



The Charismatic Movement and the Secularization Thesis

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A brief account of the secularization approach is presented with some rebuttal of common criticisms and it is argued that the charismatic renewal movement in Britain, far from refuting secularization, is the kind of religious expression one would expect in an increasingly secular society. © 1998 Academic Press

Introduction

Understandably, scholars wish to situate their reports of this or that phenomenon in a wider context. In the case of the sociology of religion, this has in recent years taken the rather unfortunate form of presenting almost every account of religious behaviour as refutation of the secularization thesis. In this paper I will very briefly summarize the secularization paradigm and then consider the implications for it, if any, of the charismatic renewal movement in Britain.

Secularization

Three very general preliminary points should be made about the secularization approach to religious change. First, much confusion is removed if we recognize the limited claims that are made by its proponents. I do not believe that Weber, Troeltsch, Niebuhr, Wilson, Berger or Martin (to list those whose work has most informed my thinking) saw themselves as discovering universal laws comparable with the basic findings of natural science. Like Weber's Protestant Ethic thesis, the secularization story is an attempt to explain an historically and geographically specific cluster of changes. It is an explanation of what has happened to religion in Western Europe (and its North American and Australasian offshoots) since the Reformation. Whether any parts of the explanation have implications for other societies is an empirical matter and must rest on the extent to which the causal variables found in the original setting are repeated elsewhere. Although careful comparative analysis, by highlighting the 'all other things' which are not equal, can shed further light on the secularization approach, of itself the fact that religion in Iran in 1980 or Chile in 1990 is not like religion in Belgium is neither here nor there.

Secondly, it seems clear to me, as someone who is often cited as a 'secularization theorist', that the approach is much more coherent in the eyes of its detractors than of its promoters. As even my brief remarks below should show, at best secularization is a broad paradigm.

Thirdly, despite the fact that, as far as I know, Berger, Wilson and Martin have never cited Comte, Freud or Huxley as intellectual progenitors, it is still common for critics to denigrate the secularizationists for the Comtian or humanist arrogance of supposing that religion has declined because people have become more sophisticated, clever, mature or well informed. I want to stress that the sociological tradition in which I place my work makes no judgments about the truth claims of religion or the maturity of believers. It supposes that true beliefs stand as much in need of sociological explanation as false ones. As I hope is clear from any reading of my most detailed presentation of the secularization

approach,¹ I have no commitment to any suggestion that secularization can be explained by such value-laden notions as Progress or Enlightenment (or indeed, anything which might take a capital letter).

The basic proposition is that modernization creates problems for religion. Modernization is itself a multi-faceted notion, which encompasses the industrialization of work, the shift from villages to towns and cities, the replacement of the small community by the society, the rise of individualism, the rise of egalitarianism and the rationalization both of thought and of social organization.

Different scholars associated with this claim stress different features. My own preference is to focus on the consequences of a combination of (a) individualistic egalitarianism, (b) social changes such as urbanization which fracture traditional communities and (c) the resultant increase in cultural diversity as people pursue their own lights. Where there was one religion, there are now fifty. Increasing diversity has both structural and socio-psychological consequences. Religious pluralism forces the state to become increasingly neutral on matters of religion. As the modern nation-state increasingly sees the need for nationwide provision of education, social welfare and social control, the inability of the previously dominant religious tradition to provide or mediate such provision ensures that churches lose social functions that had previously provided considerable background legitimation for their beliefs and secured their place at the heart of their localities.² It also calls into question the certainty which believers accord their religion.³

Eventually, the fragmentation of culture poses a threat to all forms of knowledge as we respond to the conflict inherent in diversity by becoming more and more relativistic. We gradually lose faith in the possibility of truth or authoritative understandings and instead settle for the practical attitude that what works for you may not work for me, that what is true for you may not be true for me. Relativism now poses a threat to rational thought and to science, but it first posed a threat to religious belief systems because, to simplify massively, it exposed the human origins of religion.

When the oracle spoke with one voice, it was possible to believe it was the voice of God. Once the oracle speaks in twenty discordant voices, we are tempted to look beyond the screen. Of course, this does not prevent people from believing in religion. Some people respond to uncertainty by themselves becoming shrill voices for their beliefs. But as Berger neatly expresses it in explaining the title of his book *The Heretical Imperative*,⁴ there is all the difference in the world between participating in a taken-for-granted way in a largely homogenous all-pervasive culture which includes beliefs about the supernatural, and being a modern believer in a world where you are constantly aware of alternatives and where, though you may believe in God, it is clear that you have chosen God, rather than the other way round.

One useful way of talking about the broad contours of religious change is to use the categories church, sect, denomination and cult, as proposed by Roy Wallis's development of the work of Troeltsch, Wilson, Johnson and Robertson.⁵ Wallis argues that most of the salient sociological features of different kinds of ideological collectivity (the model could be applied to nonreligious belief systems) can be expressed in terms of just two variables: the conception that the organization has of the status of its own core beliefs, and the social standing of the organization.

What the church and the sect have in common is that each believes that it has unique possession of salvational knowledge. It is uniquely legitimate. It and only it is correct. Everything else is wrong. The key difference is in the second variable: the church is large and respectable; the sect is small and deviant.

What the denomination and the cult have in common is that (with varying degrees of reluctance) each recognizes that while what it possesses may be superior, it is not unique. There may be good reasons to be a Methodist, but Congregationalists are also Christians and may also be saved. What distinguishes the denomination and the cult is that the former is large and respectable; the latter is small and deviant.

There is much more one would want to say about this descriptive typology. We might note that it is offered in the spirit of Max Weber's 'ideal types'. Any actual religious organization may combine elements of more than one form. Professionals and lay members may have differing notions of the status of the organization's product. For example, while casual consumers of Transcendental Meditation are presented with a therapy which can be incorporated into a wide range of belief systems and lifestyles, the inner core of full-time professionals clearly see their beliefs as enjoying a status closer to that of the sect form. One way of describing the changes in the Roman Catholic Church in many Western societies would be to say that, while the senior professionals may view its beliefs as uniquely legitimate, much of the laity treats it as one denomination among others.

We might also note that how a religious organization behaves and presents itself may differ markedly from one setting to another. Until very recently, the Catholic Church in Ireland saw itself as uniquely legitimate. For a long time, the Catholic Church in the United States has been a denomination.

The value of this typology is that it allows economic description of change. This is, of course, a gross simplification, but it seems that modernization makes the church form of religion impossible and permits two alternatives.⁶ One response is liberal and denominational or cultic; the other is conservative and sectarian. The former takes a tolerant and inclusive view of what is God's truth, forms ecumenical alliances and seeks new accommodations with the secular world. The latter takes an exclusive and narrow view of what is God's truth and, if the physical ghetto is not possible, seeks to create its socio-psychological functional equivalent. The sect tries to isolate mentally the believers from the rest of the society so that, in their small sub-society, they can re-create the conditions of pervasive worldview of the medieval church.

Each strategy has its costs and benefits. The benefit of the denominational response is that it keeps the churches in the cultural mainstream and keeps the costs of membership low. The cost is that it loses its children as it provides little reason to preserve the faith. The bridges built to the secular world become roads out of religion.

The benefit of the sectarian response is that it gives pressing reason to maintain the faith and justifies socialization practices that are effective in recruiting many of the children of believers. The problem is that such practices require considerable sacrifice, and the costs can be made extremely high if the state is unwilling to allow minorities to create their own sub-societies and sub-cultures.

While far more could be said about them, these two polar responses are introduced in order firstly to stress that secularization is no simple matter. At the least, one would want to tell different sorts of stories about the decline of the mainstream churches that have followed the denominational road, and the fate of the conservative sectarian option.

They are also introduced to hint at an explanation of the apparently anomalous case of the United States. Wilson followed Herberg in pointing to the various ways in which mainstream American religion had shifted its teachings in a secular direction and become increasingly supported for its secondary social functions rather than for its primary theological purposes.⁷ In my writings on American religion I have stressed the beneficial consequences for sectarian religion of the greater openness of American public life. In

contrast to the United Kingdom (and most other European countries), the United States, because it has a federal political structure and relatively little regulation of such social institutions as broadcasting, allows sub-societies considerable freedom to go their own ways. Conservative Protestants in the United States can create their own schools, colleges, universities and television channels. Though they cannot dominate the national culture, they can exercise considerable influence in those parts of the United States where they are numerically strong.⁸

The Significance of the Charismatic Movement for Secularization

Again, I want to begin by being clear about the scope of my remarks. I am concerned primarily with the charismatic movement in Britain.

Does the existence of the charismatic movement challenge my understanding of secularization? The question is put like this because the very fact of some people in modern societies being attracted to supernaturalistic religion is often presented as itself a refutation of the whole secularization approach.⁹ To answer it, we must get some sense of proportion.

According to the *U.K. Christian Handbook*, there were some 2,000 'new' churches in 1994, mostly charismatic, pastored by a slightly smaller number of clergy. Brierley and Wraight guess about 170,000 members.¹⁰ The Church of England alone lost a million members between 1970 and 1990. The Methodists, Baptist and Brethren between them lost 213,000 members in that period. Together, the Church of England and the Methodists lost 5,000 full-time clergymen between 1970 and 1990.

Of course, we need to be careful with such figures. There are any number of considerations which explain why different religious organizations report indices of popularity in different ways and which prevent such indices being readily comparable. Though Brierley has done his best to make accurate estimates of the size of the new churches, he is himself aware that their very novelty and smallness may lead to particular congregations being overlooked. To further confuse matters, anecdotal evidence suggests that some of the estimates presented by leaders of various loose groupings of charismatics are inflated.¹¹ Furthermore, we need to recognize that the degree of commitment shown by members of charismatic congregations is often considerably greater than that shown by the typical member of a mainstream denomination. However, this is to an extent catered for by noting the numbers of full-time clergy, in addition to members, as an index of interest. We should not, however, allow proper scepticism to blind us to the obvious. The difference in scale between any estimates of decline in the mainstream churches in Britain and any claims for new activity is such that I have no hesitation in making the broad assertion that the charismatic movement, as an area of organized religious activity outside the main churches, comes nowhere close to replacing those people lost to British Christianity.¹²

Even with an appropriate sense of proportion, one may take the view that any resurgence of interest in religion (even one failing to compensate for losses elsewhere in the religious economy) refutes the secularization approach. This would be the case if one expected decline to be uniform, universal and linear. This is not my expectation (nor do I find it in the works of others associated with the secularization paradigm).¹³

Decline will be anything but uniform. I have already suggested that we need to consider separately denominational and sectarian responses to the collapse of the church form of religion. I would also stress that secularization will be filtered through various prisms which give it very different forms in different kinds of societies and cultures.

David Martin has done an excellent job of delineating the basic patterns in his *A General Theory of Secularization*.¹⁴ In particular, religion may continue to be popular and important where it finds roles other than mediating man and God. I have summarized these under the headings of 'cultural defence' and 'cultural transition'.

Nothing in the social world is universal. People are rarely entirely powerless in the face of social change; it is always possible deliberately to engineer social institutions and practices which counter perceived trends. The success of the Amish and the Hutterites in maintaining their communitarian sects for centuries in what were initially inhospitable circumstances is proof of this capacity.

There is no reason to suppose the decline of religion to be linear. In posing new problems, modernization also provides new resources for coping with them. The decline of the feudal agricultural world and the growth of the cities underlined the plausibility that being all-pervasive and deeply embedded in the life of a stable community gave to religion, but it also encouraged the formation of voluntary associations and created a culture in which the persona of the pious believer had valuable secondary social consequences.

Far from supposing linearity, my model of secularization is cyclical. For brevity, the changes which accompany modernization and which create problems for religion are often described in ways which allow them to be seen as evenly progressive (or regressive!), but the more nuanced accounts include elements that repeat and mutations that run against the overall direction. Perhaps a suitable metaphor is that of the progress of any point on the circumference of a wheel on a vehicle running downhill. As the wheel turns the point rises and falls, but on each turn the high point is lower than it was before. From the Reformation to the present, the religious life of Western Europe changes as follows. We start with a society dominated by a single religious institution whose professionals worshipped God on behalf of the general population. The laity was expected to accept the authority of the church, fund its professionals, behave morally, and actively participate in major festivals and periodic acts of worship. Though most lay people were not terribly well-informed or committed Christians, they inhabited a world dominated by an all-pervasive supernaturalism and decorated with religious rituals. Modernization wrought a gradual change in the background cultural climate which strengthened the explicitly 'Christian' and created secular components, with the secular eventually coming to dominate. The proportion of well-informed pious Christians first increased and then declined drastically. The crucial point, and the conclusion towards which I will argue, is that the superficial similarity of the present and the distant past in terms of the proportions of committed Christians disguises the greater difference in the extent to which the background culture of our society is informed by religious beliefs and sustained by frequent low intensity affirmations of those beliefs. Glanmor Williams could say of medieval Wales: 'the people were, as far as can be judged, "collective Christians"'. That is to say, they reposed their trust in the powers of the saints and in the ritual performed by their clergy on their behalf to do all that was necessary to safeguard them from evil and ensure their salvation in the world to come'.¹⁵ I do not believe any future historian will say that of us.

Specific changes trigger radical breaks from the religious mainstream. These fail to take over the church and become sects. Some sects survive in that form. Most become increasing liberal and tolerant and denominational (as does the church), which in turn triggers another wave of sectarian religion, which in turn becomes more denominational and so on. I describe the overall consequences of such oscillation as secularization because the numbers involved at every stage are smaller than at the previous one and

because the total stock of shared religious beliefs (and the word 'shared' is central to the argument) decreases.

Furthermore, within (and sometimes alongside) the mutations one finds in general types of religion, particular religious organizations have their own institutional careers. Whatever general social forces may influence religious change, they are mediated by individuals, groups and organizations, and these are more than just conduits. They have their own properties. Some may be common enough for us to talk of general patterns. For example, many radical sectarian movements have their careers cut short by the frailties of their leaders who sexually or financially exploit their followers. Many radical movements become bureaucratized and sedate. However, even if we were confident that we could depict some general 'careers', we would never be able to eliminate the idiosyncratic and the contingent from the history of religion.

This is a long way round to saying that there is nothing in my view of secularization which makes periodic resurgences of interest in enthusiastic or sectarian religion unexpected. They would only refute my approach if (a) the total remaining at the end of any of these cycles were greater than those at the start (and we know that not to be the case with the charismatic movement) or (b) those recruited in any resurgence were primarily secular.

This second point brings us to the important issue of just who joined the charismatic movement. Here I defer to those better informed. Andrew Walker (whose work in this area was pioneering) believes that over ninety per cent of those who joined new charismatic bodies were already Christians. Primarily the movement grew by recruiting from other Christian churches. This is what my cyclical view would lead me to suppose.

The Nature of the Movement

If not its size, does the *character* of the charismatic movement contain anything which defies the expectations of secularization theory?

That it is very *supernaturalistic* does not surprise me. On the contrary, I expect the liberal forms of Christianity to decline faster than the conservative forms, not because, as the rational choice theorists have recently suggested, sectarian religion is in some essential sense more satisfying but because the core theological beliefs of liberalism do not permit the social practices which conservatives can use to protect their beliefs.

That the charismatic movement stresses the *experimental* over the doctrinal also does not surprise me. Because it is premised on the priesthood of all believers and denies the necessity of any overarching human agency to control correct belief, conservative Protestantism is essentially fissiparous. If believers are going to be very clear and specific about what they believe and take doctrinal statements seriously, they will tend to divide. In culturally diverse settings, revitalization movements which concentrate on doctrine will be more constrained in their ability to recruit than movements which stress the more amorphous matter of feelings.

This explains one of the appeals of arcane language and ritual. I remember once attending a 'Celtic' mass at a Student Christian Movement conference in the early 1970s and being mystified by the odd language and curious rituals. It took a while for it to dawn on me that the great merit of what seemed like deliberate obfuscation was that the members of the congregation were free to interpret what was going on in ways which suited their personal circumstances and ideological preferences. The ambiguity of the forms and the language glossed over the lack of substantive agreement among the participants.

That the charismatic movement stresses the *therapeutic* benefits of religion does not surprise me. This seems entirely in line with the point Wilson first made in the 1950s about religion becoming increasingly distant from the public arena, from the world of social roles, and increasingly concentrated on the 'recessive' side of human experience.¹⁷

One possible surprise is that this resurgence of supernaturalistic religion is going on in the heart of industrial societies rather than on their peripheries. One of the descriptive points made by people like Wilson and Berger in the early 1960s was that religion would continue to be most popular with those regional and social groups most distant from the industrial process. So it would remain common among women rather than men, the very old and young rather than the adult, the agricultural peripheries rather than the industrial heartlands, the rural rather than the urban.

Impressionistic evidence would suggest that the charismatic movement shares the same gender profile as the rest of British Christianity (outside the Afro-Caribbean churches): there are more women involved than in the population at large. However, there may be an unusual class profile. It is certainly true that charismatic groups seem to have more professional middle-class members than do the Pentecostal organizations which date from the start of this century. There is also a hint of this in the distribution of charismatic fellowships listed by county in *The Body Book*, which, even allowing for different rates of recording for different parts of the country, shows a skewing towards the prosperous southeast of England.¹⁸ Without more detailed research, the significance of this is not clear. It might well be that the charismatic movement is proving especially appealing to the prosperous middle classes, but an alternative suggests itself from an analysis of the religion data in the British Social Attitudes survey¹⁹ (summarized in my *Religion in Modern Britain*). In exploring that data set, I constructed a number of measures of religious activity and looked for the expected social correlates and discovered that they were either missing or very weak. Often statistical procedures failed because there were insufficient cases and that was from a survey that started with over 1,000 respondents. Once one tries to compare the likelihood of men and women, divided by class, describing themselves with one of three labels for frequency of church-going, for example, one finds empty boxes. Religion is simply so unpopular in Britain that even very large sample surveys do not permit rigorous analysis.

It is my suspicion that the lack of strong social correlates in the British Social Attitudes survey is not a spurious finding but a reflection of real change. As religion has declined in popularity, so the reasons for involvement have become thoroughly idiosyncratic. Involvement can no longer be much explained by shared social characteristics but is now largely a matter of personal preferences. If we now go back to my point about the role of various engineered forms of social separation in maintaining minority belief systems, it would appear that supporting social worlds will have to be fabricated from individual choices and can no longer be built on top of existing forms of social demarcation such as class or regional peripheralism. For that reason they will be weak, and the beliefs they are designed to protect and preserve will be precarious.

This is important because it brings us to the heart of my version of the secularization approach, which does not claim that people in modern societies will no longer be able to entertain the supernatural but rather seeks to identify the social circumstances necessary for the maintenance of *shared* beliefs. In a nutshell it proposes that as cultures become more diverse and as individuals claim greater authority to decide not only what they want to do but also what they want to believe, the shared ground for communal

beliefs is reduced. This in turn reduces the plausibility to any individual of any religion (and we see that both in declining numbers and in the declining reach and salience of religious beliefs that are held) but it does not prevent people from idiosyncratically entertaining diverse views of the life hereafter. Indeed, because there is no longer a dominant tradition with the power to stigmatise alternatives as deviant, it positively encourages low salience flirtation with an exotic array of alternatives.

Clearly, there are circumstances which reverse fragmentation, create social cohesion, place a high premium on group solidarity and thus create the conditions for shared belief. Ethnic conflict (such as we see in the former Yugoslavia or in Northern Ireland) is one such example. What my secularization approach suggests is that there is a point in the development of individualism and cultural diversity beyond which no amount of external conflict will create sufficient cohesion to support a large-scale religious revival. When the Catholic Irish began to settle in large numbers in Liverpool in the second half of the nineteenth century, conflict between immigrants and natives was often mediated by religious language and imagery, and in some parts of the city anti-Irish sentiments fuelled an increase of interest in sectarian Protestantism.²⁰ A century later, when large numbers of New Commonwealth migrants settled in Liverpool, local hostility was legitimated not by religion but by secular racism.

The conclusion is obvious to the point of being banal. Crises only stimulate religious responses from religious people. A combination of a shared religion and common problems may prevent internal fragmentation. If there is not (or no longer) a shared religion, no amount of strain will create the degree of social homogeneity necessary to create one culture from many.

Conclusion

The charismatic renewal movement is interesting, and it is relatively unresearched. There are important questions to be asked about why conservative Protestants (and it is largely a Protestant movement) have been attracted to this particular variant in the Christian repertoire. I have suggested part of an answer in noting the virtues of a religion that stresses experience over doctrine.

In this brief presentation I have tried to counter the view that the charismatic movement offers convincing evidence against the secularization thesis. There is always a danger that, in arguing that apparently refuting evidence is only seen as such because the secularization thesis has been misunderstood, one is qualifying the thesis so as to make it irrefutable and untestable. To make it clear that the thesis remains a source of testable social scientific propositions and is not an object of ideological veneration, I will conclude by restating circumstances which would refute the secularization thesis, as I understand it. If it were the case that a largely and popularly secular society experienced a major religious revival, the thesis would be in trouble. If it were the case that a large proportion of the people involved in any religious revival had previously little or no connection with religion, the thesis would be in trouble. The charismatic renewal movement in Britain does not offer evidence of either circumstance.

Notes

- 1 Roy Wallis and Steve Bruce, 'Secularization: trends, data, and theory', *Research in the Social Scientific Study of Religion* 3 (1991), pp. 1–31; Steve Bruce, *Religion in the Modern World: From Cathedrals to Cults*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 1996.
- 2 See Bryan Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*, London, CA Watts 1966.

- 3 Peter L. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion*, London, Faber and Faber 1969.
- 4 Peter L. Berger, *The Heretical Imperative: Contemporary Possibilities Religious Affirmation*, London, Collins 1980.
- 5 Roy Wallis, *The Road to Total Freedom: A Sociological Analysis of Scientology*, London, Heinemann 1976, pp. 11-18.
- 6 In addition to my detailed account of why the church form is impossible in modern societies in *Religion in the Modern World*, the reader is referred to the elegantly succinct argument offered by David Martin, *Reflections on Sociology and Theology*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 1996.
- 7 Bryan Wilson, 'Religion and the churches in America', in W. McLoughlin and R. N. Bellah (eds), *Religion in America*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin 1968, pp. 73-110.
- 8 This argument is elaborated in Steve Bruce, *The Rise and Fall of the New Christian Right: Conservative Protestant Politics in America 1978-1988*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 1988.
- 9 For example, Karla Poewe, 'Max Weber and Charismatic Christianity', in W. H. Swatos Jr (ed.), *Twentieth Century World Religious Movements in Neo-Weberian Perspective*, Lewiston, Edwin Mellen Press 1993, pp. 159-73.
- 10 These and subsequent figures are taken from Peter Brierley and Heather Wraight, *UK Christian Handbook 1996/97 Edition*, London, Christian Research Association, 1995, and from earlier volumes in the series. For a view over a longer period, see the data in Robert Currie, Alan D. Gilbert and Lee Horsley, *Churches and Churchgoers: Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles since 1700*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 1977.
- 11 Andrew Walker, who is the authority on British Restorationism, has privately expressed scepticism about some of the claims made by Restoration leaders for the size of their followings.
- 12 The larger question of how justified is my estimate of secularization is dealt with in detail in Steve Bruce, 'The truth about religion in Britain', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 34 (1995), pp. 17-30; 'Religion in Britain at the close of the 20th century: a challenge to the silver lining perspective', *Journal for Contemporary Religion* 11 (1996), pp. 261-75; and 'The pervasive world-view: religion in pre-modern Britain', *British Journal of Sociology* 48 (1997), pp. 667-80. An anonymous reviewer said of this part of the paper that I seemed 'unaware that the charismatic movement has lot of adherents in mainline churches'. Doubtless true, but such people are already counting against the secularization thesis by remaining in the mainline churches and should not be double-counted.
- 13 Callum Brown, 'A revisionist approach to religious change', in Steve Bruce (ed.), *Religion and Modernization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 1992, pp. 31-58, assumes that these are my views. The full account in my *Religion in the Modern World* should make it clear that they are not.
- 14 David Martin, *A General Theory of Secularization*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell 1978.
- 15 Glanmor Williams, *The Welsh and Their Religion*, Cardiff, University of Wales Press 1991, p. 14.
- 16 This is an important argument which can be followed in these publications: Steve Bruce, 'Religion and rational choice', *Sociology of Religion* 54 (1993), pp. 193-205; Rodney Stark and Laurence R. Iannaccone, 'A supply-side reinterpretation of the "secularization" of Europe', *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 33 (1994), pp. 230-52; Roger Finke and Laurence R. Iannaccone, 'Supply-side explanations for religious change', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 527 (1993), pp 27-39.
- 17 Bryan Wilson, *Contemporary Transformations of Religion*. Oxford, Oxford University Press 1976, p. 7. As this point has been misunderstood, I will add that religion has always been therapeutic. What is new is that it is no longer much else.
- 18 Peter Brierley, Peter Butt, Sharon Selvon and Cathy Noble, *The Body Book*, 4th Edition, Romford, Team Spirit Publications 1993.
- 19 Steve Bruce, *Religion in Modern Britain*, Oxford, Oxford University Press 1995.
- 20 P. J. Waller, *Democracy and Sectarianism: A Political and Social History of Liverpool 1868-1939*, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press 1981; Frank Neal, *Sectarian Violence: The Liverpool Experience 1819-1914*, Manchester, Manchester University Press 1988.

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