

Book Reviews/Comptes rendus

DAVID MARTIN, *Pentecostalism: The World Their Parish*. 2002. Oxford, UK: Blackwell. 197p.

David Martin, Emeritus Professor of Sociology, London School of Economics, one of the most prolific contributors to the sociology of religion, provides his latest instalment on the work he began with *A General Theory of Secularization* (1978). In *Pentecostalism* Martin attempts to account for the apparent resurgence of religion, especially outside of the West, and particularly among Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians. Pentecostalism is one example of religious change in the late 20th century among many including shifts in Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Pentecostalism now accounts for approximately 15-20% of all Christians worldwide and represents a significant cultural change.

Pentecostalism emerged in the late 19th and early 20th century from the Holiness and Methodist traditions. Initially, Pentecostalism was not considered an important factor on the religious landscape. Most sociologists were concerned with accounting for the impact of modernity on Western social life and the demise of religion. Quietly, Pentecostalism grew to become one of the most substantial shifts within Christianity and among the world's religions. This is where Martin applies his sociological skill in an attempt to explain the impact of Pentecostalism within Christianity and more importantly the ability of Pentecostals to adapt and succeed in a modern and globalizing world.

Martin's work is convincing. He picks up on his complex theory of secularization which questions views of the inevitable decline of religion, arguing for detailed comparative analysis of the interaction between religions and the dilemmas of modernity. Martin is sympathetic but not uncritical of Pentecostals. More importantly, he takes seriously the role of religion as a cultural resource that enables practitioners to engage the world.

Pentecostalism, while growing, does have its exceptions. Martin discusses the different "cultural receptivity" factors between North America, Europe, and those regions primarily in the southern hemisphere. Martin examines the impact of rationalization, privatization, differentiation, pluralism, religious monopoly and religious volunteerism and the consequences for religion and society. Chapter two effectively summarizes much of the current debate within the sociology of religion concerning the significance

of religion in Europe and North America. More importantly, it points to why Pentecostalism is a significant movement globally except in Europe.

The rest of the book consists of case studies that examine the impact of modernization in Latin America, Africa, and Asia and the corresponding religious and cultural interactions with these sweeping global changes. The Latin American case deserves some attention. Martin argues that Pentecostalism aided the transition in Latin America from a pre-modern to a post industrial society, not unlike the role Methodism played during the industrial revolution in Britain. In a Weberian fashion, he views the theology of Pentecostalism as a catalyst for a new world order that fits well with a Pentecostal dynamic and system of ideas. This new Protestantism enables people to become modern global actors, and quite successful as well. Latin American Pentecostals may be mostly poor, but they are disciplined and world-affirming which contributes to a new Pentecostal ethic. This ethic engages Pentecostals with contemporary global realities like the new economy. Furthermore, because Pentecostalism is a renewal movement the process of bureaucratization and routinization is always challenged by pragmatic flexibility, which is an advantage for the Pentecostal entrepreneur. I would note that it is not the domain of Pentecostals alone and comparative work with other world religions bears this out.

Martin concludes that Pentecostalism mobilizes the culturally and socially despised of the world, carrying them from the margins to modernity. This process, however, is not one of simple cultural homogenization. Rather, it illustrates the ability of Pentecostalism to appropriate and localize a version of Christianity in its own social space. The emerging global Pentecostal movement is characterized by transnational or global networks with distinct local flavours. The future of Pentecostalism, as a movement of transformation and adaptation, is still to be determined as it continually mutates in interaction with global change. All those interested in the interplay of religion, social change, and culture, would do well to read Martin's current analysis of a work in progress.

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