DAVID MARTIN

David Alfred Martin

30 June 1929 – 8 March 2019

elected Fellow of the British Academy 2007

by

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David Martin was Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics and Political Science from 1971 until his early retirement in 1989, and the Elizabeth Scurlock Professor of Human Values at Southern Methodist University from 1986 to 1990. His numerous publications made distinguished and globally recognised contributions to the critical understanding of secularisation, the global spread of Pentecostalism, the interweaving of religion, music and poetry, and debates about religion and violence. His major works include *A Sociology of English Religion* (1967), *A General Theory of Secularization* (1978), *Tongues of Fire: the Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (1990), *Religion and Power: No Logos without Mythos* (2014) and *Ruin and Restoration: on Violence, Liturgy and Reconciliation* (2016). David Martin is also remembered for his leading role in the campaign to defend the Book of Common Prayer and the King James Bible.

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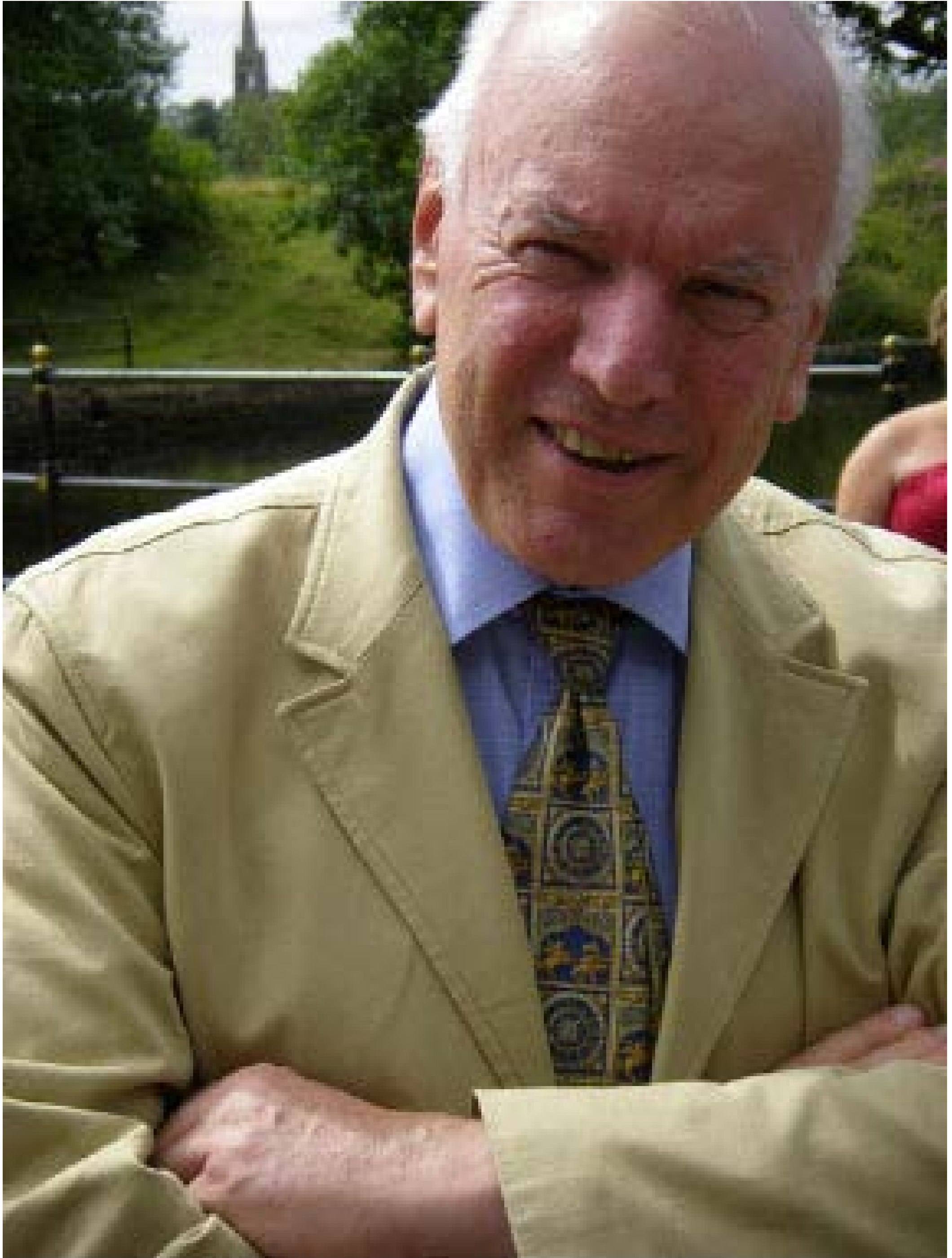

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Childhood and early years

David Martin was born on 30 June 1929 in Mortlake, in south-west London. The first chapter of his intellectual autobiography—*The Education of David Martin* (Martin 2013a)—contextualises this event by telling us more about his parents and grandparents and thus the influences on his early life. His maternal grandparents lived in Dorset, a part of the world that resonates at several points in David's life; his father's family came from rural Hertfordshire. Both father and mother worked 'in service' in London—the latter in a private house in Kensington and the former as a chauffeur then taxi driver, including a spell at Lambeth Palace during the time of Archbishop Davidson.

David's parents met at the Central Hall in Westminster, where he was baptised in 1929. This was an imposing building erected in the early years of the twentieth century, which 'announced' the presence of Wesleyan Methodists in central London (Martin 2013a, 26). It was Methodism, moreover, that infused David's upbringing and early life both directly and indirectly.

In terms of direct influences, his father is a key figure—a revivalist preacher who hoped, and no doubt prayed, that his son would follow in his footsteps. That didn't happen, at least not in the way envisaged, but Martin senior remains an active presence in the narrative—the more so in the sections that deal with David's later attention to Pentecostalism. The parallels with Methodism are nicely captured in the following: 'The moment I saw the Encyclopaedia and the Dictionary next to the Bible in the homes of Latin American Pentecostals I knew where I was. This was my childhood, my father's house and my mother's father's house, but far, far away and much later' (Martin 2013a, 6). The point is made in the initial pages of David's autobiography—the dénouement comes on pp. 209–16 in an account of a single day in Chile in November 1991.

The indirect influences are legion: the commitment to education, wide reading, singing, piano playing and—without exaggeration—the setting of a lifetime's agenda. The crucial questions were already forming: the need to make sense of the role of religion in society, the nature of power and politics, and especially sincerity and violence (Martin 2013a, 4).

More than a third of David's intellectual autobiography is taken up with the period prior to his eventual PhD at the London School of Economics (LSE). He arrived at the age of thirty by a roundabout route. This included regular church-going; primary and secondary (grammar school) education in south-west London, with short periods of evacuation in the early years of the war; a growing—though not always straightforward—passion for music; conscription in the Non-Combatant Corps from 1948 to 1950; teacher training at Westminster College in Oxford; a period of primary school

teaching in Dorset; and an external University of London degree in sociology through a correspondence course.

Parts of this chronology require elaboration. First are the constant references to expanding knowledge—encyclopaedic reading in several disciplines (notably English literature and theology) with much gratitude to those (particular teachers) who pointed the way or opened new vistas. Much of this reading, however, was off-piste, well beyond any prescribed syllabus and at times a distraction from it. Importantly, the acquisition of knowledge included the history as well as the practice of music and, intuitively, its links to the transcendent. The chapter on military—or rather non-military—service jars in comparison, but becomes a crucial building block in David's later work on pacifism, war and violence. The sections on teaching, both training and practice, are set against the break-up of a brief and unhappy marriage but also the discovery of a 'way out' located both in sociology itself (a way of thinking that made sense of the world) and in the correspondence course devised by Wolsey Hall and delivered via the external University of London degree programme. The plan worked: in 1959 David was awarded a first-class degree for a set of papers that caught the attention of the examiners and permitted entry to LSE for a doctorate in sociology. The detail of his doctoral studies will be covered in a later section.

Family life

There was one more loop in the road before David finally settled at LSE as a member of the Sociology Department. This was a brief period of teaching in Sheffield at the beginning of the 1960s, which took place before the completion of his PhD. It was here that he met Bernice (née Thompson) who became not only David's wife but also his 'lifetime's critic and interlocutor' (Martin 2013a, 126) in a partnership of more than fifty years. They moved to London in the summer of 1962—she to teach at Bedford College and he to LSE. Appointed there as a lecturer he was promoted to Reader in 1967 and to Professor in 1971, retiring in 1989. At the time of moving, David already had one son (Jonathan); three further children followed—a daughter (Jessica) and two more boys (Izaak and Magnus).

Anyone one who knew David would be aware of the significance of Bernice's contribution both to his person and to his many and varied activities. Bernice is an accomplished musician and a distinguished scholar in her own right—the author of *A Sociology of Contemporary Cultural Change* (B. Martin 1981) and of important contributions to the understanding of Pentecostalism in Latin America, not least the place of women in this hugely significant movement (B. Martin 2013).

But quite apart from publication, Bernice and David, both singly and together, supported innumerable ventures and even more individuals in the sociology of religion and indeed beyond. Significant among these were 'non-standard' students to whom David showed both great sensitivity and much kindness. Such support took place in the largest of conferences and the smallest of workshops over many decades. More personally, many of their colleagues and students (both past and present) enjoyed not only welcome encouragement but warm hospitality in the Martins' home in Woking.

PhD and other early writings

David Martin's transition to full-time doctoral research at LSE had some elements of farce (Martin 2013a, 111–21). By his own account, he 'shuffled towards the sociology of religion sideways like a crab with uncertain intent' (Martin 2017, 59). Nevertheless, he took full advantage of the opportunity to mould his earlier experiences and extensive reading into a view of the world which was to remain largely unchanged throughout his adult life. His eccentric but erudite supervisor, Donald MacRae, excelled in mislaying students' papers and failing to keep appointments. But he approved of David's decision to study pacifism in Britain between the two World Wars; and he eventually helped him to see the benefits of adopting a sociology of knowledge approach to understanding the dialectics at work in ideological, religious and cultural movements. The PhD was completed in 1964.

A modified version was published a year later under the title *Pacifism: an Historical and Sociological Study* (Martin 1965a). In some ways it was a conventional treatment of the subject in so far as it interpreted pacifism in the light of a conceptual framework derived mainly from Ernst Troeltsch and Max Weber and with an emphasis on examples from modern British history. The central argument established the contrasting logics of 'sectarian absolutism and ecclesiastical compromise' (Martin 1965a, viii) not only in religion but also in politics—and particularly in religiously inflected politics. The sectarian impulse to reject or to withdraw from the world is contrasted to the church-like tendency to make compromises with vested interests and powers. This general idea was not entirely original: Milton Yinger, for instance, had expressed it in 1946 as the dilemma of purity and power. But David amplified and enriched it immeasurably by tracing its reverberations through examples taken from many different times, places, spheres of life and religious traditions. His analysis also explored in unprecedented detail the sometimes contradictory paths taken by different types of sect.[1] More importantly, he made the thoroughly original contribution of identifying

[1] At more or less the same time, another of Donald MacRae's former doctoral students, Bryan Wilson,

the sociological type that he labelled 'the denomination' and its characteristic stances in relation to political dissidence, voluntarism and pacifism.

The sociological distinctiveness of Christian denominations had long been assumed to lie in their emergence from sectarian origins, but in a seminar paper at LSE David offered a different interpretation. His paper, which first appeared in *The British Journal of Sociology* (Martin 1962), was included as an Appendix in *Pacifism*; it argued that groups of Christians such as Methodists, Congregationalists or Baptists had rarely displayed a sectarian spirit. They were not advanced sects. Instead, they were characterised for sociological purposes by a bundle of characteristics including their rejection of the principle of *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*, their pragmatic attitude to organisation, their subjective approach to sacraments, their traditional eschatology of heaven and hell, and their individualistic approach to morality. The article concluded that '[t]he sociological idea of the denomination is the idea of Her Majesty's Opposition, of disagreement within consensus, except that the opposition is permanently out of office' (Martin 1962, 224). Moreover, David pointed out that denominations tended to flourish in conditions of moderate social change rather than in conditions of turmoil when the contrasting attractions of sectarian rigour and ecclesiastical stability might prove more alluring. Strong echoes of these arguments about the sociological-cum-theological specificity of the denominational form and its underlying principle of voluntarism can be discerned in his explorations of global Pentecostalism some three decades later (Martin 2013b).

Indeed, David Martin's early writings about pacifism and denominations provide an essential key for unlocking many of the intellectual and broadly political preoccupations of his adult life. And, although some strands wore out, new strands of his thinking were added to the thread as fresh topics of interest were woven in. One of the original strands, which was expressed most forcefully and unequivocally in the Preface of *Pacifism*, proclaimed that he was 'entirely convinced that war and militarism are utterly repugnant to reason and religion' (Martin 1965a, x). But this stark affirmation eventually morphed into what he came to consider a more 'realist' version in many later writings, notably the view that 'pacifism brought about what it was most concerned to prevent, especially given the reluctance of its influential proponents to use pre-emptive force in the late 1930s' (Martin 2018, 164). Indeed, Bernice Martin records that '[h]is pacifism had finally died at Easter 1961' (B. Martin 2001, 208).

An additional strand of David's early writings reflected the inspiration that he had gained from reading Max Weber's essay 'Religious rejections of the world and their direction' (Weber, 1948a). It was Weber's insistence on the need to trace religious

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had already elaborated his own, but different, typologies of religious sects and the tendency for some of them to develop into denominations: see, for example, Wilson (1959) and Barker (2009).

motives for rejecting the world through domains as different as the economy, politics, aesthetics, erotic life and the intellectual sphere that recommended itself to David as a methodological precept. Here was an early expression not only of his capacious intellectual curiosity but also of the kind of interdisciplinarity that he regarded as essential for capturing the patterned interconnections between so many disparate phenomena. In his view, '[o]ther disciplines may try to live in sealed off compartments but it is the task of sociology and of the sociology of religion in particular to think in terms of dialectic and of synthesis' (Martin 1966, 359). The interweaving of religion with music, poetry, architecture and politics was to be particularly close to his heart as well as to his intellectual project.

Nevertheless, David Martin never felt that his early enthusiasm for an interdisciplinary, comparative study of religion in all its subtlety and complexity was widely shared. On the contrary, he was acutely aware of the tendency for British social scientists to regard religion as a marginal epiphenomenon worthy of no more than a footnote. Indeed: 'Of all the different enclaves of contemporary specialization, the sociology of religion most resembles the republic of Venice just before Napoleon snuffed it out for ever' (Martin 1966, 355). Furthermore, the effect of this marginalisation was, he argued, to turn the sociology of religion in on itself to the point where the accumulation of knowledge about religious activities in isolation from the rest of the social and cultural world had become an end in itself. The result was that, as he captured it in one of his ironic *bons mots*, '[w]e now know the Standard Deviation of the time spent on shaving by Members of the Society of Jesus' (Martin 1966, 359). And, in anticipation of the sociological concern with 'lived religion', which was not to take root among sociologists of religion for a further three decades, he recommended that research should focus less on congruence between beliefs and the Athanasian Creed and more on 'the kind of religious and superstitious frameworks by which men live' (Martin 1966, 359)—or the 'subterranean theology' of everyday religion (Martin 2013a, 131).

This not to say, however, that David neglected the empirical investigation of religion. Indeed, he was among the pioneers who collected and analysed basic information about religious beliefs, practices and demographic variations in the UK; and he admired the work of Gabriel Le Bras—the doyen of methodical mapping of religion in France. Some of this material featured in the first course that he helped to teach at LSE on the social structure of modern Britain; and much of it underpinned his first book-length analysis of religion, which not only explored the social and cultural factors associated with religious belief, practice and organisation but also expressed his suspicions about the secularisation thesis (Martin 1967). In addition, he identified and defended intellectual spaces in which it was legitimate for sociologists to do research on religion and in which it made sense for religious leaders to take

seriously the findings of such research. As the founding editor of *A Sociological Yearbook of Religion in Britain*, he introduced the idea of 'socio-religious studies' which were intended to be mutually beneficial to sociologists and 'churchmen' (Martin 1968, 9). He also pioneered studies of folk religiosity, 'the unknown gods of the English' (Martin 1969a, 103–13), the social class basis of different expressions of Christianity, religion in Central Europe and organisations ancillary to religious institutions. What he called 'the politico-religious nexus' (Martin 2014, 9) was at the heart of all these studies.

Although many of David's colleagues and students at LSE regarded the sociology of religion as irrelevant to their overriding concerns with social class and mobility, he relished the paradox of using 'the sceptical tools of sociology against its dogmatic assumptions' about the disappearance of religion as a chimera (Martin 2013a, 128). And his tongue-in-cheek self-description as 'an academic deviant living by a non-existent subject' (Martin 2013a, 127) should not be allowed to conceal his fervent determination to turn the tables on his critics for their adherence to what he regarded as historicist conceits and utopian delusions. This was to become a central theme of his intellectual project, especially his extensive work on secularisation (see below) and of his energetic engagement in contentious debates about higher education and culture. Nor did his self-ascribed status as an academic outsider prevent him from accomplishing the routine tasks that accompany increasing seniority as a scholar: for example as Dean of Students at LSE, as Chairman of the British Sociological Association's Study Group for the Sociology of Religion, or as President (for eight years) of the Société Internationale de Sociologie des Religions.

Politics, activism and violence

Witnessing at first hand the various waves of student rebelliousness that broke over LSE in the late 1960s David interpreted them as evidence of a new 'dissolution of the monasteries' (Martin 1969b). He regarded the then-fashionable forms of 'radical subjectivity', spontaneity and the advocacy for a 'free university' as ideological forces threatening to undermine the discipline, patience and objectivity required for effective teaching and learning. In his view: 'The disintegrations of the sixties … undermined the essential elements of rote and memory that provide the foundation of vision, flexibility, and creativity' (Martin 1983a, 172). In turn, these elements, which depended on the support of 'hierarchy and habit', were said to be 'preconditions of freedom' (Martin 2013a, 134). For David, 'order, discipline, and authority' are not only integral to politics but are 'necessary for human flourishing' (Martin 2012, 312).

Not surprisingly, then, he described himself as being ‘on a direct collision course with the student revolutionaries who believed liberation followed from the disruption of habit and the destruction of hierarchy’ (Martin 2013a, 134). His inaugural lecture at LSE in 1972 bravely took the theme of ‘Order and rule’, insisting that chaos could not lead to freedom. His aim was to defend ‘masters and mastery, disciplines and discipleship, habit and continuity, the located and the familiar, the bounded and the particularized, rules, roles and relations’ (Martin 1973, 142). Authority, he argued, must precede spontaneity—just as actors require a part before they can act.

If David’s concern in the 1960s had been that ‘antinomian students and seditious dons’ (Martin 1983a, 183) were trying to undermine the intellectual case for disciplined and creative work in higher educational institutions, he was equally disturbed by what he saw as the British government’s erosion of the autonomy of universities in the 1980s. The irony was not lost on him that the reasons for opposing student anarchy had been co-opted and traduced within two decades by the policies of Mrs Thatcher’s governments which effectively forced the university sector to conform to what he regarded as narrowly utilitarian criteria for assessing the value of teaching and learning.

Taking the leading role in editing the volume on *Anarchy and Culture* was but the first of several high-profile forays that David Martin made into controversial issues in British public life. His love of music and English poetry was matched by a strong impulse to take a public stance in the defence of the institutions that he regarded as under threat from destructive forces: ‘school, university, family, church and what I call ordinary politics’ (Martin 2018, 178).

David’s second foray into public life was sparked by responses to a Church of England working party’s report of 1982 entitled ‘The church and the bomb’. In particular, he quickly co-edited *Unholy Warfare: the Church and the Bomb* (Martin and Mullen 1983), a book that brought together contributors as diverse and as eminent as Enoch Powell, Tony Benn, Lord Soper and E. P. Thompson. The fact that so many of the contributors had a high public profile and that the book was published hard on the heels of the 1982 conflict with Argentina over the Falkland Islands—not to mention the bitterly contentious service of reconciliation that followed the war—served to evoke strong sentiments not only in the British establishment but also in wider movements for peace and against the use of nuclear weapons.

The chapter that David (1983b) contributed to *Unholy Warfare* was entirely consistent with the reasons that he had previously given for abandoning the pacifism of his early adult years. It was also a reflection of his theological conviction that ‘God does not underwrite his Kingdom in political terms’ (p. 106) and that ‘Christianity cannot offer an unequivocal translation of the gospel of peace, love and universal fraternity into political terms and actions’ (p. 93): it is redemptive rather than ethical.

His argument was for a form of political realism which precluded any policy of unilateral nuclear disarmament and which acknowledged that self-interest was the dominant force in international relations—an intriguing combination of Augustinian theology and *Realpolitik*.

In turn, these arguments against unilateral nuclear disarmament are part of David's broader understanding of religion, politics and violence. In his words, perhaps echoing Max Weber: 'Political life is a form of restricted warfare, and the state embodies an irreducible residue of violence' (Martin 1983b, 91). Rejecting the idea that religions are merely about salvation, he also regarded them as being necessarily engaged in conflicts over power and therefore essentially political. At the centre of these conflicts we find, once again, an oscillation between attempts, on the one hand, to link religion to dominant political powers and, on the other hand, to withdraw into sectarian enclaves. He was in no doubt, moreover, that both of these attempts at power-seeking could take a violent turn and that there was a potential for violence in all forms of human solidarity (Martin 2012, 300). He was equally sure that a 'holistic analysis of power, including the uses, occasions and triggers of violence' (Martin 2014, 9) was necessary for a sociological understanding of both religion and secularisation.

Nevertheless, the popular claim that religion is a primary cause of violence in the modern world was not credible in David Martin's eyes. On the contrary, he agreed with William Cavanaugh (2009) that the purported nexus between religion, irrationality and violence was not much more than an ideological product of the Enlightenment myth about 'an innocent secular liberal state' which legitimated itself as the only agency capable of managing violent and irrational others—as in the so-called, but misnamed, wars of religion. In short, his conclusion was that, while there is nothing specifically or uniquely violent about religion, good research should raise questions about the precise circumstances in which religions (or secular ideologies) have undoubtedly turned malignant and violent.

The reasons for the third of David's forays into public controversies are so deeply embedded in his views on relations between theology and sociology that they deserve separate treatment in the relevant section below (pp. 401–7). As before, the main point will be that activism and serious intellectual inquiry were two sides of the same coin—or, as he put it, '[t]hinking with your life' (Martin 2018, 405–6).

Secularisation

David Martin's writings about secularisation are arguably his best known and most influential contributions to the sociology of religion, but it is important to bear in

mind that his core ideas in this field weave intricate patterns through his much broader interests in music, poetry, politics, violence and Pentecostalism. Furthermore, his persistent concern with the secular and with processes of secularisation showcase his insistence on the need to combine a search for patterns in historical change and continuity with a sensitivity to paradox, irony, contingency and reversibility. This clearly sets his work apart from that of scholars who frame secularisation as an inevitable, irreversible consequence of single causes such as modernisation, differentiation or rationalisation.

The radical character of David's approach to secularisation was evident in his early discussions of the concept's roots in counter-religious, utopian ideologies such as rationalism, Marxism and existentialism, which appealed to death-of-God theologians as well as to social scientists. Convinced that uses of the term secularisation were 'a barrier to progress in the sociology of religion' (Martin 1969a, 9) he argued, on the one hand, that the term needed to be explicated in detail and, on the other, that it should be 'erased from the sociological dictionary'. The fact that he saw no contradiction between these two positions both enhanced the distinctiveness of his work *and* attracted criticism from partisans on all sides of the secularisation debate.

Perhaps the most distinctive aspect of David Martin's analysis of both religion and secularisation is the centrality of struggles for power. He argued that religion's dual capacity both to exercise power and to validate the power of temporal authority places it in a dynamic tension with 'the world'.[2] Religion can lend legitimacy to temporal affairs; and it can challenge them. The outcomes of this continuous dialectic between religion and power vary across time and space. At one extreme lie countries such as France where a revolutionary conflict in the eighteenth century paved the way for a sharp dichotomy between religion and political power. By contrast, countries such as the USA and England experienced a relatively unproblematic transition to forms of democratic accommodation. But in both cases, as well as in the ones in between, David described the dynamic at work as one of thrust and recoil. In the history of Christianity, therefore, '[e]ach Christianization is a salient of faith driven into the secular from a different angle, each pays a characteristic cost which affects the character of the recoil, and each undergoes a partial collapse into some version of "nature"' (Martin 2005, 3). The main focus is on configurations of power and their varied inflections in different contexts, with particular emphasis on relations between religions and states. It is no exaggeration to say that this framework, which draws on sociology, history and theology, amounts to much more than a theory of secularisation.

[2] '[D]ifferent religious visions are in conflict with the world of power to varied degrees, ranging from Buddhism at the extreme position of tension, followed by Christianity, with Islam in the position of minimal conflict' (Martin 2018, 180).

It can work equally well for cross-national analyses of the political economy of religion and the secular.

This is the fundamental starting point for the cogent arguments that David subsequently elaborated not only in a full-fledged theory of secularisation but also in various self-critical revisions (Martin 2005). Secularisation in this perspective is definitely not about anything as simple as the decline of religion. It is about patterns of long-term, slow, partial, geographically specific and, above all, reversible shifts in the balance of power between religious and political forces—and the entanglement of these shifts with changes in elite and popular expressions of culture at the centre, and on the peripheries, of societies.

Charting an intellectual course at odds with most of his contemporaries in sociology, David recognised that modernisation had partially separated religion from other areas of society but he rejected any implication that modernity had *necessarily* relegated religion to the private sphere of life—or segregated it from the public sphere. On the grounds that religion and politics were necessarily interrelated, he argued that there was no inevitable progression towards the decline of religion—merely a balance between the religious and the secular which was continually shifting in response to historical contingencies and social forces. In short: 'The supposed association of modernity with secularity … is contingent not necessary' (Martin 2014, 23). He never denied that secularisation *could* take place: but he rejected all unidirectional models which mechanically tied secularisation to modernity (Martin 2017, 37).

The most influential statement of David's theoretical ideas about high-level patterns of contention and accommodation between the religious and the secular was his book *A General Theory of Secularization*. The central idea had been heralded as early as 1965 (Martin 1965b) and further elaborated in Martin (1969c). The *General Theory* itself appeared in 1978 and is still an indispensable point of reference for discussions of secularisation. Its 'intellectual architecture' sought to explain how particular historical and cultural contexts refracted universal social processes to produce distinctive—albeit flexible—patterns of secularisation and de-secularisation in different countries and regions of the world. The six basic patterns, which were identified principally in terms of degrees and types of pluralism, included: total religious monopoly; religious duopoly; state church counterbalanced by free denominations; American religious pluralism; symbiosis of church and state (as in Nordic Lutheran and Eastern European Orthodox countries); and countries where 'Catholicism (or Orthodoxy) stood in for the state under conditions of external domination or external threat' (Martin 1978, 55).

The book drew on impressive amounts of detail from historical and social scientific studies to explore the historical origins, trajectory and outcomes of each of these basic patterns—and of their many variants around the world. Complex relations of

power are shown to structure each pattern and variant, lending them 'particular character and colouring' (Martin 2014, 22). In subsequent publications David reflected self-critically on his general theory and offered further refinements of the basic framework and of its applicability to more and more cases. It was particularly gratifying for him to see that by the turn of the century 'an extraordinary reversal' (Martin 2005, 22) had occurred in the fortunes of conventional ways of thinking about secularisation. He welcomed the growing acceptance of ideas that included: the notion that religion persisted as a response to feelings of deprivation; the argument that western Europe was an exception to the continuing vitality of religion elsewhere in the world; the fact that religion had played a prominent role in the transition of states in Central and Eastern Europe from Soviet domination to self-determination; and the claim that tendencies towards cultural individualism had not necessarily excluded religion from all spheres of civil society. Other refinements emerged from extended exchanges with his critics (Martin 2018).

It is a mark of the imaginative originality, logical rigour and erudition of David's work on secularisation that other scholars still regard it as a classic in the sense of continuing to raise important questions, challenges and doubts (Carroll 2018; Koenig 2018). Indeed, it continues to generate a rich variety of hypotheses and hunches for other researchers to examine, especially as his publications after 1990 accorded more prominence to studies of religion in Latin America and to other regions of the world where the growing vitality of forms of evangelical Christianity has confirmed his theoretical expectations.

Pentecostalism

At Peter Berger's invitation, David Martin became an International Research Associate of the Institute for the Study of Economic Culture at Boston University in 1986. The following year he accepted the position of the Elizabeth Scurlock Professor of Human Values at Southern Methodist University in Dallas. These appointments gave David the opportunity to take his intellectual project in new directions while retaining a central focus on questions about secularisation and the renewal of religion in new contexts.

Given that religious developments in North America had avoided the 'spirals of antagonism' triggered by the clashes in Europe between Catholic monopolies, French secularism and the English pattern of a national church combined with denominations, David was drawn to the case of Latin America where a different pattern of development could be discerned. It seemed to him that emerging forms of popular Protestant evangelicalism—with loud echoes of eighteenth-century Methodism—

were replacing time-worn Catholic monopolies with more voluntaristic and entrepreneurial forms of Christianity.[3] Indeed, his reading of existing sources and his own fieldwork among Pentecostal groups in various countries of Latin America indicated that the latest twist in the struggle for power between religious and political forces had created a productive 'crossing of the "Anglo" and Hispanic patterns'—not as a replay of the old European dynamics but as 'a new moment with new possibilities' (Martin 1990, 295). In other words, he adapted and extended the framework forged in his *General Theory of Secularization* to take account of the rapid and large-scale growth of Pentecostal churches in Latin America. His first comprehensive assessment of this new twist in the *chassé-croisé* between secularising and de-secularising forces was *Tongues of Fire: the Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Martin 1990). It was yet another reinforcement of his argument that the paths towards modernity could take different forms and that secularisation was not an inevitable location on, or destination of, any of them.

The unpredicted foundering of state socialist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe and their eventual replacement after 1990 by a variety of states with more liberal and democratic constitutions provided further support for David's view that modernity could follow widely differing trajectories. He seized the opportunity to examine these upheavals and their consequences for Christian churches while comparing events in Central and Eastern Europe with the rising strength of Pentecostalism in Latin America and elsewhere. His arguments, first aired in the 1991 F. D. Maurice lecture series at King's College London, were later published in *Forbidden Revolutions: Pentecostalism in Latin America, Catholicism in Eastern Europe* (Martin 1996). The central themes in both cases had robust roots in his earlier work on the revolutionary potential of the voluntary principle to overcome marginalisation at the hands of dominant systems (ideological or religious) and to replace them with democratic institutions. In his view, Pentecostals in Latin America and the Christian churches in Central and Eastern Europe had, in their different ways, contributed to 'the break-up of the hegemony of ideological power and the creation of autonomous space for the egalitarian exercise of personal and spiritual gifts' (Martin 1996, 6). Interest groups and voluntary associations were key to his reading of this transformation in which groups at the margins of a society were nevertheless able to transmit powerful messages to the centre, in some cases re-energising subcultures that had long been submerged. At the same time, David Martin was aware of the risks that Pentecostalism might favour machismo among its pastors and that political developments in post-communist Europe might aggravate deep-seated religio-ethnic tensions. But he remained confident

[3] For example: 'Pentecostalism in Latin America represented the appearance there of idiosyncratic versions of "the denomination" as the dominant form in North America' (Martin 2018, 165).

that, turning Karl Marx on his head, 'the beginning of criticism … was undertaken by religion' (Martin 1996, 93) in both Latin America and Central and Eastern Europe.

David's pioneering work on Latin America was complemented twelve years later by an assessment of Pentecostalism's diffusion through other regions of the world—notably Africa and Asia. Indeed, his *Pentecostalism: the World their Parish* (Martin 2002a) raised the question of the extent to which Pentecostalism was becoming 'a global option'. In particular, he emphasised Pentecostalism's consonance not only with competitive pluralism, religious entrepreneurialism and voluntaristic forms of organisation but also with liberal capitalism on a global scale—albeit with national variations. The constant features of his analysis included the flexibility and transnational portability of Pentecostal commitments among large masses of people in marginal or subdominant positions; the enhancement of women's status in families where the risk of machismo was challenged; ambivalence towards worldly politics; growth through contact with friends and family; and a positive attitude to material betterment. In short, David characterised Pentecostalism as a diffuse and ambiguous cultural revolution aimed at personal transformation principally among 'people on the move', most of whose 'movers and shakers' were women (Martin 2002a, 168).

At the same time, David was acutely aware that other commentators on the growth of Pentecostalism both in Latin America and elsewhere regarded it differently and were variously critical of his interpretation (Casanova 2018). Some found Pentecostal theologies and practices distasteful or anti-modern; others were sceptical about the motivations of Pentecostal leaders; yet others dismissed the spread of Pentecostalism as an export of American culture and entrepreneurialism; and a final group were not persuaded that Pentecostalism overcame tendencies towards machismo. None of these criticisms deflected David from his view that Pentecostalism was 'a dramatic instalment of "modernity" within the distinctive trajectory of Anglo-German Evangelicalism and Pietism' and at 'the confluence of black and white revivalism' (Martin 2017, 171).

Socio-theology, liturgy, poetry and music

It is already clear that David Martin's work straddled several disciplines. The significance of history in his understanding of the process—or rather processes—of secularisation is self-evident, as are the interactions of religion and state (and thus of sociology and political science) in his work on religion and violence. David's skilling in theology as well as social science demands, however, particular attention in that it manifested itself in multiple ways: in his academic thinking; in his role as a priest in the Church of England; and in his spirited defence of the Book of Common Prayer

and the King James Bible. This last reflects, in turn, an unusual sensitivity to liturgy, language and poetry—thus extending interdisciplinarity yet further. The paragraphs that follow look first at the intersections of sociology and theology before turning to the Prayer Book controversy as such. A brief reference to David's final (posthumous) book: *Christianity and the World: Secularisation Narratives through the Lens of English Poetry 800AD to the Present* gathers a number of these ideas together, before a short note on music brings the section to an end.

The interweaving with David's biography is straightforward enough. The significance of his upbringing as a Methodist has already been noted, including protracted nurture in traditional forms of worship and scripture. Bit by bit, however, he moved towards Anglicanism and was confirmed into the Church of England in 1979. A relatively short time later, David was accepted for ordination, spending a term at Westcott House in Cambridge along the way; he was ordained deacon in 1983, priested a year later and became an honorary assistant priest at Guildford Cathedral for the rest of his life. His confirmation pretty much coincided with the publication of the collection 'Crisis for Cranmer and King James' in *Poetry Nation Review*, the key document of the Prayer Book controversy (Martin 1980a).

David held firmly to the idea that sociology and theology are commensurate disciplines. That view is not universal. On the one hand positivist readings of social science reflect on the emergence of sociology as an autonomous discipline, seeing this as a way of thinking that is antithetical not only to theology but to religion itself. Put bluntly, religion is seen as the intellectual and dying 'other', inimical to social progress and for this reason to be left on one side. On the other hand, theologians can be equally disparaging about the social sciences. David's own position regarding the latter stance was given book-length treatment first in *The Breaking of the Image* (Martin 1980b), then in *Reflections on Sociology and Theology* (Martin 1997) and more recently in *Ruin and Restoration: on Violence, Liturgy and Reconciliation* (Martin 2016).[4] Each of these will be considered in turn.

The Breaking of the Image was a published version of the 1977 Gore lectures, delivered in Westminster Abbey. It contains an innovative blend of theological and sociological insight which draws on a long-standing fascination with sign and symbol and the profound ambiguities that they express. The constant dialectic between cross and sword is a case in point: 'The cross will be carried into the realm of temporal power and will turn into a sword which defends the established order. It will execute the criminals and heretics in the name of God and the King' (Martin 1980b, 28). That, however, is not the whole story: temporal kingship is equally likely to be defended by reversed arms, that is by 'a sign of reversal and inversion' (p. 28). Empirical examples

[4] Also important in this context is the edited volume by Martin, Orme Mills and Pickering (2004).

of these complex dialectics follow, including a memorable description of the cross which dominates the US Airforce Chapel at Colorado Springs, itself a very striking building:

> At the centre of the huge arsenal is a chapel built of stained glass spurs like planes at the point of take-off. The cross is also like a sword. Looked at from another angle the combined cross and sword is a plane and a dove. The plane is poised to deliver death rather than to deliver *from* death and the dove signifies the spirit of peace and concord. (Martin 1980b, 28)

The extended discussion found in *Reflections on Sociology and Theology* had a different and very specific prompt: John Milbank's acclaimed but highly polemical *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason* (Milbank 1990). In this Milbank maintained that theology must not allow itself to be contaminated by social scientific thinking. The rationale is clear: social science is by definition secular (a profoundly negative term in Milbank's lexicon). For it to engage with theology is, therefore, for it to encroach unacceptably on the sublime. There is no room for compromise on these issues. David argued otherwise: that sociology, appropriately understood and carefully deployed, can (and indeed should) contribute to theological understanding without either discipline being compromised. The problem lies not in the disciplines as such, but in the fact that sociology is not always appropriately understood by theologians; nor is theology sufficiently valued by sociologists—a state of affairs that is regrettable.

For David, theological insights and the contexts from which they emerge are necessarily linked. In theological language, the Christian calling, both individual and collective, is to be 'in the world but not of it'. In David's more specific socio-theological discourse, there exists between the specificities of each situation (the context) and the exigencies of the Christian gospel 'an angle of eschatological tension'. Documenting and explaining the sharpness of this angle are, essentially, sociological tasks. So are suggestions of possible resolution if the tension becomes unbearable. Theologies of baptism in different parts of Europe offer a revealing illustration. Modes of initiation that 'fitted' the state churches of Northern Europe are no longer 'fitting', either socially or theologically, as these churches gradually mutate from ascription to voluntarism as the basis of membership (Martin 1997, 81; see also Davie, 2006). New understandings of baptism are required as new forms of ecclesiology emerge; they are more likely to succeed if the sociological shifts are not only taken into account but are properly understood.

In Chapter 10 of *Reflections on Theology and Sociology*, David explored the underlying tension further with reference to particular roles, one of which is the military chaplain—a position built into the structures of secular power (in this case

the armed forces) but held by individuals commissioned by the Christian churches. In other words, the military chaplain is doubly commissioned. The tension moreover is unavoidable: chaplains receive 'the indelible stigmata of a social role' (Martin 1997, 149), yet are subjected to criticism to the extent that they cease to be distinctively Christian. Interestingly David observes that the criticism comes as much from those on the margins of the churches as it does from those within. The charges, moreover, are levelled both at Christian ministers who become chaplains, and at ministers who claim exemption from the obligations (military service) placed on ordinary citizens. This is a classic no-win situation.

The inevitability of the dilemma is once again worked out in terms of the 'angle of eschatological tension', itself set up by the impossible demands of the New Testament. It is plain, for example, that the teaching laid down in the Sermon on the Mount cannot be realised in practice either by a believing individual or by the institutional church. The former is asked to be in the world but not of it; the second to reconcile partnership with the state with its transformation. The role of the military chaplain displays this dilemma with particular clarity: he or she either joins up and takes the consequences in the form of persistent unease or opts out. In institutional terms, this mirrors very precisely the difference between a church and a sect—a persistent theme in David's writing.

In parenthesis, the role of the Christian politician is similar. Here David's discussion drew directly on Max Weber—specifically his iconic essay on 'Politics as a vocation' published in 1919. The core of Weber's argument lies in his conviction that politics is indeed a vocation which requires passion, so long as this is tempered by a sense of responsibility and proportion (Weber 1948b, 116). Crucially, the politician has to accept responsibility for the consequences of his or her actions, which implies in turn a right understanding not only of the relationship between ethics and politics, but also of the delicate connections between means and ends—a theme developed at some length. Towards the end of this discussion, Weber too returns to the Sermon on the Mount, recognising once again that this deals in absolutes. Politics, on the other hand, operates with a different set of assumptions: 'For if it is said, in line with the acosmic ethic of love, "Resist not him that is evil with force", for the politician the reverse proposition holds, "thou shalt resist evil by force", or else you are responsible for the evil winning out' (Weber 1948b, 119–20). The crucial point is to recognise the difference between the two realms. Arguments or actions that confuse them will almost certainly end badly.

David's most recent exploration of socio-theology can be found in *Ruin and Restoration: on Violence, Liturgy and Reconciliation* (2016), which includes an introductory essay by Charles Taylor. In this, David offers a particularly stark juxtaposition of the world which is governed by a dynamic of violence against which

Christianity and Buddhism offer non-violent alternatives. They are, he argues, the axial religions that lie most obviously against the 'grain of the world'. The book begins with a governing essay that develops this theme with reference to Christianity: specifically, it traces the tensions between 'the kingdom' and 'the world' and thus 'the tension between the social sciences as accounts of how "the world" works in practice and Christianity as a hope concerning a better world' (Martin 2016, 4). Six commentaries on the atonement follow in a volume which develops some of the ideas initiated—but not always followed through—in *The Breaking of the Image* (Martin 1980). The continuities are clear, but it is *Ruin and Restoration* that contains the fullest and most deliberate attempt to *integrate* sociology and theology.

The earlier section of this memoir entitled 'Politics, activism and violence' included two instances when David himself engaged a more public role—with reference to university life and to a Church of England working party on nuclear disarmament. Such prominence was equally true in relation to the Church's attempts to 'modernise' both its language and liturgy. Indeed, the section devoted to this question in David's autobiography is entitled 'Another culture war', for thus he saw it. It is quite clear, in fact, that it engaged him totally—body, mind and spirit. The reasons are clear: the Prayer Book, the King James Bible and classic hymnody were not only redolent of family and childhood but brought together the things that he valued most: 'poetry, music, poetry set to music, the poetics of place, the Church in a place, and articulate speech' (Martin 2013a, 161). Clearly, these sentiments predate by many decades his eventual embrace of Anglicanism.

The focus was an issue of *Poetry Nation Review*, entitled 'Crisis for Cranmer and King James', guest-edited by David (Martin 1980a). The issue was in effect a manifesto—a vigorous defence of the place of the Book of Common Prayer and the Authorised Version of the Bible in both the spiritual and more general culture of England. It took the form of forty-four essays and testimonials written by what can only be described as the cultural elite (political, literary and musical), and included a series of petitions addressed to the Church of England's General Synod. The list of signatories to the petitions is even more impressive than the contributors to the *Review* itself. The combination did its work, provoking a major and animated debate (both inside and outside the Church). Leaders appeared in the major dailies, alongside dozens of articles and letters. Sacks full of mail arrived at LSE. The Church however was resistant, with the effect that the debate moved to Parliament in the form of a bill which reached a second reading before it was withdrawn. The outcome was partial success: no *volte face* on the part of the Church but '[t]he Prayer Book was not to be consigned to the museum, and its services would remain available to worshippers' (Martin 2013a, 174). This is hardly the place to argue the rights and wrongs of the Church of England's policy regarding liturgical documents. More importantly, it is the place to note that, in

addition to a distinguished academic career, David provoked on this occasion a major public debate.

David Martin's ordination followed, and offered—amongst many other things—a new way to combine priesthood and poetry. This was in the sermon, a mode of address that became deeply satisfying. Three collections have been published (Martin 1989, 2002, 2008) all of which demonstrate a very particular skill: sermons are crafted rather than written and (in David's words) constitute 'an art form that juxtaposes quotations and releases the charged-up energies stored in minute atoms of text and the multiple meanings of single words' (Martin 2013a, 175). In his hands, they did indeed.

It is important finally to note David's most recent book (in press), published after his death: *Christianity and the World: Secularisation Narratives through the Lens of English Poetry 800 AD to the Present*. This remarkable volume brings together many of the themes already addressed in this memoir, all of which find their focus in the relationship of Christianity to the dynamics of social order or what theologians might call 'the world'. The social order in this case is England and the medium of expression a thousand years of English poetry, through which it is possible to discern the thrusts and recoils of secularisation over the long term. Thus, in a single volume, David incorporates a lifetime's work on secularisation, a profound knowledge of English poetry and deep theological insight. A chronological (chapter by chapter) sequence of reflections relates each of these strands to the others. Those who are drawn to this collection will arrive by different routes, but all of them will be enriched by what they find.

Given its close connections to poetry, music constitutes a powerful sub-theme in this narrative. Indeed, any account of David Martin that did not consider the significance of music in both his life and his work would be seriously incomplete. Its centrality provides, therefore, a fitting 'note' on which to conclude this memoir.

Music was central to David's experience from the very beginning, unsurprisingly in that Methodism was—indeed still is—a singing religion. Hymns were poems set to music, and an early musical training (piano lessons) ensured that David was an asset to both choirs and congregations in local Methodist churches. His predilection for Handel showed at an early stage—see, for example, his reaction to hearing the *Hallelujah Chorus* for the first time ('I... rushed out of the room to hide my tears': Martin 2013a, 59). Playing the piano to an exacting standard gave him lifelong pleasure, most especially perhaps as an accompanist for his wife, herself an accomplished singer—a role established in the 1970s. In his own words, this was the (relatively late) moment when music finally 'came right' (p. 62).

Although David described his experience of taking diploma examinations for the Royal Schools of Music as 'humiliating' (Martin 2013a, 57), he continued to develop a profound understanding of music—a body of knowledge that became inextricably

linked with his wider thinking. For example, in *A Sociology of English Religion* (Martin 1967, 85–6), different religious cultures are captured by the terms: 'carol', 'hymn' and 'chorus'. Clearly these labels have social as well as musical overtones. Singers of hymns and carols, moreover, demonstrate identifiable affinities with more complicated music: hymns are aligned with Handel and Mendelssohn; carols with Bach, Byrd and Britten. Choruses pull in a different direction, reflecting revivalist currents both in England and beyond.

More than fifty years later, David returned to the question of music in the retrospect that he contributed to *David Martin and the Sociology of Religion* (Martin 2018). In this he responded to the essay by Pål Repstad (2018) by taking time to clarify his own sociology of music, demonstrating at each stage how this related to his understanding of secularisation. Of particular note is the distinction between a high tradition of devotion found in forms of Catholic and Orthodox ceremonialism and a demotic tradition associated with 'participation, expressivity and sincerity' (Martin 2018, 173–4). Even more striking, however, is the comparative perspective that underpins this analysis. Identifiable patterns can be found in different parts of Europe and the USA, which relate closely to those associated with secularisation.

Indeed, the discussion turns full circle as David reminds us that France offers a dramatic contrast to England, 'based not on an evolutionary politics associated with Evangelicalism but on politics oscillating violently between revolution and restoration' (Martin 2018, 175). Thus, in France, in contrast to Britain—or indeed Germany—the linear development of choral singing was necessarily disturbed, as was the case in anticlerical Italy. Developments in architecture can be approached along similar lines. In London, for instance, Westminster Abbey is adjacent to the Houses of Parliament, whereas in France, the *mairie* almost always 'confronts' the Catholic church—a juxtaposition discovered in both the largest conurbation and the smallest commune; and in Rome, the huge Vittorio Emanuele II Monument obliterates the view of St Peter's.[5] Thus, for David Martin, these buildings and their spatial relationships mediate the shifting dispositions of religious and secular power no less powerfully than the developments of poetry, liturgy and music.

Conclusion

It is no easy task to capture the life and work of a scholar such as David Martin, who not only contributed with such distinction to an impressively wide array of intellectual

[5] This application of secularisation theory to European city architecture was explained at length in Martin (2010) and extended in Martin (2014) to North America, Moscow and Eurasia.

subjects but who also brought passion and reason to bear on debates about matters of public contention. One thing is crystal clear, however: his impact on the sociology of religion and socio-theology continues to be profound. His writings about pacifism, secularisation, religion and politics, Pentecostalism, liturgy and music have become standard references.[6] And his practice of reflecting critically on his own ideas has helped to make them more widely accessible. Not surprisingly, then, numerous students and researchers remain heavily indebted to him for providing a model of engaged scholarship—or, in his own words, 'thinking with your life'.

The impact of David Martin's life and work owes much to the sophistication of his writing style, which calls for special mention. His writings were not only artfully crafted and rooted in layers of erudition and artistic sensibility but were filled with striking metaphors and rhythms. Indeed, his writing combined Pascal's 'spirit of finesse' with his 'spirit of geometry': that is, poetry and musicality in the service of lucidity and logic. At the same time, humour, paradox and irony enlivened even his technical analyses of social structure and religious symbolism. The talks that he prepared for BBC radio programmes were models of wit as well as insight; and his book reviews sparkled with humour, notwithstanding the occasional poisoned barb.

David Martin was a complex individual. At times diffident and ill at ease, he was entirely sure of an argument once it was worked out and was ready to defend it with tenacity. This 'unlikely sociologist', had an evident taste for public controversy. Most of all, however, David Martin will be fondly remembered as an inspiring scholar, exacting teacher, supervisor, examiner, mentor and friend by the generations who follow in the sociology of religion—the sub-discipline that he did so much to promote.

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[6] A *David Martin Reader* was edited by Wei Dedong and Zhong Zhifeng (2015) and published in both English and Chinese, marking not only David's global reputation as a scholar but also a particular moment in the evolution of Chinese thinking about religion.

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