Despite the emergence of new historiographical methods and religious styles, the need to reinforce America's moral identity has never really abated and in time of crisis it is likely to become more rather than less acute. Witness the recent discussion of American "civil religion", a more sober but no less determined effort to affirm an inherently religious dimension in American self-understanding.

"Retribalization" may indeed trivialise itself by overemphasising communal unity, by returning to doctrinal absolutism, or by trying to construct a non-political future. (One feels that this last is presently happening in many Spirit-oriented groups.) If the gathering of resources is to issue in a new realisation of the power of the Gospel it will have to involve a critical re-appropriation of the complex history of Christian tradition. It will have to come to terms with religious experience as an alienating factor as well as a force of conscience. And it will have to see and understand that interaction with cultural forces is a phenomenon from which no religious body escapes.

Robert Handy's volume should be a valuable resource for this task. It offers a wealth of information on denominational life organized in the "decline of Christendom" framework exemplified by Ahlstrom and others. The stories are skilfully and sensitively (though prosaicly) told, especially those which tended to be obliterated or patronised in the past. Roman Catholic history, for example, is treated with a genuine respect both for its commitments and its agonies.

This is not a "people's" history, the work of a social behaviourist. There is much discussion of church order, doctrinal controversy, the numerical growth and decline of churches and of the relationships between churches and society. This is all to the good, however, as a new stage comes into being. History is neither "bunk" nor "just history" (in the sense either of numbers or experiences). The shaping and re-shaping of church policy structure and doctrine remains a significant indicator of what a church will do in response to life in and around it. Handy's history shows that nearly always, American churches have accepted the role of building up, more or less critically, the moral idealism and national identity of their country and are loathe to give up that role lest crises be provoked both in the church and in society.

The chapters dealing with Canada provide an interesting contrast to the main body of the work which deals with the United States. While the Canadians have in many ways caught up in terms of spiritual distress, they are still fighting an older version of the battle as to who shall be the spiritual and cultural conscience of the nation.

ALDEN V. BROWN

THE SOCIOLOGY OF SECULARISATION, A CRITIQUE OF A CONCEPT, by Peter E. Glasner. *Routledge & Kegan Paul,* London, pp. 137 + viii £4.75

Are we ever going to have a satisfactory approach to, and explanation of secularisation? Most people are convinced that modern society is in some way secular. Extensive disagreement arises over the exact location of the secular and the reasons for its emergence. Such issues are the perennial problems of sociologists of religion. Books on the subject are legion, yet none has been acknowledged as a definitive answer—none raised to the status of a classic. Permeating a great deal of infighting, there is the weakness that the sociology of religion in general, and secularisation in particular, lacks an adequate theory. Thus, anyone who attempts to enter the arena—one might say jungle—must realise its great complexity and be prepared to approach it with humility, if not awe. Many great minds have got lost in the undergrowth.

The conclusion of Peter Glasner's book suggests that the answer is now before us. As the title suggests, his approach is strictly theoretical and his data secondary. He presents no new material or the findings of empirical research. Indeed, he scorns such research which is used as a basis of theory and gives rise to what he calls systematic empiricism. Much of his book is negative. He attempts to cut to shreds with sometimes obscure, and at others well rehearsed reasons, nearly every previous writer on the subject, Parsons, Berger,

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Bellah, Yinger, Wilson—the lot—and to accuse them of presenting in one way or another little more than social myths of secularisation. (To be with it these days, one has to use the term myth!) In Glasner's eyes, all have sinned, for all have indulged in ideological promiscuity. They have leant too much on the Weber-Troeltsch dichotomy of church and sect, they have idealised the Catholic establishment of the middle ages, they have been seduced by ecclesiastical organization, they have clung to church membership, to cult, to magic, and they have used conventional definitions of church, religion, secularisation, and so on.

And so Glasner wants to lead us out of the ideological jungle. But how does one transcend ideology? How does one differentiate it from truth? There is no carefully worked out or unequivocal answer. In his final chapter, he offers a solution by falling back on a little known work of Simmel, which was translated some years ago, and from it, and from a certain reading of Weber and ·Durkheim, suggests · that the religious should be differentiated from religion or religions. How ·the religious is to be defined and described is not spelt out in great detail: briefly it is seen 'as a specific form of social relationship found within the undifferentiated group.' It is located in certain types of social relationships involving humility and exaltation. The religious is therefore not subject to secularising processes: it is eternal. By contrast, religion, based on organization and institution can be influenced by such forces and will probably disappear. What is the relation of one reality to the other? Why should the religious be defined in such a way? Glasner fails to answer such questions and appears to be indifferent to religion but holds the religious in high regard. The personal-social relation is protected but the organization is of no consequence. And without describing it, he refers to 'the normal processes of religious development'. What are these? Here is ideology confirmed, not eliminated. And so we remain in the jungle.

The book may well turn out to be useful for undergraduates yearning for a comprehensive collection of resumes of what other writers have written on secularisation, coupled with critical notes. The style savours of a doctoral thesis, and a final glance at the preface confirms the hunch.

W. S. F. PICKERING

DEVIANT LOGIC: SOME PHILOSOPHICAL ISSUES, by Susan Haack. *Cambridge University Press*, Cambridge, 1974. xiv + 191 pp.   £3.80

The title of this book makes obvious what its subject-matter is: it is concerned with non-classical logics, and not with their formal characteristics, but with whether there could be good grounds for adopting them. In another respect, however, the title is misleading. The use of the apparently pejorative term 'deviant', rather than 'variant' or 'non-standard' or just 'non-classical', suggests, first, that Dr. Haack is convinced that classical logic is in possession, and, secondly, that she frowns on attempts to dislodge it. Actually, Dr. Haack adopts no clear attitude to the question whether or not classical logic encapsulates the principles of inference that we are in practice accustomed to recognise as valid; and she expressly maintains that we *might have* good ground for adopting a non-classical logic, although she is at most only very mildly sympathetic to the thesis that we actually do have such grounds. Her failure to answer, or even very clearly to pose, the question whether classical logic is in possession, is a serious defect, because it obscures the distinction between two quite different sorts of ground that may be offered for the adoption of a non-classical logic. One type of ground is the contention that we do not, as a matter of fact, recognise all classical forms of reasoning as correct when applied to statements of certain kinds: that we therefore need to diverge from classical logic if we are to remain faithful to the logic of our language. The other type of ground is that, while we do in practice acknowledge classical reasoning as valid, our doing so produces a kind of incoherence in our language. Many philosophers, including Frege and Tarski, have argued that accepted linguistic practice involves such an incoherence, that it is like a game whose rules have not been formulated and

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