

RELIGION AND GLOBALISATION: A COMPARATIVE AND HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

1. Religion: the original globalizer

When we talk of modernity we refer to many things, of which one is secularization and another is the use of rational, impersonal criteria to decide, allocate, adjudicate and evaluate. One sense of secularization is the application of these criteria to the religious field: modern culture does not necessarily encourage disbelief, but it is said to encourage rational belief, that is belief based on doctrine, on principles, on texts. . This is one way of depicting secularization. Yet religion is plainly, for most people, not a set of beliefs at which they arrive by rational reflection from first principles, but rather a set of symbolic systems which confer identity and mark out social and ethnic and other boundaries, and of rituals which mark crucial moments in the life cycle, and in the daily, weekly and annual cycles, as well as providing powerful emotional and meta-social mechanisms for the resolution of psychological and social tension.

We see this in the institutions of the Church of England an example of religion borrowing the rationality of modern democratic culture,. But we also see that, unlike the state, which has retained a monopoly on the rule of law and the use of force, the nominally dominant institutionalized churches in the West have not succeeded in attaining a monopoly of the ritual life of society. There is always, in all societies, an undercurrent or counter-current of 'popular' religion which takes care of the sacred in a manner which does not fit in with the impersonal culture outlined above. In these count-currents authority is embodied in persons to whom special powers are attributed: they are not Anglican clergy or Catholic priests, but rather *charismatic* leaders who have sprung as if from nowhere, and who exercise the prerogatives of their office not so long as a Church recognizes (and pays) them, but so long as they retain a following. Alternatively, popular religion can survive and flourish within the formal framework of the major institutionalized churches, organized around the devotion to particular saints or shrines to which supernatural powers are attributed, especially powers to heal and powers to dispel misfortune.

Now if we allow that ritual cycles and the symbolic representation of the forces of health and illness, good fortune and misfortune, are markers of identity and difference separating peoples, ethnic groups and primary collectivities in general, and if we also allow that rituals and symbols are the outward manifestations of embodied, as distinct from impersonal authority, we can begin to see why it is that conquest and colonialism, have almost invariably been associated with religious expansion and conflict. For to establish domination it is necessary to embody power, and to do so in a form which is comprehensible to the subject people. That much is evident enough from the history of all the great empires of the past. Since conquerors have no 'legal-rational' grounds for legitimizing their power over the conquered, religious/symbolic methods, which confer authority on their persons (independently of a set of principles) are a useful resource for the imposition of their power.

But what then of that contemporary form of conquest and colonization known under the deceptively peaceful word of globalization? For unlike the empires of the past, we have here a process in which all manner of frontiers (political, economic, cultural, religious) are apparently breached and even

reduced to nothing in the creation of a seamless web of market relations and of the legal and humanitarian institutions of capitalist democracy. In a globalized world of democratic capitalism, all authority is expected to be rational and impersonal, all economic agents to be optimizing automata, and religion a matter of private personal choice experienced in an institutional setting governed by the same democratic principles as the state itself.

The starting point of this chapter is that this picture is misleading, with respect not only to contemporary social experience, but rather to the model of globalization itself. And the reason why it is misleading is not that the advance of this impersonal secularized culture is merely taking its time, or that it is penetrating some parts of the world at a slower pace than others, or even that the threats it poses to ways of life produces a flight back into 'fundamentalism', irredentism and similar all-embracing loyalties. Rather the reason is that the life of ritual and symbolism which is at the heart of popular religion is itself redrawing frontiers all the time, that numerable forms of popular religion are straddling or violating cultural, ethnic and national frontiers, and in the process are redrawing new frontiers, because ritual or religious communities cannot exist without drawing frontiers.

Globalization is therefore by no means a process which moulds all the cultures which meet within its dynamic into a single homogeneous whole. Indeed it is almost as if the contrary were true: globalization may bring about the unpacking of local cultural complexes, but in the process it creates multifarious local identities and criss-crossing frontiers, so that diversity comes to rule more than ever before, even if similarities across social and spatial distances also become ever more evident. To illustrate: although millions of Africans came under the influence of English, Scottish and American missionaries in the 19th and 20th centuries, that is not to say that they exchanged one religious package for another: on the contrary, the packages themselves were reshaped, and not only in Africa. That is why African Christianity, even when it is brought back to the colonial metropolis by post-colonial migrants, is so different from any British religious institution – as witness the numerous Caribbean Pentecostal Churches, Nigerian 'Aladura' Churches or branches of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa in Britain.

Religion breaks through frontiers and in the same process throws up new frontiers because religions ancient and modern, monotheist, polytheist and totemic, with their apparatus of ritual practices and internal, proprietary, self-sufficient codes, are demarcators, markers. When religion crosses frontiers or breaks through barriers, even when it does so in the most violent manner, the outcome cannot be the abolition of one set of religious beliefs and practices by another. In economics the term does mean homogenization in the sense of drawing far-flung agents into a competitive world market, and although that notion also needs a great deal of refinement we can take for granted that it does pull down barriers to trade and competition. That is a recent phenomenon: the system shaped by European colonialism was based on mercantilist arrangements, carving up markets politically (as when colonial powers excluded other countries from trading with their colonies), not on free markets.

The history of the world before the explorers set out from Europe was of course a history of invasions and endless religious conquest and suppression, which accompanied political and military upheavals, so if the phrase 'religion as globalizer' is to have any analytic force, it must be underpinned by a concept of religious conquest and encounter which involves more than massacres

and the destruction of temples and idols, and by a concept of globalisation rooted in contemporary experience which, as sketched above, evokes not homogenisation but rather the rearrangement, and the multiplication, of social boundaries in ways which, at any particular point in time and space, criss-cross inherited borders and barriers, re-inventing them, removing them or indeed violently destroying them. It is a distinctive feature of the modern world that these rearrangements and reinventions are historicized, that is to say the people involved are made aware that they themselves have a place in history and a location in space as do the peoples with whom they enter into alliance or confrontation, and it is this location in time and place which goes to make up identity, in sociological terms. Likewise, in the process of borrowing, imposing and appropriating rituals, taboos, healing procedures, music, through religious conquest and encounter, there is, again, transmitted a 'theory'. The transmission of the apparatus of religion is accompanied by a will to appropriate and even domesticate the powers and virtues of the invading, or conquered, other, and this requires a 'theory' about who the 'others' are, where they come from and whence they derive their powers or their uniqueness, in short a theory of their history – and of course a concept of history, of origins and of social causation is a feature of modernity.

2. The concept of popular religion and the cosmopolitan movement of cultural globalization

If religion demarcates adherents of different systems, its institutionalization also divides those adherents and their modes of enacting, performing and expressing their belonging. In every day language this is the difference, say, between the regulated procedures at a Catholic mass or Anglican service led by a qualified and certified priest and the less regulated or even unregulated, but equally symbolic and liminal (i.e. boundary-maintaining) festivities at local Saint's days, pilgrimage sites, or conceivably during the Christmas shopping season. Among contemporary highly institutionalized religions, Catholicism is distinguished by the proliferation of popular forms of celebration and worship, especially in Italy, the Iberian peninsula and Latin America. It is noticeable, at least to the casual observer, that English (not Irish!) religion, whether Catholic or Anglican, has hitherto been somewhat impoverished in this respect, though that may be changing in the Church of England. Yet still, the popular version, the version unregulated by the church hierarchy, is there, if only embedded in commercial life, as in the ritual of present-giving at Christmas which as an annual family occasion retains at least a vestige of religiously ritual character by demarcating identity. In Islam the co-existence of institutional religious rhythms centred on mosques and their personnel exists in tension with an infinity of curers, seers, mystics (or *sufis*), and in North Africa classically the Islam of the interior, centred on the cult of saints coexists with the more text-based professionally led Islam of the cities - a pattern whose early manifestations were already described by the medieval philosopher of history Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) and more recently by Ernest Gellner. This pattern is repeated in North African Judaism and, albeit in different forms, in European Judaism. In this last the late 18th century witnessed a mass revival of mysticism in tension both with the more text-based rational approach of classic centres of study (especially in Vilna, today Vilnius., the capital of Lithuania) and also with the, again more rational but also more ecclesiastical, structures born out of the influence of the Enlightenment on Jewish life, thought, aspirations and communal structures (REFS HERE TO KATZ, DRESDEN ETC). In the Latin (Spain, Portugal, Italy and the Americas), Catholicism is divided in this dualistic fashion even while remaining within the liturgical and institutional framework of the Church. In Protestantism, evangelical (popular) tendencies have a history of breaking away, in innumerable, often fissiparous sects, while the Church of England itself is today divided between the erudite (or

'liberal') element which controls the establishment and an increasingly vociferous evangelical movement rising from the grass roots. But in the context of contemporary globalisation, this movement could be interpreted in a different perspective, as an extension of a vast multinational charismatic movement which bypasses the -popular divide in a historically new shift, to which we shall return later. The evangelicals would thus appear less as the popular counterpart to erudite Anglicanism than as a foreign body which has infiltrated or inserted itself within the Church of England, using the institution and its resources for purposes and in a manner ultimately destined, or designed, to detach it from its heritage.

To return to Catholicism, it is extremely important to relate the dialectic of the erudite and the popular within its vast and elaborate institutional edifice to its evident global reach. Ever since the 16th century Counter-Reformation, which represented a response to Luther and Protestantism but coincided with the final stage of the Reconquest of Spain (retaking the Kingdom of Granada where Islam had had such a glorious history) and also with the Conquest of the Americas, the culture of Catholicism has had to deal with 'the other', and the result has been quite different from the corresponding experience of Protestantisms of all kinds, even though Protestantism has also been intimately bound up with colonialism, especially in Africa.

The Catholic Church was caught up in and even a party to the cruelty of the Spanish and Portuguese Conquest of the Americas. But within the Church at a very early stage dissidents spoke out against the brutality of Conquest and despoliation, and the economic and social subjection of the indigenous peoples, the majority of whom perished as a result of epidemics of diseases against which they had no immunity. As the Church established its institutional presence, however, the conversion of indigenous peoples produced a vast array of festivals and local organizations under whose auspices there developed cults of saints not dissimilar from those which already existed in the Iberian peninsula. In addition, beliefs in spirits, in supernatural entities governing peoples' lives, inherited from pre-Columbian civilizations in the Andean countries and in Mesoamerica, persisted. Catholicism tried to make sense of this, retaining the idea that a people's identity was encapsulated in their own religious life, and dissidents within the Church claimed that if different peoples practised different religions, maybe this was their way of worshipping the same universal God. The full implications of such an idea were not of course followed up, but ever since the violent 16th century campaigns to destroy the political and institutional apparatus for indigenous religion, in a manner which tolerated the intermingling of indigenous and officially accepted belief. The greatest of all 'defenders of the Indians', the Dominican friar and Bishop Bartolomé de las Casas (1484-1566), had gone so far as to say that the indigenous Mexicans' practice of human sacrifice, far from work of the Devil, was their way of worshipping the same God as the Christians, and to denounce the Spanish conquerors who were massacring them in the name of Christianity as violators of the God's laws. A century later in 1648 the Mexican Church 'invented' what was to become the most popular and deeply rooted cult in the Americas, that of the Virgin of Guadalupe, based on the apparition of the Virgin to a humble Mexican Indian, said to have taken place in 1531, in the immediate aftermath of the Conquest of Mexico (1519-21). The core of the story of Juan Diego's vision of the Virgin of Guadalupe is twofold: that the Virgin appeared not to a Bishop or priest or to a Spaniard, but to an unlettered Indian, and that the same Indian was able to show evidence of a miracle to the Archbishop of Mexico (at that time a very powerful secular figure as well as the Head of the Church in the vast colony of New Spain) and convince him to erect a church in the place where she had appeared. The Indian overcame the Spaniard and the illiterate overcame the educated, in a story which has several hallmarks of a myth of origin: extreme brevity, the

establishment of a quasi-kinship relationship between a human and a divine being, and both the contestation and the confirmation of a politico-religious institution. This is the founding myth of the Mexican Church – one of the most thriving in the world in terms of the devotion and religious participation of its followers – and of the Mexican nation, and the Virgin of Guadalupe has even been declared ‘Queen and Patron of the Americas’ by Papal authority.

So Catholicism, for all the Church’s obsession with dogma, is a plural, multifarious, inclusive culture able to absorb and refashion local cultures worldwide in an unending dialectic of the erudite, or institutional, and the popular. The two feed off one another, borrowing and co-opting elements, while in the process the erudite theorizes, contextualizes and tries to mould or control the popular. In recent times this relationship has been politicized under the influence of the Theology of Liberation, which arose in the 1960s among Catholic – but also Protestant - theologians initially in Latin America, as a critique of what was seen as the Church’s role in defending oppressive social structures. At first the Theology of Liberation taught that ‘superstition’ was a mechanism of blinding the masses to their oppression, but before long theologians of this school began (like Bartolomé de las Casas) to see popular religion as an expression of the untutored devotion of the masses which, because of their innocence, could be seen as a true expression of the divine. In addition, though, they have added a political element which sees popular religion as a force for social change and popular empowerment. The influence of this current has reached the official doctrine of the Catholic Church, albeit in diluted form, for example in the ‘preferential option for the poor’ and it was palpable in the campaigns against apartheid in South Africa led by Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

It is above all Catholicism which embodies a ‘cosmopolitan’ version of religious globalization, in which a religious culture, identity and institution expands across cultural and political frontiers accompanied by a ‘theory’ of the other, by the very modern idea that religious practices are embedded spatially and temporally, that they express the location of a people in time and space and that changing others’ beliefs requires an understanding of that embeddedness. There is even a Theology of Inculturation, which argues for the explicit recognition and incorporation of non-Western rituals and symbols in Christian celebration among non-Western peoples.

More broadly the cosmopolitan variant of cultural globalization is repeated in a variety of contemporary, and each time the distinctive and ironic features of ‘theorizing’ and contextualizing appear. Examples include the adoption in Europe and North America of Eastern religions, with all the accompanying literature and philosophical reformulations, and the creation of Buddhist institutions in the West or in the style of modern institutions. The borrowing happens in the opposite direction as well: the emergence in India of ‘Hindu fundamentalism’ or Hindu nationalism, could be seen as the institutionalization of a religion which had never before been institutionalized save around village or neighbourhood temples, and which had never before had a doctrine in the Western sense of a coherent, closed philosophical system developed by literate experts. Likewise international campaigns to preserve indigenous cultures lead inevitably to their incorporation into the international culture of modernity, as their leaders take part in the life of international institutions and in the culture of the *NGO* movement, through organizations such as OXFAM, Christian Aid and Survival International, and thus adopt the practice of theorizing and contextualizing their own ‘other’ traditions.

3. A note on the approach taken in this paper to religion and globalization.

Hitherto this chapter has concentrated on the way in which, from the time of the first European colonial venture, that of Spain in the Americas, religion has been indissolubly intertwined with the redrawing of frontiers of all kinds, and I have used the word ‘cosmopolitan’ to describe how the theme of difference, and of the shaping of difference, has been central to the expansion of the three great monotheistic traditions across the globe. I also ended by noting that in the contemporary world it is not only Western religions which are spreading in this way.

But it is now time to shift our attention from difference to sameness, from movements and cultures which theorize and contextualize the other to contemporary movements which seem to transcend the popular-erudite dialectic which underlies that contextualization and construct truly global religious cultures. Although this tendency fits in with globalization as most commonly conceived by sociologists, the approach adopted here still diverges from theirs, and it is therefore necessary to explain that divergence.

The most representative writing in sociology on the relationship between globalization and religion is that of Roland Robertson and Peter Beyer. The following features of their work are the most relevant:

- The understanding that globalization is an extension across national boundaries of the process of modernization applied to almost all societies by mainstream sociology since the Second World War
- The assumption that ‘societies’ are basic units of analysis whose boundaries coincide with those of nation states
- The assumption that religious revivals are an expression of traditional identities and a reaction against modernity, and that only within the culture and self-understanding of a modern society can there exist a concept of tradition
- The assumption that there is a distinction between private and public religious spheres in modern societies
- An understanding of the task of sociological analysis as a broad-brush characterization of the prevalent habits, values and structures in societies

Because it does not deal with points of friction, conflict and interweaving, this approach does not describe or explain how the changes brought about by globalization are qualitatively different from those which sociologists throughout the twentieth century have equated with modernity. Even when he attempts to deal with the specific relationship between religious change and globalization, Robertson resorts to broad generalities, referring for example to the ‘cultural pluralism which is itself a constitutive feature of the global circumstance’ (1992:61). His reference to the adoption of ‘culturally protectionist strategies’ which ‘may at least appear “fundamentalist”’ is not elaborated, and although he writes at some length about ‘the rise of wilful nostalgia’ as a consequence of globalization, he treats it as almost a mood, rather than as the source or symptom of changes in identity and in ethnic or other boundaries, with their attendant consequences for conflict and social structure. Despite the crucial recognition that a concept of tradition as a set of practices embedded in a social context, can only exist within modernity, there is no account of the sorts of ambiguity and mechanisms of domination and resistance which I have tried to deal with in drawing the

contrast between popular and erudite religion and explaining the dialectic which binds them, nor of the sometimes devastating changes which the clash and mutual assimilations of religious practices and rituals have wrought over the long history of colonialism and in today's post-colonial world.

Beyer for his part assumes that 'in pre-modern societies there was a close association between moral codes, group membership and religion', in other words that those societies have been solidary, unified and unchanging over centuries (1994:84), and although he recognizes the co-existence of 'great and little traditions' and of 'religion and superstition' in 'more complex older societies', he does so only as offshoots of the more unified moral/cosmological/religious framework of the elites. The conception of such a unified social order is another version of the monolithic, unchanging notion of 'traditional society' which has plagued sociology since its earlier days, and there is not even an allowance for *syncretism* – itself a contestable concept – let alone for the sort of dialectic described in the account of the 'popular-erudite' dialectic in this chapter. Furthermore, the notion of traditional society ignores a vast corpus of anthropological work on religion in pre-modern societies as well as in colonial societies – which are hard to fit into the traditional-modern dichotomy and are, after all, the locus of the expansion of Christianity and Islam across the globe in the 19th and 20th centuries, and thus of the shaping of today's worldwide religious arena.

The division between private and public religious spheres, which is central to Beyer's account, raises all sorts of difficulties, because at its core lies the view that religion is a set of moral and cosmological *beliefs* and that the translation of these beliefs into the practice of everyday life is a proper object of sociological analysis. In contrast I proceed on the understanding that religion exists *only* in the public sphere and that the issue of belief simply cannot be resolved: we cannot know how large collectivities come to make a connection between professed doctrines or ethical systems and their daily life and in any case religion has to be thought of in terms of the ways in which family life and life cycles are moulded, of ritual and symbolism – which can only exist in the public sphere, and – most importantly in the context of globalization, of the demarcation of collective identities which have no necessary relationship with the boundaries of nation states. The corresponding distinction drawn by Beyer between (private) 'function' and (public) 'performance' seems to me non-existent: the function of religion *is* performance, and religious belief is expressed in performative ways – such as collective recitations of prayers and doctrinal formulae. This is borne out by the English sociologist Grace Davie who describes her countrymen as possessing a 'vicarious' religion in the Church of England: they may not believe, they may not attend service, they may not know prayers or Biblical stories, but they remain attached to the Church of England as an institution, as a focus of ritual on important occasions, and as a source of undisputable moral pronouncements.

Analytically speaking, the approach adopted in this chapter differs from that of sociologists of globalization such as the two mentioned by its focus on the creation, reproduction and recreation of boundaries, especially between ethnic groups and religious collectivities, as well as other sorts of collectivities (such as the 'popular sectors' within a given social formation), and also on the overcoming or transcendence of boundaries. By focusing on boundaries we focus on the encounters where the cultural pluralism evoked by Robertson is translated into real social relationships, and real conflicts, over how to rule, how to heal, what authority to obey, and much besides.

Now to understand boundaries we must, within reason, avoid prejudging them: this is why national boundaries are not a suitable starting point, and why racial, ethnic and evidently religious

boundaries should not be described as if they were ready-made and to be taken for granted – though clearly this avoidance, if taken to extremes, can make any analysis impossible. Ready-made categories such as ‘Christian’ or ‘Jewish’ conceal vast differences, while similarities between religious activities operating under different ‘titles’ can be very striking – witness for example the convergence between Catholic Charismatics¹ and the deeply anti-Catholic Pentecostals, who, broadly speaking, come out of the Protestant tradition. Whatever differences one might rightly find between them they are as nothing compared to the differences between a Charismatic celebration and a mainstream Mass, or between a Pentecostal service and a ‘mainstream’ Anglican Sunday service. Since in Africa, in the Caribbean, and in Latin America, Pentecostals far outnumber mainstream, or ‘historical’ followers of Protestants, and since the growth of the Charismatic Renewal is currently being described like a hurricane thundering through the ranks and churches of Catholicism worldwide, these changing boundaries do make a difference.

So if globalization is a process in which cultural – and therefore also religious – ‘pluralism’ is constructed, it is to be understood at the points of friction and conversion, not by simply affirming that pluralism is a fact or a trend or a fashion. In addition there is a very important and frequently made observation which draws our attention to quite concrete ways in which the most newsworthy religious changes occurring in today’s world are quintessentially global – namely the transnational reach of *fundamentalist* and charismatic movements emerging out of the three great Western religious traditions, Judaism, Islam and Christianity which, for better or for worse, represent the most rapidly growing sectors within those traditions, and indeed within religion anywhere.

4. From the cosmopolitan heterogeneity to global homogeneity.: fundamentalist and charismatic movements arising from the traditions of the world religions.

The phrase at the head of this section has been formulated to refer principally to Islamic renewal – what the French call ‘integrism’ (by which they mean a religious code which encompasses and governs with its prescriptions the entire private and public life of individuals and the collectivity) and the Anglo-American world tends to refer to as Muslim fundamentalism; with the innumerable evangelical and charismatic churches, sects and tendencies descended from the Protestant tradition and associated with names such as the Assemblies of God; and with ultra-Orthodox Judaism – also described as ‘integrism’ by the French, whose followers are known as *haredim* (those who live in fear of God) or *chassidim* (the pious). These three varieties of movement represent radical departures from the traditions out of which they have grown – even the Jewish ultra-Orthodox despite of course their claims to be returning to the practices of their forefathers in every minute detail. They also stand out as the prime candidates for the place where religion meets globalization, for the following reasons:

- their organizations, systems of communication and training, and the communities they create are transnational in character
- their extraordinary ability to ‘plug in’ to local cultural practices and to incorporate them into their ritual and symbolic procedures, but without ‘theorizing’ them in the manner of the cosmopolitan co-optation and the dialectic of the erudite and the popular, and also an ability

¹ The Charismatic Renewal movement grew out of North American Catholic universities, reportedly (but not certainly) Marquette, in the 1960s. Its prayer meetings are marked by ecstasy and trance, it propagates divine healing and speaking in tongues, all very similar to Pentecostal services, save perhaps that Pentecostals are much more attached to fear of and deliverance from devils.

to provide a framework for coping with serious social ills among marginal or impoverished populations, again in a wide variety of cultural contexts

- they have an ability also to jump over existing political, linguistic and ethnic frontiers and to create transcultural communities of individuals without regard to these prior attachments
- their obsessive attention to the control of sexuality., especially female sexuality
- the emphasis on conversion as a crisis and rupture in the life of individuals.

Pentecostal churches are a movement, not a centralized international organization, yet no observer can fail to be struck by the extraordinary degree of similarity of liturgy, organization, ideology and ethic among Pentecostal churches in the most widely varying contexts – from Chile to China. This sounds as if it fits some ideas about globalization very well, yet it raises as many questions as it answers: it is much less surprising that commercial firms exhibit such similarities across cultural frontiers, because they operate in a ‘seamless’ world market, but religion is supposed to ‘fit in’ with inherited cultural traits. Sometimes mass conversions, especially in poor countries, are attributed to the persuasive power of global organizations (‘cultural imperialism’), but it is now widely recognized that such explanations are too simplistic and do no justice to the vast proportions of the phenomenon, and to Pentecostalism’s long history of cross-cultural transplantation. (GIVE SOME NUMBERS HERE)

Even in its early days, in what was then the seething frontier town of Los Angeles, Pentecostalism was a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic movement, drawing on black Americans, and the Mexican, European and Asian migrant communities for its following. Today one of the most striking features of the movement worldwide today is that in some countries (such as Nigeria and Ghana) it seems to appeal more to middle class groups, in others it is most visible among the poor and the very poor, but in all cases this is a matter of degree and the appeal is visible across the class spectrum. Pentecostalism in Latin America, and also in the Philippines (also a former Spanish colony with a strong Catholic identity) is particularly successful among the urban poor and among indigenous peoples, and this represents a very profound change after five centuries during which the dialectic relationship between the erudite and the popular within Catholicism has had an almost complete monopoly.

In Islam and Judaism the attachment to the inerrancy of the sacred text is similar especially in contemporary fundamentalist movements and communities. Both of these cultures – and their many sub-cultures and variants – have a past in which an erudite strand of learning has co-existed with a proliferation of healers and seers, especially in Islam. Modern Jewish fundamentalists are overwhelmingly focused on texts, however, and although their heritage in Eastern Europe (the *Chassidim* or ‘pious ones’) has a strong element of ecstatic prayer, that has tended to take second place in the post-Holocaust era to an institutionalization of learning, and of life-long learning. There is also within Judaism a mystical strand of more or less *Kabbalistic* inspiration, which was revived in Eastern Europe in the 18th century, but today tends on the whole to be bookish rather than experiential. In Islam likewise the renewal movements, led usually by lay people not by clergy

(except in Iran²) focus on the text of the Koran and are hostile towards the mystical-magical heritage of Sufism and the *marabouts*.

The international network of Pentecostalism operates in many ways: world-famous preachers, sometimes accompanied by ‘road show’ publicity and attracting enormous crowds to highly orchestrated rallies, travel the globe building up a mediatic presence for their practices of healing, exorcism and their encouragement of mass conversions. Churches use common manuals and texts for training preachers and pastors, and send missionaries away for long periods to establish branches in other countries. There is also now a growing pattern whereby local churches based or originated in countries such as Brazil, Mexico, Nigeria, Zimbabwe establish missions and then churches in other countries, often following migrants but often also extending their reach well beyond migrant communities notably the United States where an admittedly committed source claimed that there were 16,000 full-time missionaries from Africa, Asia and Latin America. This requires a more elaborate type of organization than that usually associated with Pentecostal churches and their characteristic grassroots approach to growth and organization.

Although Pentecostals preach a similar message worldwide, they have shown a remarkable ability to use imagery and symbolism drawn from local cultures, especially *possession cults*. In Brazil and West Africa this is particularly in evidence. The relationship is complicated by the fury with which Pentecostals attack the cults, branding them the work of the devil and predicting that their followers are condemned to eternal damnation, since the Pentecostal churches are also frequently known to borrow their own ideas about possession by devils and the language and imagery with they depict this possession, from the cults themselves. Where the cults deal with possession by spirits and entities who dictate a person’s life, and with elaborate esoteric cures and procedures to summon or dispel spirits of varying kinds, the Pentecostal preachers will conduct procedures to deliver people from these same spirits. This is not to say that both are ‘the same’ for they are not, but it does show that these Pentecostals recognize the efficacy of those spirits, and that from being possessed by spirits to having the Holy Spirit descend upon a person is not such a long step. The difference is that the Pentecostals, like other evangelicals, call upon individuals to change their lives, to adopt a life of austerity and devotion to the church – by for example attending service daily, giving up drinking, smoking and ‘licentious living’ – whereas in possession cults the medium or sorcerer retains control of the communication between the spirits and the humans whose destiny they control.

Pentecostals happen to be the fastest-growing contemporary ‘branch’ of evangelical Christianity, but they should be thought of as a tendency within a wider multinational and multicultural evangelical culture – even to call it a movement would give the impression that it is more organized than it is. The culture of evangelical Christianity was carried first by missionaries from England and Scotland to Africa in the early 19th century and from the beginning this transfer was marked by continuing attempts to wrest the symbols and meaning of their symbolic and ritual apparatus away from missionaries and colonial authorities: for example, indigenous Africans, impressed by the medical skills of missionaries, preferred to cast them in the role of healers – much to the dismay of some missionaries who saw their medicine as the application of science and wanted them to be convinced of the truth of their message. But the missionaries had, so to speak, only themselves to

² It should be noted, however, that the Iranian revolution is exceptional to this pattern: it is led by the established *Sh’ite* clergy – who are organized in a far more hierarchical fashion the *Sunni* clergy in most other Islamic countries – and thus is the contrary of a movement against or independent of the religious establishment.

blame, as they propagated the Bible and its innumerable stories of visions, miracles, Virgin Birth, incarnation, resuscitation from the dead and so on.

For indigenous Africans conversion also represented an upward social move and an aspiration to join the colonials' society, yet they found themselves barred from high office in the Church and it is not surprising therefore that in the early 20th century they established their own Christian or semi-Christian movements, either in messianic form in which rituals and taboos from the Old Testament were incorporated (as in the South African 'Zionist' churches) or in churches inspired by Black American missionaries who had broken away from churches which discriminated against them in the United States. Pentecostalism in Africa fits into this heritage even though it could not be said to be descended from it – but the briefly sketched background draws attention to the porosity of boundaries between ritual and symbolic systems: curiously, although evangelicals are very concerned to draw lines between themselves and 'the world' – the 'world' of earthly concerns and temptation – they also show themselves to be undogmatic and open in matters of liturgy and 'doctrine' – a matter to which they pay little attention, and which confuses those who think that conversion is a matter of believing a set of principles.

The Islamic revival often known as Islamic Fundamentalism obviously does not share all these features with Pentecostalism. In particular, there is little sign of the capacity to 'plug in' to far-flung traditions in popular religion. However, it is clearly able to leap across cultural and national frontiers and it also has the polycentric feature, lacking any global centre of power yet exhibiting strikingly common features across those frontiers. Islamists, as its promoters are also known, are poised between the sphere of private morality, with emphasis on the regulation of sexual contact and the criminal law by religious authorities, and politics, emphasizing the establishment of Islamic states. Islamists are in rebellion against religious authorities which have occupied positions of power for centuries subject to their cooperation with the state, and they share this dissidence, or antagonism to the cultural elite, with evangelicals.

Another important pattern to note is the growth of Islamism in Western Europe among second and third generation immigrants from North Africa and South Asia, often rebelling against their secularized parents. Here we note patterns in common both with evangelicals – who are particularly strong in the Afro-Caribbean community in Britain – and ultra-Orthodox Jews – who are gaining adherents also among the children of secularized Jewish families in Israel, Europe and worldwide whose parents or grandparents came from Eastern Europe. Further similarities can be noted between ultra-Orthodox Jews and Islamists who share tight regulation of the rhythms of daily life (punctuated by prayers at particular times) of dress and of sexual relations.

The ultra-Orthodox Jews may be divided into a variety of sects, but each sect is grounded in a multinational network bound together by kinship, by marriage, and also by flows of funds to support educational institutions and missionary activities. With their self-consciously anachronistic apparel and infinitude of minuscule regulations of everyday life, ultra-Orthodox Jews may bear the appearance of being extremely provincial and inward-looking, yet, like the Islamists, their reach is more multicultural and multinational than the more mainstream and purportedly more 'modern' versions of Judaism and Islam (which of course are themselves losing their mainstream credentials as these more dynamic fundamentalist movements gain ground, carve out territory and place often irresistible pressure on governments, especially in the Middle East). It is particularly noticeable that

ultra-Orthodox Judaism is now penetrating the deprived and marginalized population of North African and Oriental origin in Israel even though the type of institutionalized regulation of daily life enacted by post-Holocaust ultra-Orthodoxy is quite alien to the tradition of their forebears. In this relatively new development we may be seeing another case of fundamentalist religion appealing to the outcasts of society.

In the long run experience tells us that dissident religious movements, if they are to survive, tend to institutionalize and to accommodate, though not before they have brought about sometimes earth-shattering changes in society, culture and at the level of individual lives. There are already signs of this in all the three great religious traditions: the Jewish ultra-Orthodox have already gained control over physical territory in Israel as well as over certain institutions of the State – especially in the regulation of marriage and conversion and also in education; they have also managed to impose their rules on numerous aspects of everyday life in Israel, such as the enforcement of Sabbath observance in public services, and the certification of food served to members of the Israel Defence Force.

Islamists likewise (outside the Iranian special case) have gained much respect among the middle classes in Egypt where a drift towards stricter observance of everyday rules of conduct is noticeable and they have also successfully pressured states in the Middle East to align with them in the governance of private life. They have however been less successful in seizing even small parts of the state apparatus – for governments, as in Algeria and Egypt, have responded to them with systematic, and sometimes extremely violent, repression. Pentecostals, despite their totally apolitical tradition, have become increasingly successful politically in Africa and Latin America, countries where no social movement or initiative, secular or religious, can hope to make much headway without building bridgeheads in the state.

Finally we come to the importance of the conversion experience, especially in charismatic movements. This is particularly evident in Pentecostal churches, where it is usually accompanied by a personal – but fairly standardized - narrative of healing, perhaps of a disease but also more broadly of fractures in families, by recovery from depression and by the abandonment of a dissolute lifestyle – something which has evident echoes of indigenous religion in Africa and Latin America and also confronts the searing social problems of disease, alcoholism and poverty which afflict so many in those continents. In Islam and Judaism conversion – not among outsiders but among secularized members of the community – may be less sudden, but clearly also involves a radical shift in lifestyle, from lax identification to stringent observance of the minutiae of rules of everyday life.

5. Summary

- Globalization is not only about sameness, or about homogenization and the destruction of cultural boundaries
- On the contrary it generates a proliferation of new and reformulated and cross-cutting boundaries in the spheres of culture, ethnicity, language and religion – and religion plays a role in this process.

- There is at the same time also a spread of homogenized cultural forms across pre-existing boundaries, as witness the market economy, consumption habits and much else besides.
- Religious change reflects both these tendencies: ‘cosmopolitan’ forms of cultural globalization, which have been in existence within Catholicism worldwide since the 16th century, involve a dialectic between erudite and popular forms of religious observance, within which there is an awareness of difference and a ‘theorizing’ of the other, while contemporary, ‘global’ forms ignore the dialectic and succeed in making inroads in the most variegated cultural contexts without paying any conscious attention to difference – yet at the same time appropriating all manner of ritual and symbolic practices and meaning into their own rituals.
- Fundamentalists are more concerned with the minutiae of sacred texts and emphasize their ‘inerrancy’, while charismatics place more emphasis on gifts of the Spirit – however the latter also believe, at least nominally, in biblical inerrancy. The two are sometimes confused in daily parlance, and are overlapping categories, but the distinction is nonetheless an important one. Among ultra-Orthodox Jews, unlike the evangelical and fundamentalist Christians, devotion to the text takes pride of place, though charismatic and mystical practices are present (and are gaining ground). Islamists – or Islamic fundamentalists – are, like the Ultra-Orthodox Jews, principally concerned with the regulation of everyday life and obedience of the letter of the sacred text.
- Although all these movements and communities share a hostility to the permissiveness and moral dissolution they see as rampant in modern society, this does not mean to say they are not modern. On the contrary, their ability to communicate across cultural boundaries and the mercurial entrepreneurship, especially of charismatic sects and their leaders, shows that to be fundamentalist and especially to be charismatic is, indeed, to be modern.

Annotated Bibliography.

The best way to deepen your understanding of this subject is to read in history and anthropology, since that provides a sense of real social processes behind or beyond the more general or theoretical pronouncements of sociologists. The following texts will be particularly stimulating:

For a historical and anthropological account of the religious encounter between colonialism and African indigenous culture, and the subsequent interweaving of them:

Comaroff, J. (1985). Bodies of power, spirits of resistance: the culture and history of a South African people. Chicago, Chicago University Press.

Sundkler, B. (1961). Bantu Prophets in South Africa. London, Oxford University Press, for the International African Institute.

For Latin American studies of Pentecostalism:

Martin, D. (1990). Tongues of Fire: the Pentecostal revolution in Latin America. Oxford, Blackwells. (Despite the apparent concentration on Latin America, this also offers the best

panoramic account of the spread of evangelical Christianity across the globe from its English 19th century origins.)

Lehmann, D. (1996). Struggle for the spirit: religious transformation and popular culture in Brazil and Latin America, Oxford, Polity Press.

Accounts of ultra-Orthodox Judaism tend to be written in ways that are not easily approachable for outsiders, but the following are good ethnographies:

Friedman, M. (1990). Jewish Zealots: Conservative versus Innovative. Religious Radicalism and Politics in the Middle East. E. Sivan and M. Friedman. Albany, State University of New York Press.

Shokeid, M. (1995). The Religiosity of Middle Eastern Jews. Israeli Judaism. S. Deshen, C. Liebman and S. Shokeid. New Brunswick and London, Transaction Books: 213-237.

Soloveitchik, H. (1994). "Rupture and Reconstruction: the Transformation of Contemporary Orthodoxy." Tradition 28(4): 64-129.

Mintz, J. (1992). Hasidic People. Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press.

An interesting presentation of the internationalisation of Cuban possession cults (*santería*) is found in:

Murphy, J. (1988). Santería: a religion in America. Boston, Beacon Press.

The standard sociological approach to globalization and religion is to be found in

Beyer, H. (1994). Religion and Globalization. London, Sage.

Robertson, R. (1992). Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture. London.

A readable set of texts on the transnational reach of particular religious cultures and communities is

Rudolph, S. H. and J. Piscatori, Eds. (1997). Transnational Religion and Fading States. Boulder, Westview Press.

A readable survey of fundamentalism, especially in Islam is:

Kepel, G. (1994). The revenge of God. Oxford, Polity Press, while a down-to-earth account is Bayat, A. (1998). "Revolution without movement, movement without revolution: comparing Islamic activism in Iran and Egypt." Comparative Studies in Society and History 40(1): 136-169.

A similar exercise by the doyen of Religious Studies in the US on Pentecostalism is:

Cox, H. (1996). Fire from Heaven: the rise of Pentecostal Spirituality and the reshaping of religion in the twenty-first century. London, Cassell. (Note the similarity in title to Martin's volume.)

The University of Chicago Press and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences undertook a massive 'Fundamentalism Project' in the 1980s which published a series of very comprehensive volumes consisting of well written and well informed articles by authoritative experts in the field. These volumes are very useful for basic information on a very wide range of topics.

Marty, M. and R. S. Appleby (1991). Fundamentalisms observed, Chicago University Press.

Marty, M. and R. S. Appleby (1993). Fundamentalisms and society: reclaiming the sciences, the family and education, Chicago University Press.

Marty, M. and R. S. Appleby (1994). Accounting for Fundamentalisms: the dynamic character of movements, Chicago University Press.

Marty, M. and R. S. Appleby (1995). Fundamentalisms Comprehended. Chicago, Chicago University Press.

The theoretical basis for the present chapter can be found in:

Lehmann, D. (1998). "Fundamentalism and Globalism." Third World Quarterly **19**(4): 607-634.