THE YOGI AND THE COMMISSAR REVISITED[1]

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THE SPECTRUM OF IDEOLOGIES

IN 1942, four years after he had left the Communist Party, Arthur Koestler published a collection of essays entitled *The Yogi and the Commissar*. In the first essay Koestler suggested that all the possible human attitudes to life could be arranged in the form of a spectrum. " On one end of the spectrum, obviously on the infra-red end, we would see the Commissar ". The Commissar represents those who believe in what Koestler calls, " Change from Without ", that is, who believe that the cure for all human ills is to be found in a reorganization of the material basis of human life, particularly the means of material production and distribution, and who believe that the carrying through of this reorganization justifies any methods and any kinds of behaviour towards those who get in the way. At the other end of Koestler's spectrum was " the Yogi, melting away in the ultra-violet ". For him " nothing can be improved by exterior organization and everything by the individual effort from within ". Between these two extremes Koestler saw " in a continuous sequence the spectral lines of the more sedate human attitudes ". On the whole, however, he found the central part of the spectrum fairly woolly ; what he saw most clearly was the contrast between the two ends of the spectrum : " the real issue remains between the Yogi and the Commissar, between the fundamental conception of Change from Without and Change from Within ".[2]

There is no evidence in the essay that, having become disenchanted with Communism, Koestler was looking with interest towards the other end of the spectrum. That the yogi

[1] A lecture delivered in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester on Wednesday, the 11th of December 1974.

[2] A. Koestler, *The Yogi and the Commissar* (Danube Edition, London, 1965), pp. 15 f.

had some kind of perverse fascination for him may perhaps be inferred from a book he wrote some years later, *The Lotus and the Robot*, which was, he says, a kind of sequel to his essay on the Yogi and the Commissar. But it is very clear from the later book that when it came to a choice, he felt extremely little rapport with the mystics he met in the course of his brief travels in India, and that he was not sorry to shake the dust of India off his feet.

Nevertheless, in 1942, it had seemed to him, as to a number of other intellectuals in Europe and America, succumbing to the temptation to generalize about the human condition at a time when totalitarian ideologies were at the height of their power and repulsiveness, that the yogi was the most obvious symbol of the attitude to life diametrically opposite to that of the totalitarian regimes.

The yogi, for many of the disillusioned among that generation of intellectuals, was the embodiment of what they believed to be the lofty, detached, pure spirituality of India, unsullied by involvement with mundane or political concerns. It was a spirituality which they saw in sharp contrast to the crude materialism of the West. This was a viewpoint which Indian idealist philosophers who wrote in English, mainly for Western readers, had been spreading abroad for some time. However, the great majority of the Indian educated classes, supported by masses of their fellow-countrymen, were meanwhile engaged in a very real, earthy struggle to overthrow British political power in India and achieve Indian (and Pakistani) national independence.

In his essay Koestler did not develop his concept of a spectrum of human attitudes, but left the idea in the fairly rudimentary stage at which it had come to him. It is now possible to elaborate and describe in detail the middle stretch of the spectrum in a way in which Koestler could not have done in 1942. This is due to the resurgence of interest in the sociology of religion that has taken place since the end of the Second World War, and the careful scrutiny and analysis of religious structures which has resulted from it.

The Yogi

First, we can identify the yogi more clearly. The yogi represents the opposite extreme from the thoroughly collectivist attitude, that is, the thoroughly individualist attitude, and, at this extreme end of the spectrum, he can be taken to represent above all the mystical type of religion.

By mystical in this context is meant that which is concerned with some reality which is said to be other than the reality apprehended by the senses, a world behind or beyond the world of "commonsense", a world beyond what is dealt with in Western science; in other words, a world which it is claimed can be known by non-empirical, non-rational means, through meditation, intuition and insight.

As well as being concerned with a world beyond that of the senses the mystical way is individualistic in character in that it requires or encourages social organization only of the most rudimentary kind, if any at all. In contrast to this, non-mystical and anti-mystical ideologies show a very strong tendency to embody themselves in social collectives of one kind or another. For the mystical way, the *individual* life has most significance within the human context. For non-mystical and anti-mystical ideologies, on the other hand, the *collective* tends, in general, to be accorded a higher importance than the individual. In the former case the only genuine insight, the only significant human experience, is that of the individual; churches, parties, sects, creeds, can only provide at best signposts and pointers. For the mystic, experience of his "real" world is of a direct, self-validating kind, and has to be undergone at the individual level. For anti-mystical ideologies on the other hand, the party, the church or the organization takes precedence over the claims of any one individual on the grounds of his own experience or insight. The individual is expected to be willing to sacrifice his individual understanding and desires, and to suppress his individual intuition or experience if these conflict with the accepted tenets of the collective.

It is true that some mystics have emerged from the ranks of institutional or ecclesiastical religion and have even in some cases

succeeded in maintaining a measure of coexistence with institutional religion, just as they have also lived within the wider organizations of society as a whole. But in many such cases their mysticism has caused them to be regarded by the authorities, ecclesiastical or other, as suspect, and frequently their rejection both of the authority of revealed dogmas, and of the necessity for sacerdotal practices and formal membership of an organized body has led to their expulsion as heretics, and sometimes their persecution. In principle the mystic can dispense with organized religion and in practice he may find it necessary to do so. In a few instances this may not be so, but these, rather than the former, are the anomalous cases. The yogi is the mystic *par excellence*, one who affirms that the only genuine spiritual knowledge is self-knowledge and the only salvation is self-achieved salvation. He is a religious innovator rather than, as in the case of the guru, the transmitter of a tradition.

Non-ecclesiastical Religion

In that part of the spectrum which adjoins the narrow band occupied by the mystic is a type of religion which is very similar in the sense that it too is highly individualistic. It has been variously described. Thomas Luckmann has called it " Invisible Religion ".[1] Robert Towler has recently given it the name " Common Religion ".[2] Luckmann's identification of it begins by making the important basic distinction between ecclesiastical and non-ecclesiastical religion. A great deal of so-called religious history especially in Europe is almost exclusively the history of ecclesiastical or quasi-ecclesiastical bodies and movements. Non-ecclesiastical religion has until recently been largely ignored. Certainly there is more to non-ecclesiastical religion than the sect-type; and more even than the sub-sectarian " cults " which some sociologists distinguish and treat separately from sects.

Invisible religion, or common religion, is not easy to identify.

[1] Thomas Luckmann, *The Invisible Religion*, 1967.

[2] See R. Towler and A. Chamberlayne, " Common Religion " in Michael Hill (ed.), *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain*, vi (1973) and R. Towler, *Homo Religiosus* (1974), chapter 8.

Religion is notoriously difficult to define, and this type most difficult of all perhaps. But there is a specific area of religion here that has to be acknowledged. Briefly, the concept is that of an *ad hoc* assemblage of temporary and local elements—religious ideas and attitudes and perhaps activities—the precise nature of which will vary from person to person, as each makes his own selection of elements from the common stock. In some cases private religion may stand very close to that of the mystic, whereas in other cases it may be very close to membership of a religious cult; that is to say, the spectrum quality is exhibited within private religion itself. Obviously, it is also a very fluid area of religion. It has begun to be recognized as existing not only in contemporary life but also as having existed in Britain, for instance, in the pre-industrial period. Keith Thomas's recent study *Religion and the Decline of Magic* provides massive evidence, carefully documented, of the very widespread existence in sixteenth and seventeenth century England of popular *ad hoc* combinations of various elements taken from magic, witchcraft, astrology, demonology and so on. In twentieth-century Yorkshire Robert Towler's study reveals an amalgam of beliefs and attitudes which can be called theistic, astrological, fatalistic, and so on, held by the totally unchurched in an industrial area. Who is to say that in any really comprehensive survey of the phenomena which can be counted as religion this does not count? It is increasingly coming to be accepted as a viable type of religion, and it therefore has to be given its appropriate place on our spectrum.

The Cult

Beyond this fairly long band on the spectrum there is what can now be regarded as a well established group of three types of religion: first, the cult, then the sect, and then the established church. The term *cult* is used by sociologists of religion to distinguish a type which has at least some rudimentary features of organization, even although they may be flexible and sometimes ephemeral. Certain attitudes, certain ideas, certain practices, combined in loose and not necessarily well defined ways are shared by numbers of people, large or small. The cult is

distinguished from the sect by the greater degree of individualism which it exhibits. David Martin fastens on this greater individualism as the fundamental criterion of the cult compared with the sect.[1] Bryan Wilson, however, regards the cult as a sub-type of the sect, and places such movements as Theosophy and Scientology in this category.[2] However, if the terms employed in the sociology of religion are to have a cross-cultural usefulness, it will be an advantage to keep " cult " as a separate category. In western society a cult, as Marty has pointed out, may have a more positive orientation to the values of the society in which it is found than the sect, which much more usually has a negative attitude to the values which prevail in the greater society.[3] This is true of a type of belief and practice which occurs in rural India, namely, cults associated with specific, sometimes local, minor deities for specific, often mundane purposes. The values and attitudes of those who follow these cults are not sharply distinguished from those of the society at large, and adherents of the cult do not constitute sharply defined, recognizable groups in the way that sects do. On the other hand the cult type possess a sufficient community of interest and attitude to distinguish it from the large undifferentiated area of common religion, which, on the spectrum, is adjacent to the cult on the other side from the sect.

The Sect

So we come to the sect type of religion. An increasing number of studies of sectarian movements have been made in the post-war years. Such studies have on the whole demonstrated that religious sects are not necessarily parasitic upon ecclesiastical religion, but constitute a form of religion which exists in its own right and has at least the same degree of persistence as any other type of religion. Certainly it does not now seem that the destiny even of Christian sects (and there are many sorts other than Christian, even in the West) is that of being absorbed into the

[1] David A. Martin, *Pacifism* (1965), p. 194.

[2] Bryan Wilson, *Religious Sects*, 1970.

[3] Martin E. Marty, " Sects and Cults ", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, cccxxxii (1960), 125-34).

great ecumenical merger which some ecclesiastical leaders in the West have in view as the necessary and desirable outcome of their religious statesmanship. The sect-type has to be located towards this end of the spectrum because it is individualistic in its most characteristic concerns, compared with the established churches. The latter are more concerned with the national dimensions of religion, and in theory with the totality of the citizens of the state ; not, as the sect, with the relatively few, whether they be an elect few or a deprived minority (or both simultaneously). The sect-type of religion will generally be found to give greater importance to the notion of *individual* salvation. Such salvation is usually conceived of in terms of life in some state of being other than the present condition of human existence. Salvation sects are as much a characteristic feature of the range of Indian as of Western religion, as far back as we have any record, that is, back to the time of Buddha.

The structure of this central part of the spectrum, occupied by sects and denominations, has become more clearly visible in detail in the last few decades. Sects and churches of every kind, as well as quasi-ecclesiastical organizations such as the Salvation Army, their belief systems, their power-structures, their patterns of recruitment, their social-class affiliations, their membership trends and many other such matters have all been energetically investigated and are now more clearly distinguishable in terms of their type. Sociologists of religion have increased in number and in the intensity of their researches in this direction with the result that, so far as religion is concerned, we are now able to enjoy a closer and more detailed view of that middle area of the spectrum which Koestler in 1942 saw only as rather blurred and woolly.

It is important to notice that here at the centre of the spectrum, from sects to churches, we are in the area which is usually the referent when in Western popular parlance the word religion is used. The common view is that religion is found *here*, in relatively stable religious organizations. Most characteristically of all perhaps, what is called religion in the West is the area on our spectrum adjoining that of the sects ; namely the form of organization which religion takes at a national level.

The Denominational Church

The adjoining band of the spectrum, immediately beyond the sects, is that of denominational churches. It extends from the sect on one side, to the national church on the other. I use the composite term " denominational church " because it covers two kinds of organization, one of which merges into the other. First there is the *denomination*. This is the name given to all the local congregations of a certain type, for example, Baptist, within a particular country or region. In their collective aspect these local congregations are constituted into a denomination in the form of an autonomous national union. Obviously, the line of demarcation between sects, which sometimes form *ad hoc* groups and enjoy some sort of " fraternal " relationship, and the denomination, is not very clear. Generally, the denomination has a more comprehensive and evenly distributed spread throughout the country concerned ; what is more, it often has something of an international character. The Baptist denomination in one country recognizes that in the existence of unions of Baptist churches like itself in other countries, it is part of a supra-national denomination. The Baptist denomination exists throughout such widely separated regions as the U.K., the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R. and Australia. The tendency nowadays is for such national bodies to call themselves *churches*. Methodism, on the other hand, manifested itself in the form of what were at the beginning of the twentieth century, separate national denominations, which have now merged to form the Methodist Church. Similarly, in Britain, the national organization of independent churches which used to be called Congregationalist was formerly known as the Congregational Union. This has now entered into a merger with the Presbyterian Church to form a new body known as the United Reformed *Church*. The differences between a denomination, such as the Baptist, and these emerging " Churches ", is not great enough to constitute a major difference, and for that reason I have used the term " denominational churches " to designate them all.

The National or State Church

There is a type of church, however, which is more clearly distinguishable in certain important ways from these " Free " Churches (or non-state-established Churches), and that is the State Church, of which the Church of England is an example. The distinguishing features of the State Church are (1) the special relationship which it enjoys with the central political authority, and (2) its acceptance of concern for the general moral condition of society within the state. It is the public and official face of religion in the country; its clergymen have a special legal status (" Clerk in Holy Orders "); they are not allowed to stand as candidates for Parliament (whereas ministers of other churches, such as Baptist and Methodists may), and they cannot receive the accolade; but on the other hand diocesan bishops of the Church of England have the right to sit in the upper house of Parliament, the House of Lords.

Similar in principle (more similar than is sometimes acknowledged) is the situation where a country has a " national religion ", that is, where constitutional recognition is given to and a special status is enjoyed by the majority religion of the country, even although it does not exist in the form of a church. This has been the case, for instance, in Pakistan, and at various times in Islamic history it has been the case elsewhere. Islam stands as the clearest example also of the religion which is also a nation, or perhaps more accurately an empire, existing throughout the world. All those who accept the Islamic faith constitute the *Ummah*, the community of the faithful, a distinct and unique nation, over against all the other nations of the world. Wherever Islam is the predominant faith of the people, and where the governing power acknowledges this in practice, there is the territory (*dar*) which is surrendered to God and known as *dar-ul-Islam*. All other areas of the world constitute the territory which is still in opposition, *dar-ul-Harb*.

Marxism as a Religion

It is not too great a contrast, therefore, to move beyond this end of the national religion band of the spectrum into the

area at the infra-red extreme, namely the band occupied by Marxism.

The roots of Marxism lie in the realm of religion. There is, in the first place, Karl Marx's own Jewish heritage, his rabbinical ancestry, and his own conscious reaction against the Lutheran religion which his father had been forced to adopt. Reaction against one form of religion does not necessarily constitute irreligion. Karl Marx showed considerable intellectual interest in religious problems in his school days. The doctrines of Saint-Simon, which strongly influenced him in his youth, were recognized in the Germany of his day as religious in nature. In the Moselle region, where these doctrines were gaining many adherents " the archbishop was obliged to issue a special warning against *this new heresy* ".[1]

Jules Monnerot in his book *The Sociology of Communism*[2] calls Communism " The Twentieth Century Islam ". In this case, what is recognized as a kind of religion is the Communist Party itself. The religious characteristics which it possesses are impressive : quasi-sacred writings which define orthodoxy and enable the faithful to detect deviation, or heresy ; faith, that is, in the significance of the unfolding process of history and a kind of eschatology ; a conversion experience ; devotion to the cause, complete sacrifice of self and private interests to the party, the extending of the revolution to cover all areas of the world, and so on.

One of Lenin's recent biographers writes of early associates of Lenin as " men whose whole lives had been bound up with the bracing appeal of Marxism, for whom it was not only a political creed but a religion and a way of life ".[3] In Marxism, he comments, there is a " stern moral judgment and doom pronounced upon the rich and powerful of this world, all the more satisfying, for it cannot be avoided or softened ".[4] This immediately recalls the prophetic activity of Muhammad's days

[1] T. B. Bottomore and Maximilien Rubel, *Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology & Social Philosophy* (Penguin Books, 1963), p. 25 (emphasis added).

[2] Translated by Jane Degras and Richard Rees.

[3] Adam B. Ulam, *Lenin and the Bolsheviks*, 1965. Fontana Library, 1969, p. 182.

[4] Op. cit. p. 182.

in Mecca; every word applies exactly to the message of early Islam to the rich men of Mecca. " It is no wonder that for all its materialistic and free-thinking base Marxism has always held a secret attraction for some religious-minded: it promises, and considerably sooner than in the next world, certain chastisement for those who have succumbed to the false idols of worldly success ".[1] Karl Popper, in the course of his long critical study of Marx, having characterized Marxism as " moral theory " and " oracular philosophy ", declares that he would " be the last to deny its religious character ".[2]

This is not the appropriate point at which to embark on a detailed exposition of Marxism as a religion, which, in any case, has been done elsewhere.[3] Enough brief indications have been given to justify the inclusion of Marxism within the spectrum of religion. Within, but only just within, someone may observe. In the interests of accurate analysis it may be useful to consider whether possibly it falls half within the territory of religion, and half within that of politics, and is a phenomenon which, overlapping both, shows that there is a continuity between religion and politics. In this respect, too, Marxist Communism might be considered very similar to classical Islam, for there also is a case where religion and politics are perhaps difficult to distinguish at first sight.

Opinions will differ on this matter. It is important to notice the point made by Peter Worsley, that there is more than one kind of Marxism; one cannot speak of Marxism simply; it is a plural phenomenon. " There is conventicle (' sectarian ') Marxism and ' Popular Front ' Marxism; proletariat-based and peasant-based; ' vanguard ' Marxism v. the Marxism that designates the self-conscious and self-moving proletariat as the revolutionary agency; the pre-revolutionary Marxism of oppositional collectives—classes, national movements, etc.—and Marxism which have become State ideologies; ' Democentralist ' Marxism and *groupusculisme*. Nor is the problem resolved by taking non-Marxism as the reference-point for drawing boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, for Marxist

[1] Ibid. [2] *The Open Society and its Enemies*, ii. 255.
[3] See, e.g., Trevor Ling, *Buddha, Marx and God*, London, 1967.

sociology has never been as separate as Gouldner suggests and has exercised an increasingly powerful influence on its competitors and enemies, even when quite excluded from the academy. We even use the label *marxisant* to express our uncertainty as to just where Marxism begins and ends."[1] There is much more in what Professor Worsley has to say at this point that could with relevance and profit be quoted, but what will be clear from this quotation is the spectrum-like quality within Marxism itself. And for the present analysis what is important is the possibility that somewhere along the Marxist spectrum religion ends and politics begins. Where exactly, is not clear, however. Bernard Crick altogether disclaims Marxist Communism as not satisfying his requirements for inclusion within politics. For, he writes, politics " can be simply defined as the activity by which differing interests within a given unit of rule are conciliated by giving them a share in power in proportion to their importance to the welfare and the survival of the whole community ".[2] Politics is, therefore, " a process of discussion " ; it presupposes that " opposition is tolerated " it is " a way of ruling divided societies without undue violence ".[3]

Totalitarian rule, on the other hand " marks the sharpest contrast imaginable with political rule, and ideological thinking is an explicit and direct challenge to political thinking ",[4] for the totalitarian ruler believes that " the task of government is to reconstruct society utterly according to the goals of an ideology ".[5] Like other observers of Communism we have already mentioned, Crick too sees it in religious terms ; it is old religion writ large : " what was once a religious heresy, to achieve the holy reign of the saints on earth, has become in our times a secular orthodoxy held with religious intensity ".[6]

Thus, if the essence of politics is the effort to harmonize differences of opinion and interest which exist within a society, without denying their right to exist, a totalitarian ideology, such as Communism, in view of " its hatred of diversifying groups

[1] P. M. Worsley, " The State of Theory and the Status of Theory ", *Sociology*, viii, no. 1 (1974), 3.

[2] *In Defence of Politics* (Penguin Books, 1964), p. 21.

[3] Op. cit. p. 33.

[4] Op. cit. p. 34.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Op. cit. p. 36.

and institutions "[1] cannot be reckoned as coming within the sphere of politics.

A second characteristic of politics to which Crick draws attention also distinguishes it from totalitarian ideology. This is the " concern with personal identity—its assertion and preservation " which characterizes political rule, and is " the antithesis to the totalitarian stress on violence " and the low value totalitarian rule places on human life, taking and wasting it easily, and demanding self-violence, in the form of self sacrifice, from the individual.[2]

Thus " political thinking is to be contrasted to ideological thinking ", for " an ideology means an end to politics, although ideologies may combat each other within a political system ". Politics " is an activity—lively, adaptive, flexible and conciliatory. Politics is the way in which free societies are governed. Politics is politics and other forms of rule are something else ".[3]

Thus we find that Marxism comes within the sphere of religion ; it may also come within the sphere of government, of " other forms of rule ", but not within that of politics. In a number of respects Marxist Communism and Islam seem to be very similar ; both are forms of secular rule, both are in a sense empires, with ambitions to become world empires, both seek to do so by extending an ideology and reconstructing society in terms of the ideological vision. There are differences, however. Marxism, in all its forms is secular, in the sense that its sanctions are not super-natural or in some sense beyond history, as it is claimed those of Islam are. Moreover, Islam, unlike Marxism, is concerned with personal identity—" its assertion and preservation "—and indeed with the ultimate destiny of the individual, to be made manifest at the Judgement Day at the end of the world's history. The Islamic Ummah, or community of the faithful is, even in the farthest vision, a super-nation among *other* nations ; a nation, of which not *all* individuals will be members, even at the last day. It is appropriate, therefore, to place Islam in the category of the religious nation, and to see it

[1] Op. cit. p. 47.
[2] Op. cit. p. 49.
[3] Op. cit. p. 55.

as occupying a different, although adjacent position, from Marxism on the spectrum.

Crick's characterization of politics is useful also in enabling us to define where the spectrum *of religion* ends: namely, beyond Communism. All up to there is religion; beyond there is politics. The two do not merge in some misty, ideological no-man's land; in Crick's terms we can recognize what is not religion, and what is not politics.

Other Possible Spectrums

It must be emphasized that this spectrum-model which has been set up is only one of any number of possible heuristic devices for the analysis and intellectual understanding of the nature of religion, just as the use of a prism to show the spectrum of colours of which light consists is only one way of beginning to understand the nature of light. The model I have constructed here provides a way of understanding the major *types* of religion as these have come to be recognized in recent research, and their relationships to one another. The spectrum does not represent any historical or developmental progression in the nature of religion, in either one direction or the other along its length. Neither end is climatic. What this spectrum arrangement does is simply to draw attention to the interesting fact that types of religion can be viewed in rank order from most individualistic to most collectivist, and that the validity of this way of viewing them seems to be confirmed by, and to make sense of, the general body of recent typological analysis of religion.

Now it may be the case that there are other characteristics which these various types of religion all possess; other, that is, than their inversely varying degrees of individualism and collectivism. It may be that other characteristics could provide the bases for some different arrangements of types, that is, along spectrums other than this one from mysticism to Marxism. Nevertheless, extreme individualism and extreme collectivism do, conveniently and in a clearly recognizable way, provide the terms for a heuristically useful ordering. Moreover, this assertion can be strengthened by pointing to some other features

which also increase and decrease in intensity along the spectrum, in the same way as individualism and collectivism.

The seven major types of religion on our spectrum—mysticism, common religion, cults, sects, denominational-churches, national religion and Marxism—can be examined with reference to *the attitudes they exhibit towards material welfare* and consequently towards the importance of political authority. In this case we find that the *order* in which they occurred from individualism to collectivism is confirmed. Mysticism has a low concern with material goods and welfare and a low concern with political power as a means of ensuring the successful planning and control of the material realm to the maximum advantage. Marxism, on the other hand, has a high concern with both of these. Common religion, the next type along the spectrum from mysticism, may or may not have a concern with material welfare, and is not in any necessary way interested in questions of the organization of political power. In general, common religion *per se* does not identify with any particular kind of political control, and is fairly negative in this respect. To move along the spectrum to the next type, cults, is to find a possible slight increase in concern with material welfare, and some, cargo-cults, for instance, have much concern with it; but still very little concern with organized control of the body politic. The next type, the sects, may well be found to be much more concerned than the preceding types with some re-arrangement of the economic and political structure. This is in the nature of sects, arising as they often do out of some form or other of deprivation. The deprivation does not have to be economic; other forms of deprivation which occur in modern societies are social, organismic, ethical and psychic.[1] That is to say, numbers of individuals may suffer a common experience of deprivation of social status, even although the members may be economically well off. Examples of this sort are the old, who in modern societies are regarded as less socially important than the young; or women, compared with men in European paternalistic society; the uneducated compared with the educated; the

[1] See Charles T. Glock and Rodney Stark, *Religion and Society in Tension* (1965), pp. 242-59.

coloured compared with the white, and so on. Deprivation may also be of a physical or a psychological kind. Ethical and psychic forms of deprivation are those in which there is a sense of loss or deprivation of values; this may well be a potent source of religious sectarianism. However, not all of these kinds of deprivation necessarily result in the formation of sects, for, as Glock and Stark suggest, " deprivation is not, in itself, a sufficient condition " for the emergence of an appropriate social group or sect. Other conditions are necessary; notably a sufficient sense of *shared* deprivation, the perception that there is no already existing institutional arrangement for meeting the need, and the emergence of a leader with a new conception of how the deprivation can be remedied. In many sects, even in those arising out of economic deprivation, this takes the form of an ideal, to be realized in some future condition of society, perhaps in a millenarian way, but it may not be a practical issue in the present state of things. Denominational-churches may share the millenarian attitude of the sects so far as this world's goods are concerned; nevertheless they may also exhibit a certain amount of concern with interim rearrangements, and may affirm the need to reorganize society here and now in terms of social and personal justice. The national church, or national religion, has a real concern with the control of the material world in the interests of religion, and finds political power an essential means for achieving this end. Sometimes the state church will reveal its opposition to mysticism by seeking to use its political power to suppress the nonconformity of the mystic. Finally, the communist state is concerned with material goods as the primary reality in the human situation, and therefore its priorities are with total governmental control. The exercise of governmental power is regarded by Marxists as an interim necessity until, with the full establishment of socialist society, the state can be allowed to wither away. Nevertheless, until then it persists.

Another contrasting feature which can be observed between the two ends of the spectrum is, at the mystical end, a low concern with the process of history, that is, with history as something possessing real significance for human affairs, to high concern with this at the Marxist end. In between we find

roughly the same gradation of attitudes. In common religion such concern may possibly be shown, but equally possibly it may not ; the overall complexion of the common religion area of the spectrum is not notably coloured by keen concern with the processes of history. Cults, too, may or may not exhibit this kind of concern, depending on the particular nature of the cult. In general, however, since quite a considerable proportion of this type of religion (in the world context) consists of rural, agricultural cults, where it is the ever-recurring cycle of the year that is the major concern, the linear process of history and the difference between one age of human history and the next is of only minor importance. Sects may certainly show a stronger concern with the historical process ; but in their case it is more likely to be an eschatological interest, an interest in the great final event which will one day cut across the present irrelevant and insignificant succession of temporal events. Denominational-churches share this attitude to some extent, but in so far as their members are predominantly urban and middle-class they have tended to be identified in a positive sense with the growth of industrial societies, and in this milieu ideas of " progress " and the steady improvement of human affairs through the course of the centuries are common. The national church, in particular, sees itself as the instrument *par excellence* through which divine providence operates in the world of men. The *idea* of the divine right of kings to rule on God's behalf, directing affairs as God wills, has not altogether disappeared from the ideology of the state church in England,[1] and certainly not from the Catholic Church, whose head claims to be God's vice-regent on earth, directing the course of affairs and by aspiration, at least, exerting powerful influence in the political realm.

In the case of Islam, as the type of religion that *is* also a nation, there is a very strong sense of the working out of a process of Islamization of the world in the course of the centuries. And it is hardly necessary to mention the place held in Marxist ideology by the concept of historical progress, in the form of the historical dialectic, and the profound significance accorded to the

[1] See T. O. Ling, " Religion in England : Majorities and Minorities ", in *New Community*, ii, no. 2 (Spring 1973), 117-24.

supposed successive stages of human history from primitive tribal communism, through primitive slavery, feudalism, and capitalism, to the final stage of a socialist world, by means of what Karl Marx described as " a long and painful process of development ".[1]

Yet another characteristic which varies in intensity from one end of the spectrum to the other is, at the mystical end, a high concern with *wisdom*, understood as something perennially unchanging and therefore ancient, as the sure and only guide to action, and at the other end a total lack of concern with such ancient perennial wisdom, and a high concern instead with the most recent of all " scientific discoveries ", that of Marxism, or historical materialism. In between we find once again a consistent gradation of concern, with perennial wisdom gradually losing importance in the middle bands of the spectrum (the sects and churches) and pragmatic ways of dealing with human problems receiving more emphasis, until the emphasis is almost exclusively on the most recent hard and fast solutions to human problems, those of Islam, and of Marxism.

The order in which the various types of religion have been arranged on the spectrum between the yogi and the commissar can, therefore, be regarded as having a good basis in more than one of the characteristic features which these types exhibit. It is, therefore, I suggest, a useful way of indicating the spread, the range and the variety of religion, and of emphasizing a point which is not without importance in the evaluation of religion in the contemporary world, namely, to put it at its simplest, that there is more to religion than its ecclesiastical form and organization. It is appropriate, therefore, that the academic study of religion should not be confined to the latter but should cover the whole range of the phenomena which have been briefly and cursorily examined here, from mysticism to Marxism.

[1] See T. B. Bottomore and Maximilien Rubel, *Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology and Social Philosophy* (Penguin Books, 1963), p. 119.