~to~~ through visualizing what humans would choose if presented. Presented the two scenarios of war and peace, rampant religious extremism can be said to be a product of a system rather than dependent on human nature in isolation. To compare, neo-liberalism believes in the inherent altruism and goodness of man but denotes the international system as anarchic. It is also stated that if man is evil, it is because he has been

taught through a flawed system to be evil, but his primordial nature is of peace. Overall, humans are altruistic by nature so rampant religious extremism can be attributed to systemic ~~to~~ problems, rather

However, while social institutions ~~teach~~ socialise humans, ~~we~~ humans are masters of their own thinking and not passive victims of society. Man has been ordained with free will and intellect to make his own decisions. ~~to~~ To blame all behaviour on social institutions is ~~folly~~ folly. Some individuals, despite objective social institutions pursue a path of their own which could be of religious extremism. For example, Shamima Begum, a British national volunteered to give up her life in the UK and join ISIS where she became the wife of a terrorist. She wasn't forced or taught to be an extremist as she studied in a western, secular school and her parents weren't extremists. ~~However~~ But, she still chose her own path. Consequently, human nature may be blamed for the spread of religious extremism as individuals aren't passive victims of society.

Evolutionary psychology posits that religious ~~extremist~~ identity is a part of human nature which could be a reason for <sup>rampant</sup> religious extremism in

the world. Throughout human evolution man has followed one religion or the other which has culminated into a psychological need for religion in his life. In the case of religious extremism, without any other choice in his surrounding, man adopts these extremist ideologies due to a psychological need for religiosity. In his book, Satoshi Kanazawa explains how all rational beings need religion and sometimes this can even entail adopting religious extremism which explains the rampant spread of these ideologies in populated regions (Satoshi Kanazawa, *The Intelligence Paradox*, 2012). All in all, rampant religious extremism can be a result of human nature which can be explained through evolutionary psychology.

~~Inadvertently~~

In any society, there are individuals that are staunch and

An individual's capacity for extremism is determined by his nature and he could choose to adopt ~~liberal ideologies~~ religious extremism or shun it. In every society, there are individuals who are stringent with their ethical code of conduct and those who are easily influenced. This depends on their nature. Where some have adopted

religious tolerance and liberalism despite poverty and hunger. For instance, many in extremist countries choose to flee for a liberal lifestyle despite ~~the~~ having the opportunity to gain relative stability by joining extremist groups. This explains why **30,000** <sup>(UKRAINE)</sup> people crossed the English channel in 2023 for a better life. Thus, religious extremism depends on human nature and some can choose not to adopt it ~~which~~ signifies its extent while some do adopt it.

Inadvertently, religious extremism may be a result of isolation not always be reactionary but rather in isolation. Through human nature many religious leaders have sought to spread ~~religious~~ <sup>religious</sup> extremist ideologies just because they have the capacity to do so. History is littered with such instances that span across all religions. For instance, as far back as the ancient Egyptian civilization, one can see religious extremism through Pharaoh <sup>which</sup> led to the enslavement and mass murder to the Israelites (Jewish people). Moreover, Christian settlers in the American colonies adopted the notion of Manifest Destiny. This denoted that it had been their duty to educate and civilize the Native Americans even if they had to adopt violence to do so. Resultantly, religious extremism can be said to be part of

human nature as many historical instances point to ~~these instances~~ it rather than it being a reaction.

Selfishness and lust for power are traits of human nature that lead to the rampant spread of religious extremism in the world. Religious extremism sometimes hides behind the facade of religiosity but is actually a product of human nature the narrow objectives of human nature. Men, in positions of power, have used religious extremism for expansion and hegemony which has contributed to its rampant spread. For example, the British monarchy used religion as a means to expand its empire. It adopted extremist strategies such as forceful conversions through Christian missionaries in the subcontinent and East Asia. This can be denoted to the individual capacities and nature of the ruling kings and queens. Overall, <sup>rampant</sup> religious extremism is rampant in the world ~~as it~~ ~~is~~ ~~due~~ ~~to~~ could be due to lust for power and selfishness which constitutes as human nature.

It can be claimed that ~~rampant religious extremism is a~~ people are a product of socialisation and the id or primal instinct can be suppressed through nurturing. Humans are taught socially acceptable behaviours and they can conversely, they can be taught religious

extremism. Individuals develop the concept of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour at an early age. In this context, Sigmund Freud proposed the concept of Id which is one's animalistic and natural instinct. Whereas on the other hand, the superego is what one learns from what society teaches them. The middle ground is what humans balance which is the ego, it balances the natural instinct and social values. By extension, if society teaches them to be extremist this will be deemed acceptable and the balance will tip in the favour of rampant religious extremism. Hence, through nurture one is taught to either adopt religious extremism which can be expanded on a global scale.

Social identity is constructed through socialisation and it would be intuitive to assume that its protection also comes into the scope of nurture. Social identity construction: Religious extremism, as discussed before, is a <sup>latent</sup> ~~manifest~~ function of wanting to preserve social identity. Humans are taught to protect what is important to them. In the case of religion, religious groups use securitised language and denote threat to their being which heightens the credibility for protection. An existential

Threat to religion is used as a weapon to gather momentum for religious extremism. For example, the ISIS re-sensationalizes the threat to Islam from the west and nurtures feelings of hate and distrust. Therefore, religiosity of religious identity is a product of nurture rather than nature and ensures the rampant prevalence of religious extremism in the world.

To put it into perspective, if religious extremism is curbed ~~for~~ overall, it would cease to exist as there it would no longer be taught. Religious values are taught from one generation to the next. There have been instances of later generations forgetting their religious teachings and values as a result of ~~the parents~~ or them not being formally taught. By extension, religious extremism can also be eliminated if it is not taught to the next generation which constitutes the vitality of nurture. For instance, ~~in the US in~~ the early 1990s in the US, 90% of the population identified as Christians. But today, about two-thirds of adults are Christians (Pew Research Centre, Modelling the future of religion in America, 2022). Ergo, if

extremist values are taught they will be prevalent showing that not human nature but nurture is <sup>an</sup> important factor.

To a large extent, its extremist religious groups cite the killing of innocent civilians for their extremism. Social w-groups feel a sense of duty to protect their own and if they face violence or mass murder, they are likely to adopt means to take revenge. In the case of Hamas in Palestine, they reiterate the justification for their attacks on 7th October as ~~few~~ Israeli expansionism and killing of innocent civilians, particularly women and children while Hamas is termed a terrorist organisation that has adopted an extremist religious ideology, its actions are largely the result of nurture. They were taught that extremism is more effective than passiveness. Hence, rampant religious extremism is a product of nurture rather than human nature as can be seen through the reaction-action-reaction behaviour of Hamas.

Undoubtedly, <sup>sociopathic</sup> psychopathic tendencies of religious extremists are an anomaly and most people are taught good characteristics religious tolerance. If religious extremism was

a universal part of human nature then everyone would be an extremist. The differences between individuals is a result of differences in their environment. Individuals, in turn, are mostly taught religious tolerance which further shows that religious extremism is an anomaly <sup>resulting from</sup> ~~of~~ the environment. For instance, Muslims are taught, "Help one another in acts of piety and righteousness. And do not assist each other in acts of selfishness and transgression..." (Al Quran 5:2). This denotes that religious extremism is rampant not because of nature but because of the environment one finds himself in which teaches him the opposite of religious scripture. ~~So, it is rampant~~ religious extremism ~~through human nature~~ can be denoted to <sup>sociopathic</sup> psychopathic tendencies which are an anomaly ~~as~~ as religion can not be denoted to human nature as sociopathic extremist tendencies "are 2 anomalies which nurture plays, a more active role with 'extremism being' prevalent in the world." In conclusion, rampant religious extremism ~~is~~ cannot solely be denoted to human nature. In the debate of nature versus nurture, nurture wins in this case. Rampant religious extremism

constitutes of multiple factors a plethora of factors and is defined differently by different perspectives. Overall, nurturing individuals in light of religious extremism on a massive scale is the main contender. Societies are taught to protect their identity and social wefare through religious extremism. Along with moreover, religious extremism is prevalent amongst brainwashed individuals. On the other hand, ~~some~~ some blame human nature for religious extremism as humans are inherently power-hungry and wasters of their own free will. Finally, more evidence points towards socialisation of religious extremism as most religious extremists are taught to protect their religion through securitised ideologies and most importantly, they use religious extremism as a reaction to injustices which constitutes as part of nurture.

\* The was further legitimised in an interview of Elon ~~to~~ Musk who said "For every Hamas member that you kill, how many did you create?" and "If you kill somebody's child in Gaza, you've made at least a few Hamas members".

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