

Wallace, Anthony F.C.

1956 Revitalization Movements. *American Anthropologist* 58(2):264-281.

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Week 2

In this article, Wallace introduces the concept of revitalization and describes uniformly-found processual phases of revitalization movements. Many movements, nativistic movements, reform movements, cargo cults, religious revivals, messianic movements, utopian community, sect formation, mass movement, social movement, revolution, and charismatic movements are types of revitalization movements. Though they differ in individual and social salience, they are all characterized by a uniform process and the motive of constructing a more satisfying cultural system.

The processual structure of revitalization movements include a 1) a steady state, 2) a period of individual stress, 3) a period of cultural distortion, and 4) a period of revitalization. Within the revitalization period six major tasks occur: 1) "mazeway" reformulation, 2) communication to others, 3) organization of followers, 4) adaptation to contention and conflict, 5) cultural transformation, and 6) routinization of the new culture system. When this occurs, the revitalization creates a new steady state.

Though process is basically the same, revitalizations vary in structure. Revitalizations can seek to revive traditional culture, they can seek to import a foreign cultural system, or they can seek a never before seen utopia. They can be achieved either through secular or religious means or start off as one type but then proceed with the means of the other. The degree of nativism can vary from movement to movement as well as within a movement processually. Finally movement participants vary in their ability to gauge the effectiveness of their revitalization campaigns and ability to strategize against contention thus affecting success or failure.