#### МИНИСТЕРСТВО НАУКИ И ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ РОССИЙСКОЙ ФЕДЕРАЦИИ ФЕДЕРАЛЬНОЕ ГОСУДАРСТВЕННОЕ АВТОНОМНОЕ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОЕ УЧРЕЖДЕНИЕ ВЫСШЕГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

«Национальный исследовательский Нижегородский государственный университет им. Н.И. Лобачевского»

# Социология и религия: Сборник текстов и заданий по английскому языку

Практикум

Рекомендовано методической комиссией Института филологии и журналистики ННГУ им. Н.И. Лобачевского для студентов, обучающихся по направлениям подготовки 39.03.01 «Социология» и 39.03.02 «Социальная работа»

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Практикум предназначен для студентов факультета социальных наук ННГУ им. Н.И. Лобачевского. Комплекс заданий направлен на формирование и совершенствование навыков ведения устных дискуссий и письменного описания результатов исследования, а также расширение словарного запаса обучающихся по заявленной теме.

Материалы практикума соответствуют профессиональным интересам и уровню сформированности профессиональных компетенций обучающихся.

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# UNIT 1 Sociology and Religion

#### *Exercise 1.* Work in pairs to answer these questions:

- Whom can you see in the portraits?
- How, do you think, these scholars' work is connected with religion?
- What is religion in terms of sociology?

Emile Durkheim (1858-1917)



Max Weber (1864-1920)



*Exercise 2.* Read the text to find out what sociologists focus on in their study of religion.

#### SOCIOLOGY AND RELIGION

As individuals, sociologists may hold any number of religious beliefs – or none at all. However, they agree that religion plays a major part in the operation of society. Each theoretical paradigm suggests ways in which religion shapes social life.

Because religion deals with ideas that transcend everyday experience, neither sociology nor any other scientific discipline can verify or disprove religious doctrine. Religion is a matter of faith, belief anchored in conviction rather than scientific evidence.

Through most of our history, human beings lived in small societies and attributed birth, death, and whatever happened in between to the operation of supernatural forces. Over the last several hundred years, however, science has emerged as an alternative way of understanding the natural world, and scientific sociology has much to say about how and why societies operate the way they do.

Some people with strong faith may be disturbed by the thought of sociologists turning scientific eye to what they hold as sacred. In truth, however, a sociological study of religion is no threat to anyone's faith. Sociologists recognize that religion is central to virtually every culture on earth, and they seek to understand how religious beliefs and practices guide human societies. As sociologists, they cannot comment on the meaning and purpose of human

existence or pass judgement on any religion as right or wrong. Rather, sociology takes a more "worldly" approach by delving into why religions take particular forms in one society or another and how religious activity affects society as a whole.

(after John J. Macionis, 1999)

# *Exercise 3.* Are the statements below true (T) or false (F), or no information is given in the text (NG)?

- 1. A sociologist is expected to be atheistic.
- 2. The task of sociology is to disprove religious doctrine.
- 3. Science helps us understand the natural world.
- 4. A sociological study of religion does not threaten anyone's faith.
- 5. Every culture on our planet has emerged due to religion.
- 6. Sociologists seek to understand how religious practices may influence society.

# *Exercise 4*. Match the words to make collocations as they are used in the text. A

to shape (*3)	religious beliefs
to guide (*2)	social life
to hold	(a) human society
to pass	into sth
to delve	everyday experience
to transcend	judgement on
В	<u> </u>
religious	doctrine
scientific	faith
strong	paradigm
theoretical	evidence

## *Exercise 5.* Make up sentences with the phrases from *Exercise 4.*

*Exercise 6.* Work with the student next to you. Explain the statement below: "Religion is a matter of faith."

## *Exercise* 7. Translate the underlined sentences.

# UNIT 2 Religion in the USA and Great Britain

#### *Exercise 1.* Work in pairs to answer these questions:

- Why is the USA considered to be the land of many faiths?
- The representatives of what faiths can be found in the USA?
- Are there any established or government-favored religions in the USA?

#### *Exercise 2.* Guess what the following words and word combinations mean:

establishment of religion; personal matter; religious preference; Christian nation; to outnumber; Protestant; Roman Catholic; non-Christian group; Islamic; Buddhism; Hinduism; immigrant; majority religion; public educational institution; religious study; the Bible; synagogue; direct subsidy.

#### *Exercise 3.* Match correspondences:

amendment to the Constitution	обучение религии
religious denomination	добровольное пожертвование
religious congregation	приверженец, последователь
adherent	религиозная группа
religious instruction	поправка к Конституции
voluntary donation	конгрегация, религиозное братство

# *Exercise 4.* Read the text. Which answer A, B or C best fits each space? Text 1

#### **RELIGION IN THE USA**

The freedom to choose his or her own religious faith and (1)... according to individual (2)... is the right of every American. The first amendment to the Constitution of the United States says: "Congress shall (3)... no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." People in every state have the same freedom to worship.

For most Americans religion is a personal matter not usually discussed in everyday conversation. <u>The (4)... majority practice their faith quietly in (5)...</u> <u>manner they choose</u> – as members of one of the traditional religious denominations, as participants in nondenominational congregations, or as individuals (6)... join no organized group. <u>However Americans choose to exercise their faith, they are a spiritual people. Nine out of ten Americans express some religious preference, and approximately 70 percent are members of religious congregations.</u>

America is largely a Christian nation. Protestants (7)... other religious groups: 140 million list themselves as Protestants, 62 million are Roman Catholics, and four million are in the Eastern Orthodox Church. The most (8)... non-Christian group is the Jews, with 5 million

members of the Jewish faith. The Islamic (9)... also has 5 million adherents, many of whom are African-American converts. The number of mosques in the United States has doubled in the last 15 years. <u>Buddhism and Hinduism are growing with the arrival of immigrants from countries where these are the majority religions</u>.

No public educational institution in the USA can give religious instruction, (10)... the constitutional separation of church and state. But this does not (11)... teaching the history of religion and (12)... courses in many schools. (13)... children and adults attend classes in religious study provided by religious groups. Each week radio and television programs of a religious nature are presented by (14)... faiths. The Bible (15)... one of the most popular books in America; about nine million are sold or distributed each year.

Support of the churches, mosques and synagogues comes from voluntary donations by their members. The government gives no direct subsidy to any faith.

1	A. to believe	B. to worship	C. to support
2	A. conscience	B. freedom	C. attitudes
3	A. do	B. produce	C. make
4	A. big	B. vast	C. broad
5	A. however	B. whenever	C. whatever
6	A. who	B. whose	C. which
7	A. increase	B. exceed	C. outnumber
8	A. remarkable	B. outstanding	C. prominent
9	A. church	B. faith	C. congregation
10	A. out of	B. because of	C. from
11	A. preclude	B. include	C. interrupt
12	A. corresponding	B. concerned	C. related
13	A. both	B. as well as	C. as
14	A. different	B. various	C. similar
15	A. leaves	B. stays	C. remains

#### *Exercise 5.* Read the text carefully to answer the questions:

- 1. What does the first amendment to the Constitution say?
- 2. What is Americans' attitude towards religion?
- 3. What religions form a Christian group? A non-Christian group?
- 4. Why don't public educational institutions give religious instruction?
- 5. How can Americans gain knowledge of the history of religion?
- 6. Who supports churches, mosques and synagogues in the USA?

#### *Exercise 6.* Sum up the contents of the text using the key words:

Religious faith, to worship, individual conscience, the first amendment, the establishment of religion, free exercise, personal matter, to express religious

preference, religious denominations, religious congregations, Christian nation, to outnumber, to be members of, adherents, mosques, arrival of immigrants, to give religious instruction, to preclude, to attend classes, to remain, voluntary donations, direct subsidy.

## *Exercise* 7. Translate the underlined sentences from Text 1 into Russian.

Alexander Nevsky Cathedral (Nizhny Novgorod)

St.Peter's Church (Manhattan)





*Exercise 8.* Study the structures in the table below. Use them to compare Russia and the USA.

## Surf the Internet for information, if necessary.

- What religions are practiced in Russia and the USA?
- What is the attitude to religion in these countries?

Similarities	Differences
Like in Russia, in America	Unlike Russians, Americans
seem to have a lot in common	differ slightly /differ considerably
similar/ identical (e.g., religious	different ( <i>e.g.</i> , religious denominations)
denominations)	
Both Russians and Americans	In contrast, Americans
Neither Russians nor Americans	Americans while Russians

# *Exercise 9.* Read the text and notice one or two things you did not know. Compare your ideas with those of your fellow students.

### Text 2

The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution sounds straightforward, but at times it is difficult even for American constitutional scholars to draw a distinct line between government and religion in the United States. Students in public schools may not pray publicly as part of the school day, yet sessions of the U.S. Congress regularly begin with a prayer by a minister. Cities may not display a Christmas crèche on public property, but the slogan "In God We Trust" appears on U.S. currency, and money given to religious institutions can be deducted from one's income for tax purposes. Students who attend church-affiliated colleges may receive federal loans like other students, but their younger siblings may not receive federal monies specifically to attend religious elementary or secondary schools.



A Christmas crèche

# *Exercise 10.* Read the article and explain its title. Text 3

#### THE CHURCH IN MODERN BRITAIN – TO BE OR NOT TO BE?

I don't know if you go to church – and it's none of my business. But I assume that you probably know that the traditional church in Britain is in trouble.

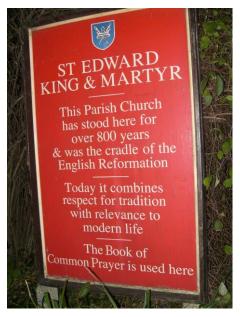
What is its problem? Or perhaps we should ask, is there a problem? Britain has become a post-Christian society. Most people in Britain aren't concerned about the church's problems. They aren't hostile. They just couldn't care less.

As attendance continues to decline, some analysts have prophesied that Christianity, already reduced to the level of a "minority life style option", is dying. If they are right, the traditional denominations will have disappeared by 2030.

The author of this article is not beholden to any church, sect or denomination. But we do have a deep commitment to seeing the Christian faith not just surviving, but thriving in this country. For that to happen, we need churches – healthy churches, filled with dedicated, reasonable people who can put the spiritual needs of others ahead of their personal agendas.

Churches are not very good at doing that. Instead of reaching out to a world that is losing the knowledge of God, we Christians seem preoccupied with glaring suspiciously at society and each other from behind denominational barricades.

Meanwhile, those whose job is to study these things tell us the tide is going out. We need to understand the problems. We need to analyze the options and choose the right solution, if indeed there is one. And we need to ask "What can we do to help?"



Cambridge, UK

## **Getting It Going**

Progressive church leaders recognize unless their churches move with the times they will become museum pieces. An average of 1500 people, many of them committed "pillars" in their congregations, leave the traditional denominations every week. That's 200+ a day! Historian Callum Brown has declared that "Britain is showing the world how religion as we have known it can die".

A frighteningly large percentage of British people have lost all contact with religion. It is estimated that 40% of the population have never been

in a church except for the "rites of passage" like weddings, funerals (less all the time) and baptisms. Church buildings are as unfathomable and inaccessible to them as an exclusive gentlemen's club in Piccadilly. That, say forward-thinking leaders, must change.

They are willing to use almost any means to show that the church is a relevant and even a fun place to be. So we have contemporary Christian music, Bible video games, trendy vicars and a church made a bouncy castle.

Are these kinds of things the answer, or just gimmicks? Do they build the church or undermine it? "We must move with the times", plead the progressives. We must do whatever is necessary to be relevant. Fire the organist and bring in the band. Hide the Hymnals – download the latest pop hymns and project them on the wall. Yes, even if it means covering the stained-glass window. In fact, we need to get out of that gloomy, draughty old building and move to the shopping mall. If people won't come to church, take the church to them.

Yeah but – there is always a "yeah but" about these things – doesn't the Bible say that the church should come out of the world? So does it make sense to endorse

the materialistic culture? Does an informal, folksy gathering in a coffee shop count as a "real church"? Surely Jesus said we were to take up our crosses not croissants.

(O. Cronin)

#### *Exercise 11.* Answer the questions.

1. Why does the author believe that the traditional English Church is in trouble now?

2. What are the reasons for so many people to leave the traditional denominations?

3. What can Church leaders do to make people more religious?

4. Does the author agree that a trendy Church will be able to attract more parishioners?

*Exercise 12.* Open Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 "Phrases Used in Discussion". Discuss the following in pairs or small groups:

- What is better for a state: to have an established, government-favored religion or not to support any of the religions?

- Is separation of church and state possible?

#### Exercise 13. Translate from Russian into English.

1. Отделение церкви от государства является основным принципом политического устройства страны. В соответствии с этим принципом (to keep with the principle), правительственные деньги нельзя использовать для поддержания деятельности церкви, чтение молитв в государственных школах запрещено.

2. Американцы – религиозная нация. Около 60% американцев являются прихожанами церкви или членами религиозной группы. Более 40% регулярно посещают церковные службы.

3. Атеизм никогда не пользовался большой популярностью в Америке. Люди, не придерживающиеся никаких религиозных убеждений, скорее отнесут себя к агностикам (agnostics), т.е. людям, которые не знают, существует ли Бог или нет, чем к атеистам, людям, которые убеждены (to have a strong conviction), что Бога нет.

## UNIT 3 World Religions

#### *Exercise 1*. Work in pairs to answer these questions:

- Why is our country often referred to as multi-faith?
- What world religions are there?
- Which of them are there in our country?

#### Exercise 2. Translate and learn the derivatives:

worship (v) – worship (n) – worshipper adhere – adherence – adherent convert (v) – convert (n) – conversion distribute – distributor – distribution – distributive donate – donation – donor subsidy – subsidize

#### *Exercise 3.* Match the synonyms below:

adherent	about
individual conscience	religion
to express a preference	nation
faith	religious
to practice one's faith	to consider oneself
to preclude	mostly
largely	to exercise one's faith
spiritual	private conscience
approximately	birth and upbringing
(a) people	to claim a preference
to list oneself	supporter
background	to prevent from

# *Exercise 4.* Use some of the synonyms instead of the underlined words in the sentences:

1. The United States as a nation was founded and formed <u>mostly</u> by Protestants, who remain a powerful national group.

2. Americans are <u>a highly religious nation</u>.

3. Nearly every <u>religion</u> in the world has <u>adherents</u> or organized institutions in the United States.

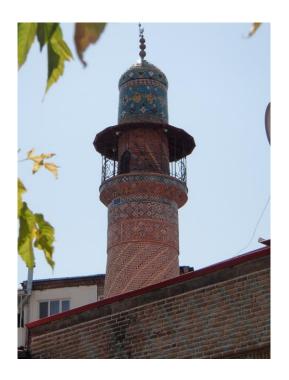
4. <u>About</u> 60% of Americans are members of a church, synagogue or other religious group, though many identify with various religions because of their <u>birth or</u> <u>upbringing</u>.

5. Prominent Hindu religious retreats and spiritual centers where people practice their faith exist both in cities and <u>rural areas.</u>

6. The Black Muslim movement has <u>supporters</u> in most African-American communities.

7. On national surveys, nearly 90% of U.S. adults claim a religious preference.

8. While growing up, 68% of adults say they attend classes in <u>religious</u> <u>instruction</u>, and 60% <u>consider themselves</u> a member of some religious organization.



Exercise 5.	Complete the	chart. Use a	dictionary, if	necessary.
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Person	Adjective	Religion
		Christianity
	Protestant	
Catholic		
	Orthodox	
		Judaism
	Islamic, Muslim	
Buddhist		
	Hindu	

	Who / worshipped?	Where? (temple/ place)	Who? (priest)	Holidays/ celebrations rituals, etc.
Buddhism	woromppeur			
Christianity				
Hinduism				
Islam				
Judaism				
Shinto				

*Exercise 6*. Complete the chart. Surf the Internet if necessary.



*Exercise 7.* Speak about one of the world religions using the information from the completed chart.

## UNIT 4 Cults and Sects

# *Exercise 1.* Read the abridged entries from *A Dictionary of Sociology* by Gordon Marshall. What are the differences between cults and sects?

**Cult** In the anthropological meaning, a cult is a set of practices and beliefs of a group, in relation to a local god. In sociology, it is a small group of religious activists, whose beliefs are typically syncretic, esoteric, and individualistic. Although it is related to the concept of a *sect*, the cult is not in Western society associated with mainstream Christianity. As a scientific term, it is often difficult to dissociate the idea of a cult from its commonsense pejorative significance, and it does not have a precise scientific meaning.

**Sect** The sociology of religion developed a model of religious organization which is referred to as the 'church-sect typology'. The church is <...> a large, bureaucratic organization with a ministry or priesthood. It develops a formal orthodoxy, ritualistic patterns of worship, and recruits its members through socialization rather than <...> conversion. By contrast, the sect is a small group which recruits its members by conversion, and which adopts a radical stance towards the state and society.

Contemporary sociologists have modified this typology by identifying the denomination as an organization that is mid-way between the sect and the church, and by defining various sub-types of the sect. ... These sub-types have different beliefs, methods of recruitment, and attitudes towards the world.

# *Exercise 2.* Check the meaning and pronunciation of the words in your dictionary. Put one of the words into each gap.

profess (v.)	fertile (adj.)	commit (v.)	noninterference (n.)
cult (n.)	prey (v.)	existence (n.)	solicit (v.)
sect (n.)	cause (v.)	adjustment (n.)	preach (v.)
Tort			

#### Text

America has always been a (1) ground for new religions. Because of its tradition of (2) in religious matters, it has provided a comfortable home for many small (3) from overseas. Some of them are considered to be religious (4) as they (5) extremist beliefs and tend to glorify a founding figure.

Religious cults usually (6) \_\_\_\_\_ on confused young people, separating them from their families at a time when their judgment is weakest. They provide support networks for young people with (7) \_\_\_\_\_ problems or low self esteem. The most famous cult group for many years was the Unification Church run by the Korean Dr. Sung Myung Moon. Thousands of young "Moonies" would go door to door selling flowers and (8) money for the church, sleeping in vans or communal dormitories and (9) the sect's teachings on the street. In controversial cases, parents had to kidnap and "de-program" their own children to save them from the cult.

Other cults have from time to time (10) shocking events such as mass suicides. In 1997, for example, 39 members of the "Heavens Gate" organization (11) suicide together in an event designed to coincide with the arrival of the *Hale-Bopp* comet, which they interpreted as their signal to leave the earthly (12).

#### *Exercise 3.* Answer the questions.

- What religious cults are mentioned in the text?

- Why, according to the text, may young people join a sect or cult?

- What, in your opinion, should be done to prevent the spread of extremist beliefs?

#### *Exercise 4.* Work in pairs. Find the odd word out.

1. sect – denomination – congregation – cult

2. believer – worshipper – prayer – convert

3. mosque – monastery – church – synagogue

4. Catholicism – Protestantism – the Eastern Orthodox Church – Judaism

	0 0 0
религия/ вера	первая поправка к Конституции
личное дело	запретить свободное вероисповедание
религиозная нация	конгрегации/ религиозные братства
последователи	конституционное разделение церкви и государства
мечеть	посещать занятия по изучению религии
обучение религии	не давать прямых субсидий
Библия	добровольные пожертвования?

#### Exercise 5. Look through Units 1-4. What is the English for the following?

#### Exercise 6. Translate from Russian into English.

1. В США проживают последователи почти всех мировых религий. Религиозные институты Америки обладают большой властью и оказывают влияние на социальную и политическую жизнь страны.

2. Из-за традиции невмешательства в вопросы религии США всегда представляли благодатную почву для возникновения религиозных сект.

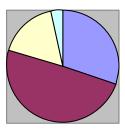
3. Религиозные культы могут представлять огромную опасность для общества, если члены этих групп придерживаются экстремистских взглядов.

# UNIT 5 Presenting the Findings

### Exercise 1. Study the pie-chart in Figure 1 carefully. Focus on:

1) the theme it deals with; 2) where and when the survey was conducted.

Figure 1. Survey: Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about the Bible? (1996, the USA)



- The Bible is the actual word of God and to be taken literally 30.2%
- The Bible is the inspired word of God but not everything in it should be taken literally, word for word 49.5%
- The Bible is an ancient book of fables, legends, history, and moral precepts recorded by men 17%

**Other 3.3%** 

## *Exercise 2.* Follow the steps below to describe the pie-chart.

1. Decide what main points you will have to cover and what figures you should include.

2. What conclusion can you make?

3. Decide what tense(s) you should use.

4. Revise the vocabulary relevant to the theme. What words or phrases can you use to avoid repetition?

# *Exercise 3.* Study the words and phrases from the list. Use some of them in your description.

- to demonstrate/ to show

- to do research/ to conduct a survey

- ...% of the sample/ ...% of the respondents

- according to.../ as we can see from the chart,  $\dots$ 

- to report/ to state/ to claim

*Exercise 4.* Write a report (150-180 words) for a University lecturer describing the information in the pie-chart in Figure 1.

## **APPENDIX 1**

## AGREEMENT AND CONFIRMATION

I fully (quite) agree with you	That's it
I side with you	That's right
I fall in with you	That's true
I can't agree more	That's just it
I'm of the same opinion	That's the thing
It goes without saying	Quite so
Beyond all doubt	Exactly so
There's no denying that	Naturally so
That's just I was going to say	Indeed so
	Absolutely so

### DISAGREEMENT AND PROTEST

Not exactly	On the contrary
Not really	Just the reverse
I shouldn't say so	Just the other way out
I'm afraid, you are mistaken	Far from it
I'm afraid, you are wrong	Nothing of the kind
Oh, but you've got it all wrong, I'm afraid	
I disagree with you on this point	
I differ from you	
I don't side with you	
I don't think so	
Do you really think so?	

## SUPPOSITION, DOUBT, HESITATION, UNCERTAINTY

Perhaps (not)	In a way
It's hard to tell	It looks like that
You can never tell	It seems so
I rather doubt	I'm in two minds
I'm not (quite) sure	It all depends
I should say so	
Who knows?	

# APPENDIX 2 PHRASES USED IN DISCUSSION

- 1. To begin with...
- 2. I will start by saying that...
- 3. I shall mainly concentrate / focus on...
- 4. It is common knowledge that...
- 5. For all I know... / As far as I know (remember, can see) ...
- 6. If I'm not mistaken, ...
- 7. Speaking about...
- 8. My own feeling (impression, opinion, viewpoint) is that...
- 9. What really matters is...
- 10. My point is that.../ I mean to say...
- 11. I'd like to make it clear that...
- 12. The point I wish to stress is...
- 13. I don't want to press my point, but/ You are free to disagree with me, but
- 14. To some extent you are right
- 15. That doesn't sound convincing enough / That sounds very doubtful to me.
- 16. I suppose it's too much to say that...
- 17. That's all very well, but...
- 18. Much depends on who (when, how etc.)
- 19. On the one hand.../ On the other hand...
- 20. On the surface of it.... However, ...

21. It must be noted that.../ In this connection it is interesting to consider one more aspect

22. You are wandering from the point/ Keep to the point/ Don't get away from the point

23. May I have my say? / Let me have my say

24. Does it make any difference? / It makes all the difference

- 25. Let me see / Let me think
- 26 There are many pros and cons here
- 27. I don't catch what you are saying
- 28. To sum it up.../ In short...
- 29. Let's round off

30. I would like to summarize the discussion by saying that.../ In conclusion I'd like to say...

# APPENDIX 3 STRUCTURES FOR SUMMARIZING

## To start with

The title of the article is... / The article is entitled The article (text / paragraph) is devoted to... describes ... / deals with.../ focuses on... is based on... is concerned (with such issues as) ... To sum up the contents and introduce the information The author describes (the events in.../ the theory of  $\ldots$ / etc.) tackles (the problem(s) of .../ etc) considers (such issues as ...) outlines / lists (the factors.../ the reasons/ etc.) stresses (the importance of.../ the differences between.../ etc.) emphasizes that... focuses on ... reveals a great interest in ... expresses his/her concern about... states that... mentions sth views sth as ... argues / believes / considers / supposes that... compares (contemporary approaches to...) speculates on ... defines / gives a definition of / offers his(her) own definition... refers to (the most recent studies into.../ etc.) To refer to the source of information According to the article, .../ As it is said in the article... As stated here... As far as the author is concerned... In the author's opinion, .../ In his(her) mind ... Linking your text

- also/ too/ as well/ Moreover,  $\ldots$  / What is more,  $\ldots$ / More than that,  $\ldots$ /Besides,  $\ldots$ 

- First,... / Next,... / Then,.../ Further... / Finally.../ In conclusion,...

- However, .../ Nevertheless, .../ whereas...

- Despite smth.../ in spite of smth...

- On the one hand... / - On the other hand...

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## Социология и религия: Сборник текстов и заданий по английскому языку

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