

- Vinaya** The discipline books of Buddhism, delineating the rules of the Sangha, and so on.
- Viśiṣṭādvaita** Qualified Non-Dualism: the theistic philosophy of Rāmānuja and his followers.
- Vodun or Voodoo** Afro-Catholic religion of Haiti.
- Xenophanes** (?580–?480) Critic of religion in ancient Greece.
- yoga** System of meditation in the Indian tradition.
- Zarathustra (Zoroaster)** Founder of Zoroastrianism, from Persia (Iran).
- Zen** Japanese meditation Buddhism.
- ziggurats** Ancient Near Eastern pyramids and temples.
- Zionism** The movement to create a national state in Palestine, viz. Israel.
- Zoroastrianism** Religion founded by Zarathustra: found in Persia and India (among the Parsees).

INTRODUCTION

This book ranges widely over the religions and ideologies of this world. I believe that by seeing the patterns in the way religion manifests itself, we can learn to understand how it functions and vivifies the human spirit in history. In this book I consciously try to classify the elements of worldviews, both in their beliefs and in their practices. These classifications come from reflections about the varying cultures of humankind. Though I sometimes simplify, this is in the hope of clarifying perceptions. I have also fortified the text with many allusions. It might be useful for the reader to consult with some narrative on faiths and world religious history, such as my own *Religious Experience* (new edition, 1986), or my recent slim works *Asian Religions* and *Religions of the West* – but there are plenty of other fine surveys of a similar kind.

In providing a kind of physiology of spirituality and of worldviews, I hope to advance religious studies' theoretical grasp of its subject matter, namely that aspect of human life, experience and institutions in which we as human beings interact thoughtfully with the cosmos and express the exigencies of our own nature and existence. I do not here take any faith to be true or false. Judgment on such matters can come later. But I do take all views and practices seriously.

This book is in some sense a phenomenology of religion. That is, it belongs in the same genre as Gerardus van der Leeuw's famous *Religion in Essence and Manifestation* (VAN DER LEEUW, 1938). But my book, and indeed van der Leeuw's, could also be called a morphology of religion, incorporating a theory. It explores and articulates the 'grammar of symbols' – the modes and forms in which religion manifests itself. *

The word 'phenomenology' derives from the philosophical tradition of Husserl. But comparative religionists (henceforth I shall

simply call them religionists) use it in a different way from philosophers (SPIEGELBURG, 1960). Among religionists it means the use of *epoché* or suspension of belief, together with the use of empathy, in entering into the experiences and intentions of religious participants (WAARDENBURG, 1973). This implies that, in describing the way people behave, we do not use, so far as we can avoid them, alien categories to evoke the nature of their acts and to understand those acts (KING, WHALING, 1984). In this sense phenomenology is the attitude of informed empathy. It tries to bring out what religious acts mean to the actors.

But this book is something else: it is intended to delineate the various manifestations of religion in complex ways. It discusses a number of theories – about myths, doctrines, art, rituals, experience, organizations, ethics, law – and a certain amount of religion, politics and economics. So it is an ambitious enterprise.

Gerardus van der Leeuw used the term 'essence', which implies a definition of religion. I do not here wish to affirm a definition in the strict sense. Moreover, I believe that there are sufficient affinities between religious and secular worldviews (such as applied Marxism and nationalisms) to include the secular in the scope of this work. I hope this will make the book comprehensive. To split a category can be dangerous if it is taken too far. Because religion is separated from secular worldviews, for instance, it is assumed that East Germany was a secular state; in fact Marxism functioned in that country much as a state religion, as Lutheranism once had. If you did not adhere to the state religion you were denied opportunities in education and employment. So my enterprise here, though largely concerned with religion, can also be categorized as a version of worldview analysis (SMART, 1983).

The term 'worldview' is not the best. It suggests something too cerebral. But religions and comparable worldviews should be studied at least as much through their practices as through their beliefs. Likewise nationalism involves more than a set of myths or stories about 'our' country: it involves practical actions and acknowledgments of loyalty; it involves joy when 'we' win (at soccer or at war), the speaking of 'our' language, appreciation of the monuments and beauties of 'our' country. So when I use 'worldview' I mean in-

carinated worldview, where the values and beliefs are embedded in practice. That is, they are expressed in action, laws, symbols, organizations.

We tend of course to think in our own languages, and this provides canals of usage down which our intellectual barges navigate. I am not saying that other tongues are necessarily better, but sometimes they offer illuminating terms which we can incorporate into our own. So we probably need an international vocabulary.

Cross-cultural phenomenology of religion

The phenomenology (that is, the theory and morphology) of religion has usually been conducted in European languages, notably English, French, German and Italian: see the work of Eliade, Parrinder, Chantepie de la Saussaye, Heiler, Bianchi (BIANCHI, 1964; SHARPE, 1975). But it is important to make use of terms drawn from non-European traditions. Shaman, mana, totem, tabu/tapu, yoga and karma have all entered the English language, but there are other vital terms which have not and which might be most useful in cross-cultural comparisons.

The dominance of the English tongue in cross-cultural comparisons is no accident. It is largely a product of colonialism and therefore of unequal cultural power relationships. Moreover, British and American scholars played an important role in developing the subject. There was often the tacit assumption that Christianity was normal religion, and that it was against this norm that the primary comparisons were to be launched. English is fast becoming the major global tongue and is therefore a proper vehicle for such explorations, but there is no reason why we should not employ a range of cross-cultural terms to further comparisons. I shall in this book make use of a number of crucial expressions, including *bhakti* (devotion), *dhyāna* (meditation) and *li* (appropriate behaviour). Sometimes distinctions and nuances are clearer and richer in other languages than English. There may be differing ways of carving up the territory. Sometimes this may justify us in creating neologisms. In the West it has often been assumed that God and gods are normal: a system is either

theistic or polytheistic. But what about the Theravada? Its Ultimate is not God or the gods, but nirvana. Should we then see Christianity and Judaism as major non-nirvanistic religions?

In affirming that phenomenology should be conducted on a cross-cultural basis, I am saying two things: that its findings should make use of cross-cultural terminology and sensitivity; and that there should be no assumption of the priority of one tradition as the norm. This is where informed empathy has another role, in creating the sensitivity to allow me (a Westerner, a Scot, a male, an Episcopalian, albeit with Buddhist leanings) to enter into other cultures' attitudes (SMART, 1973). But in thinking about the cross-cultural we need to reflect on what the boundaries of cultures are.

The boundaries of traditions, regions, cultures

The word 'cross-cultural' may be understood to refer to items belonging to broad cultural areas, such as China, South Asia and Europe. But there can of course be many traditions within areas: thus Jaina, Buddhist and Hindu traditions are important in classical India. But even here there are vital sub-traditions within each, while some scholars rightly question whether we can really treat Hinduism as a single tradition (SMART, 1993). In modern times perhaps we can, because that is how to a great degree it is perceiving itself. But what about in classical times? We have to be realistic in the study of religion and take the richness and variegations seriously.

That is often why the insider can be wrong about her tradition. When Kristensen said that the insider is always right, he meant that she is right about herself (KRISTENSEN, 1960). That is, she has certain feelings and beliefs and they are an important part of the data we as religionists are set to explore. But an insider can be terribly wrong about her tradition, ignorant about or insensitive to the variety of her religious heritage. I once heard a Baptist minister give a lecture on Christianity which was, phenomenologically speaking, absurd. What he identified as true Christianity would not be accepted by great swathes of Catholicism, Orthodoxy, Episcopalianism, Methodism and so on. Indeed, one major use of the word 'phenomenology' is to

mark off what we as religionists are trying to do from those committed interpretations which essentially are part of preaching (MACQUARRIE, 1981).

Thus we must distinguish between descriptive and normative uses of such terms as 'Buddhism' and 'Christianity'. But the most important point here is that traditions are plural. Moreover, they may vary regionally as well as by lineage or tradition. The Episcopal church in Fiji may vary greatly from its counterpart in Scotland; Theravada Buddhism may differ markedly in Thailand and Burma; the Unification Church in Korea and England may have great differences.

While the comparative study of religion is usually conceived in macro terms, it could equally well be construed as dealing with micro or intra-tradition comparisons.

Questions of comparison: platform and context

The expression 'comparative religion' or 'comparative study of religion' (I would prefer 'comparative study of worldviews') has met with some disfavour in differing eras. In a backlash against missionary colonialism the word 'comparative' has been taken to express a certain arrogance – comparisons, as the saying goes, being odious. It has sometimes been under suspicion for an opposed reason, it being thought that comparativists love likenesses excessively, thus blurring the uniqueness of the preferred religion (some form of Christianity) (JORDAN, 1905). But there is no need at all for comparison to stand on a superior platform, and comparing traditions, sub-traditions or whatever involves the discerning not only of likenesses but of differences.

It might be thought that my present ambitious project has its own platform, maybe not that of the certain and confident missionary, but that of the Western 'scientist' who wishes to look at religions and worldviews from a platform of analysis and superior understanding. It is true that in a sense I do start from a platform of 'science'. I believe that religious studies can be, within the limits of recognition that it is a human enterprise (being by and about human beings), scientific (SMART, 1973). But I cannot believe that by itself this claim is

arrogant. Arrogance arises rather from the manner in which a method is pursued. If the anthropologist visits a village simply to get material for a doctorate, without consideration for the villagers as fellow human beings with their own sensitivities and concerns, that is arrogant and heartless. But the enterprise of advancing knowledge by itself is not arrogant. Yet what of knowledge and power relations? What if the whole structure of knowledge displays a certain arrogance?

I would defend the comparative study of religion on a number of grounds. First, it has often acted as counterpoise to cultural tribalism, such as often prevails in Western universities and, especially, in theological schools. Second, it often raises fruitful questions for contemplation by religions and more generally worldviews: any real similarity between the piety of one tradition and that of another poses obvious questions for each. Third, because of ideological prejudices, religious studies is too often neglected among the social sciences, where projection theories seem to be fashionable: the comparative study of worldviews can be a source of insights, as Weber well knew.

The deeper challenge to cross-cultural studies concerns context. The point was most incisively made by Hendrik Kraemer (KRAEMER, 1938). Even if we think that we have made a valid comparison, for instance between Luther's and Shinran's account of 'grace', the divergence of context between the two may invalidate the comparison, in the sense of alike-claiming. The details of context give quite diverse flavours to the two phenomena.

The problem with this thesis is that everything becomes so particularized as to be incommensurable with anything else. This is self-defeating in a number of ways. It means that there is no vocabulary which can properly describe the offerings of different cultures. Besides, while we know that each individual human being is unique, implying that each person has a divergent set of flavours drenching her experience, it does not follow that we have no common feelings and perspectives. It does not follow that we cannot study medicine, which depends upon a range of alike-claims. We all have noses, even if each one is subtly different from all others. Anyway the proof is in the actualities: and we shall see how well the theoretical and descrip-

tive similarities laid forth in this book stand up to the necessary contextualities. Part of my way of dealing with the problem is the use of dynamic and dialectical phenomenology.

Dynamic patterns and dialectical relations in phenomenology

Because of essentialism (the view that a given type of phenomenon has a common essence) and other factors, earlier phenomenology tends to be synchronic and static. There is no harm in this within certain limits. Alike-claims and unlike-claims can be of this character. But we may also want to see if there are patterns of change. Do new religions tend to get institutionalized in certain ways? And, if so, what other effects does this have? Do certain forms of religious experience release creative or organizational behaviour in their recipients? And so on. If we can discern patterns, that is what I call dynamic phenomenology (PYE, 1972; SMART, 1983). Now obviously patterns of change in human history tend to be synergistic, so that they combine. Alternatively, a pattern of change in one context leads to different results in another context.

By dialectical phenomenology I mean more particularly the relationship between different dimensions of religion and worldviews. In general we can say about any system or scheme that one element in it is in principle affected by all others. An organism functions as a whole, so that an injury to one part affects the whole to a greater or lesser degree. A set of religious doctrines, for instance the teachings of Eastern Orthodoxy, is a sort of loose organism. It is not necessarily a consistent whole, but one doctrine, such as the creation, is affected by others, such as the incarnation of Christ (so Christ becomes Creator) or the definition of the sacraments (so the created world is viewed as sacramental). We can therefore see items in this field in the context of the scheme in which they are embedded (SMART, 1958). But more than this, we can view the items in one dimension (in this case the doctrinal dimension) in their interaction with items in other dimensions, for instance the practical (or ritual) dimension. The idea that the world is created out of nothing should be seen in the light of

the intensity of Christian worship: no limitation should be set on the glory of God. The idea that there is an ineffable aspect of God or Brahman should be related to the mystical path, as well as to other factors, such as the performative analysis of indescribability in the context of supreme praise (in other words, seeing how the language of ineffability actually performs the act of praising: you get something like this in 'I cannot say how grateful I am' which conveys how grateful I am).

Again we can see dialectical phenomenology at work in relation to a secular worldview. It is part of the doctrine of the United States that it favours and incarnates democratic values: this in turn has effects on the style of the Presidency. Its rituals include the practice of the President's going out and about among the people and being populist in his actions (displaying himself as a 'man of the people').

The dimensional analysis of worldviews

To flesh all this out I need to give a more detailed account of what I mean by the dimensions of religion (SMART, 1989). The pattern which I put forward is primarily directed towards what traditionally in English are called religions (I will not at this juncture go into a comparison of other concepts such as *dharma*, *magga*, *tao*, *chiao*, *din* and *religio*). But the schema also applies to worldviews other than religious ones.

The schema has a double purpose. One is to provide a realistic checklist of aspects of a religion so that a description of that religion or a theory about it is not lopsided. There is a tendency in older histories of Christianity for instance to emphasize the history of doctrines and organizational matters: you can pick up church histories (so called, for the title already makes some assumptions) which say very little about the spiritual and practical life, or about ethical and legal matters, or about the social dimension on the ground, other than the organizational side. Some treatments of the Hindu tradition concentrate on myth and social organization, and say very little about the philosophical side or about patterns of experience and feeling.

So one purpose is to achieve balance. The other is to give a kind of functional delineation of religions in lieu of a strict definition. I also avoid defining religion in terms of its foci or content. That is, I am not saying that religion involves some belief, such as belief in God or gods, because in some religions, notably in Theravada Buddhism and Jainism and in phases of the Confucian tradition, such beliefs are secondary, to say the least. As we shall see, two of my dimensions can concern the gods most lavishly – namely, the doctrinal and mythic dimensions – so it seems better not to try to define religion by content. The best we could do is use a phrase like 'ultimate concern' (TILLICH, 1969), yet this is rather empty and too wide-ranging. Or we could trot out the 'transcendent': a useful place-holder, open to as many ambiguities as 'religion' itself.

I do not deny that there is a role for place-holders. We need a term to stand for the phenomenological object of religious practice and experience. I prefer 'focus', in part because it has a plural ('foci'), whereas 'the ultimate' cannot be very naturally plural and in part because it does not carry any ontological baggage (SMART, 1973). It does not matter whether Vishnu exists or not – that is, it does not matter for our purposes, though for the faithful of course it matters – or whether there is a transcendent ultimate; but we can still recognize that Vishnu is the focus of the Vaishnava's dreams and worship, as Christ is the focus of the Eucharist. But it does not define religion to say that it has a focus.

The notion of a focus enables us to talk about worship and other activities in meaningful ways without having to comment on their validity, without having to comment on whether there is a Vishnu or a Christ. But it does enable us to think of Vishnu as focus entering into the believer's life, dynamizing his feelings, commanding his loyalty and so on. This is an advantage in discussing a controversial subject like religion. For a believer the focus is real, and we can accept this even if we do not want to say that it (or she or he) exists. I thus distinguish between 'real' and 'existent' as adjectives. The former I use, in this context, to refer to what is phenomenologically real in the experience of the believer. Whether the real in this sense exists is an altogether different question.

To return to the dimensions: in each case I give them a double

name, which helps to elucidate them and sometimes to widen them. The list of seven in the first instance is drawn from the catalogue in my book *The World's Religions* (SMART, 1989). I first enunciated the idea in 1969 (SMART, 1969), but had a slightly smaller list. I add two to the seven which are in my view the most basic. The extra two are the political and economic dimensions of religion. The seven are as follows (the order is rather random).

1. The ritual or practical dimension. This is the aspect of religion which involves such activities as worship, meditation, pilgrimage, sacrifice, sacramental rites and healing activities. We may note that meditation is often not regarded as a ritual, though it is often strictly patterned. This is partly why I also call this dimension the practical (EVANS-PRITCHARD, 1965).
2. The doctrinal or philosophical dimension. For different reasons religions evolve doctrines and philosophies. Thus the doctrine of impermanence is central to Buddhism. It also interacts dialectically with the ritual or practical dimension, since philosophical reflection of a certain kind aids meditation, and meditation in turn helps the individual to see existentially the force of the doctrine. Some traditions are keener on doctrinal rectitude than others: Catholicism more than Quakerism, Buddhism more than traditional African religions, Theravada more than Zen. We may note that diverse traditions put differing weights on the differing dimensions. Religions are by no means equidimensional.
3. The mythic or narrative dimension. Every religion has its stories. The story of Christ's life, death and resurrection is clearly central to the Christian faith. The story of the Buddha's life, though somewhat less central to Buddhism, is still vital to Buddhist piety. In the case of secular worldviews and to an important degree in modernizing traditions, history is the narrative which takes the place of myth elsewhere. So the version of history taught in a nation's schools is not only a major ingredient in the national sense of identity, but enhances pride in 'our' ancestors, 'our' national heroes and heroines.
4. The experiential or emotional dimension. It is obvious that certain experiences can be important in religious history – the enlightenment

of the Buddha, the prophetic visions of Muhammad, the conversion of Paul and so on. Again there are variations in the importance attached to visionary and meditative experiences: they are obviously vital to Zen and Native American classical religion (the vision quest); they are less important in Scottish Calvinism. But they or associated emotional reactions to the world and to ritual are everywhere more or less dynamic, and have been studied extensively (e.g. OTTO, 1917/1923).

5. The ethical or legal dimensions. A religious tradition or sub-tradition affirms not only a number of doctrines and myths but some ethical and often legal imperatives. The Torah as a set of injunctions is central to orthodox Judaism; the Shari'a is integral to Islam; Buddhism affirms the four great virtues (*brahmavihāras*); Confucianism lays down the desired attitudes of the gentleman; and so on. Again, the degree of investment in ideal human behaviour varies: it is central to Quakerism, less important in the Shinto tradition (though Shinto ritual was tied to the notion of the *kokutai* or national essence during the Meiji era and into the between-wars period). In modern national states certain norms of civil behaviour tend to be prescribed in schools.

6. The organizational or social component. Any tradition will manifest itself in society, either as a separate organization with priests or other religious specialists (gurus, lawyers, pastors, rabbis, imams, shamans and so on), or as coterminous with society. Embedded in a social context, a tradition will take on aspects of that context (thus the Church of England cleric begins to play a part in the English class system).

7. The material or artistic dimension. A religion or worldview will express itself typically in material creations, from chapels to cathedrals to temples to mosques, from icons and divine statuary to books and pulpits. Such concrete expressions are important in varying ways. If you only have to carry around a book (like an evangelical preacher in Communist Eastern Europe) you are freer than if you have a great monastery or convent to occupy.

Let me sketch out, for a couple of worldviews, how these dimensions operate. I shall take classical Christianity first (namely Catholic and Orthodox Christianity in the centuries not long after Constantine) (*Oxford Dictionary*, 1983).

1. Ritually the Church had evolved more or less elaborate patterns for celebrating the mass, liturgy or eucharist. It had various other sacramental rites, ranging from baptism to marriage to consigning the dead to the next world. It was also evolving the cult of saints, pilgrimages and so on. In practical terms there was a growing emphasis on the life of meditation. This helped to enhance doctrines relating to the ineffability of the Divine Being (especially the assumption in the liturgy and myths that God was male).

2. The religion had succeeded in fusing together motifs from the Jewish tradition and from Neo-Platonism (that is, the worldview of Plotinus and other religious followers of Plato during the 3rd and 4th centuries C.E.). Those charged with settling its doctrines tackled many current intellectual problems (assisted by thinkers such as Augustine and the Eastern Fathers) and grappled with matters arising from the narrative dimension. If, as the Biblical stories affirmed, God was successively creator, incarnate Jesus and mysterious inspirer, how could all this be reconciled with monotheistic Judaism? The answer was the Trinity doctrine, generator of heresies but gradually settling down as the norm within the two great churches.

3. The main narratives came to derive from the Old and New Testaments, though the church had to explain itself historically from those times up to the present – hence that great interpretation of history in Augustine's *The City of God*. The myths were wedded to ritual: for instance, in the eucharist's re-enactment of the story of the Last Supper, or in the evolution of a church calendar that re-enacted other parts of the story through the year and celebrated the saints, the heroines and heroes of the salvation history.

4. The creation of networks of monasticism favoured the cultivation of mysticism, which was reinforced by the absorption of Neo-Platonist ideals. In addition, the development of colourful, even

glorious ritual enhanced the more ordinary emotions of the devotional life.

5. The settling of the church into more defined ecclesiastical organizations helped the formation of a legal system, while Christian ethics was already well established through the Ten Commandments and the definitions of Paul and others in the epistles.

6. Organizationally, the two halves of the church eventually drifted apart, though each retained a fairly well-defined structure in alliance with the secular power. Most notable was the growth of monasteries, reflecting new ways of being Christian after the religion became fashionable, which in turn gave rise to a need to strengthen the spiritual life.

7. Meanwhile the churches had taken over many of the glorious buildings of the old Roman Empire and went on to construct new ones, giving Christianity a formidable material dimension reinforced by techniques of painting which encouraged the decoration of churches. Icons in the East performed an important ritual function, despite the largely aniconic traditions of Judaism, out of which Christianity had evolved.

These then are brief illustrations of the dimensional analysis of Christianity. A parallel inventory of a secular worldview can be drawn up (BELLAH and HAMMOND, 1980). In running through the dimensions I shall select the case of United States nationalism, starting with the mythic dimension.

1. The mythic dimension of the United States is contained largely in the received history – how the Union came into being, arising out of the rebellion against the British (pre-revolutionary history, including a slice of British history, to some extent serves as a sort of Old Testament). In subsequent history, certain items have a significant ritual role, especially the Civil War and its reflected depths as expressed on Memorial Day.

2. The doctrinal or philosophical dimension is expressed in the constitution as enshrining the values of a democratic society, and

loyalty to these values is an important mark of a genuine American citizen. It was notable that in the McCarthy years a counter-doctrine (communism) came to be seen as the central heresy (GELLNER, 1983).

3. The ritual of the United States is seen in various activities: saluting the flag, singing the national anthem on important occasions such as baseball games, the ceremonial duties of the President, pilgrimages to celebrate national monuments and, more informally, the beauties of the American landscape, wearing uniforms where appropriate, the honouring of past heroes such as presidents, poets, musicians and writers.

4. The emotional dimension is found in reactions to moving national occasions, to celebrations of patriotism, to the singing of significant songs and so on.

5. The ethical dimension is evident in puritan ideals, democratic values and patriotic values.

6. Organizationally, there is the deployment of the nation's institutions, in which certain functionaries play a key part. The priesthood of the nation are perhaps the schoolteachers, who induct the young into the national myth; the saints are the heroines and heroes; other sacred people (in a way) are the military. There are some tensions: people are often and necessarily critical of the President as a political figure; but as ceremonial leader of the nation he should command 'our' loyalty. And often a person's particular religion may run counter to the religion of the nation.

7. Finally, the nation incarnates itself in its material dimension: above all in the landscape, with its marvels and its familiarity; but also in the memorials and buildings of Washington and other sacred spots, including the battlefields of the Revolution and of the Civil War.

The relationship of the dimensions to disciplines

These various dimensions are not set in concrete. It is obvious that other ways of looking at worldviews are possible. The question is not whether my approach is the only one, it is whether it is fruitful. Clearly there can be more than one fruitful way of analysing religions and, more generally, worldviews. But it is worth considering how the dimensions relate to various disciplines within the academic marketplace. Indeed we may relate those disciplines to religious studies, which incorporate the exploration of various traditions and regions.

Textual and philological studies. Broadly, language studies have played a great part in the history of religions, for two main reasons: first, they are the key to texts which constitute the scriptural authorities of so many traditions (DENNY and TAYLOR, 1985). Second, they are the key to texts which are the chief sources of our knowledge of ancient and not so ancient religious traditions. We shall later examine the phenomenology of sacred books (and by contrast of oral traditions). We shall also advert to the social significance of the specialists who created and looked after such books (mainly males, mainly elite). Languages are also important for fieldwork. The sacred scriptures are often sources of a major part of the mythic dimension. They can also be vital (as in the case of the *Upanishads*) in the evolution of the doctrinal or philosophical dimension.

Anthropology and sociology. It can be argued that these two supposedly separate disciplines are really the same subject. As the joke has it: sociology is about us and anthropology is about them. Actually it is more complicated. Classically anthropology has concerned itself with small-scale and largely non-urban cultures. Non-Western societies which are not small-scale have sometimes fallen between the two stools. It seems logical that we should include all social studies under the same umbrella. Be that as it may, both have most to do with what I have called the social or organizational dimension, but it turns out too that anthropologists have helped to pioneer studies in ritual and myth, while sociologists have laid foundations for the exploration of secular worldviews. Many of the most prominent theorists concerning religions and ideologies have been sociologists or anthropologists

(BANTON, 1966); these include thinkers such as Durkheim (DURKHEIM, 1965), Lévi-Strauss (LÉVI-STRAUSS, 1966), Douglas (DOUGLAS, 1966) and Geertz (GEERTZ, 1973), while a number of prominent recent writers have dealt in a fecund way with new religious movements, such as Wilson, Robertson, Lanternari (LANTERNARI, 1963), Martin and others (YINGER, 1970). Naturally I shall draw on much of this theoretical and empirical work in later chapters (SKORUPSKY, 1976).

Psychology and psychoanalysis. The psychology of religion is no doubt less flourishing today than it was, particularly in America under the influence of William James. But we now have much greater resources to draw on, both tradition-oriented and cross-cultural studies of mysticism for instance (with much work on Sufism, Buddhist meditation, Chinese and Japanese mystical traditions, Christian contemplation and Qabbala; and some parallel work on shamanism in various societies in Siberia, Africa, Korea and among Native Americans, for example). It is important to work up our knowledge of mysticism into systematic shape, and this will be one of the aims of this book.

Psychology obviously concerns itself with what I have called the experiential dimension (STRUNK, 1971). In addition, psychoanalysis, in part because of its incorrectness, has much to do with the mythic dimension and the way human symbols operate, while theories of the unconscious can clearly be important in theorizing about religion. Of course, psychoanalysis has a strong theoretical structure, which we do not need to accept at face value. One of the reasons for using phenomenology is that it enables us to judge whether the empirical results of our descriptive work really do confirm or disconfirm theories, but it cannot do this if the theoretical structure is already built into the very descriptions which are supposed to test the theory (HOMANS, 1979). So our phenomenological approach to the descriptive (and evocative) task should not be taken as a rejection of theories of the unconscious and the like, so much as a way of clearing the ground for the testing of those theories. Obviously, we separate out pastoral psychology from phenomenology: it is a kind of committed practice generative of spirituality, and as such is part of our subject matter (TILLICH, 1952).

History. Obviously the history of the religious and other traditions is simply part of general history, but one may then enquire whether religious history plays a formative or less than formative role at a given time in a given context (this, by the way, is the issue embraced by reductionism: reductionism implies that religion always has a secondary part to play). Issues concerning history are nevertheless complicated by the fact that history itself may be viewed religiously in ways that come into conflict with scientific history – for instance, in relation to the supposed historical facts recounted in the New Testament (RUDOLPH, 1962). A similar kind of conflict can occur in secular history (so called), for a society may view a piece of history in a certain way, only for later research to show that the real facts were rather different. Our phenomenological approach gives some status to perceived history as one of the causative factors at work in a given context. Because scientific history is critical of sources and received opinions, it can clash severely with religiously interpreted history: so it is necessary to be clear at a given juncture whether we are talking about phenomenological or actual history. There is another complication. The word ‘history’ refers sometimes to the story and sometimes to the method. When I referred to scientific history, what I meant was the method of doing history in as scientific (and impartial) a way as possible (BREISACH, 1983). Naturally the notion of what counts as scientific is controversial: the Marxian and the non-Marxian historians might debate the matter. But, leaving that aside for the moment, one meaning of ‘history’ is the method. Another meaning is the history or *story* of what is arrived at by doing history. We might talk about the history of the Second World War, referring to the story of that war. In this book I shall on the whole use ‘story’ to refer to the relevant flow of events, and ‘history’ to refer to the methods (MESLIN, 1973). It is sometimes important for us to refer to the process of delineating the story from a phenomenological point of view. There is an advantage in my using ‘story’ in the way described, for story is also a general category of which one subdivision is myth (which after all means ‘story’ in Greek); and in this way I assimilate myth and history. I believe this is phenomenologically realistic, since (historically arrived at) national stories do function as identity myths.

Ethics and law. The ethical dimension of worldviews is important, and part of what is customarily called ethics relates to its analysis. But only part: for much of what is undertaken under the head of 'ethics' is either normative ethics (not our prime concern in this analytic and phenomenological work) or metaethics. But the history of ethics, and of law, is vital to our understanding of how worldviews operate. And a central part of our concern here is comparative ethics, that is the comparative study of ethics. This is a subject not much undertaken in recent times (but see CHIDESTER, 1987).

Philosophy. Much of philosophy is concerned with debating and proposing solutions to problems. In short it has to do with building worldviews, rather than simply with analysis. Though an intellectual exercise, it is also value-laden. It is not as such part of the history of ideas or, more broadly, of the descriptive study of worldviews and religions. And yet the philosophy of religion is frequently viewed as part of religious studies (LONG, 1980). It is well to pause and consider here what part reflection may play in religious studies.

Classical philosophy of religion, which should in my view be regarded as the philosophy of worldviews (SMART, 1983), concerns itself with certain of the principal topics in Western religion, such as the supposed proofs of the existence of God, the problem of evil and the question of immortality (SWINBURNE, 1977). Its scope should be widened so that it becomes cross-cultural and includes discussion of the criteria of truth in religions. In its most general form, perhaps, it should be seen as reflecting about the truth, value and relationship of the world's worldviews. But obviously reflection about is different from description of, and even from theorizing about. The descriptive task has a certain priority: unless we know what it is we are reflecting about, how can we reflect appropriately? Some exponents of religious studies, wishing to stick rather strictly to the empirical and scientific study of the subject, are not happy with including philosophical-type reflection in the discipline. They are often motivated by a suspicion of the way in which (Christian) theology has dominated and perhaps infected the field (RAMSEY, 1957). There are academic and institutional dangers here, I do not doubt. Still, it seems inevitable that some reflection will arise out of the study of religions and, more generally,

of worldviews (HICK, 1966). Is it better to keep such reflection inside or outside the academy?

Whatever the answer to such a question, the reflective mode, about truth and value in worldviews, is not strictly relevant to my approach in this book, even if this book is highly relevant to the reflective mode. It is not so relevant because our purpose here is not to judge worldviews or to worry about their truth or otherwise. I shall not pretend that my conclusions will be beyond debate: my varied theories will doubtless be open to question. But in trying also to present features of religions and slices of history I shall hope as far as possible to be appropriately descriptive. My tasks will not be part of the philosophy of religion.

There is, however, an aspect of the philosophy of religion which is something other than reflection about truth, consistency and so on: namely, the delineation of and debate about method in the study of religion. Obviously such methodological thinking is highly relevant to my task. It is part of a more general discussion of the philosophy of the social and human sciences. The present chapter is much taken up with this. No less obviously the history of philosophy concerns us here: it is in large measure the history of worldviews. Once constructed a worldview becomes history (EDWARDS, 1967)!

The history of philosophy can play a leading role in the delineation of the doctrinal and philosophical dimension. Certain aspects of philosophy may contribute to some understanding of other dimensions: for instance, the concept of performatives is highly relevant to the analysis of ritual.

Art history and the material dimension. 'Art' is a somewhat loaded concept, and so it is that art history tends to cover only a slice of religious art: Buddha statues at Sarnath; Leonardo da Vinci; Raphael and Rouault; West African bronzes; the Mughal monuments of north India – in short the high-quality products of religion. But the material dimension just as often incorporates the kitsch and the aesthetically deficient: plain chapels in Bradford; posters in the streets of Banaras; ex-voto paintings in Mexico; and so on. In this respect the study of the material dimension goes beyond the more conventional art history (HERMEREN, 1969).

I might add that the history of music too has this wider swathe to cover. How we should classify it I am not sure, but I shall include it primarily under the ritual dimension. It is a most important area of religious studies, but very little developed.

Theology. Though the term 'theology' is used of an academic discipline in the West, its assumptions are very much open to question. I believe it should be characterized as Christian, Islamic, Jewish and so forth, since it is typically tied to a view of where authoritative doctrines and scriptures come from. But much of what goes on under the rubric of theology is descriptive, for example the history of Western religious thought or the probing of texts in a quest for history. But constructive theology, which is a branch of worldview-construction, is more a part of the *data* of the descriptive and phenomenological treatment of religions.

At the level of worldview-construction and debate about worldviews, theology belongs to reflection about religions and worldviews. It should be conceived as plural in scope: there is a place neither in mainstream academic life nor in a global culture for restrictions on the positions explored. But again such religious reflection has little to do with my principal purpose here. This does not imply that methodological or other insights may not be yielded by primarily theological works – for instance, there is something important being claimed on this front in Kraemer's *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (KRAEMER, 1938), in his estimate of the importance of context. But the task of constructing a worldview on the basis of cross-cultural facts is quite different from the kind of analysis and theorizing which I am undertaking here.

Political science. I shall later on be adding to my regular dimensions in referring to the political and economic aspects. Sometimes the political significance has been underplayed, partly because of an over-spiritual and ideal treatment of religion, and partly because of a predilection for reductionist theories. But the 1979 Iranian revolution, especially, has altered perceptions about the importance of religion in human affairs. If the dimensions sketch out what worldviews are in themselves, then the relation between them and political factors in a given society gives us some handle on the empirical

question of reductionism: if the dimensional factors have a potent effect on the political process, then religion is a vital factor in that bit of history; but if the political process strongly affects the dimensions, then politics is a dominant factor in that bit of history. More dialectically, both effects may be working together. These more empirical ways of looking at reductionism should also help to avoid the fallacy of supposing that because a given position is not true it cannot have a potent effect on its society. Moreover we can see already that there is a whole cluster of factors within worldviews which are relevant to politics: loyalty to one's nationalism as incorporating a certain worldview; divine kingship; Anabaptism and incipient individualism; the status of the Sangha in Theravadin monarchies; Confucianism as a state ideology among the Chinese bureaucracy; the concept of the caliph in Islam; religious convictions in Israel and the question of the occupied territories; and so on (MERKL and SMART, 1983).

Economics and various exchanges. Although religionists have not much interested themselves in economics, it is a fruitful subject in relation to worldviews, ranging from such expansive theses as Weber's concerning Protestantism and the rise of capitalism to current thinking about Confucian values in the East Asian economic upsurge. But it also embraces deeper questions of exchange: for example, consider ways in which lay Buddhists give material goods such as robes and food to monks in exchange for moral instruction and enhancement of their own merit. I shall therefore devote some space to the study of the worldview dimensions in relation to economic attitude.

So much then for a brief account of major disciplines as they stand in regard to religious studies. There are some areas I have not explicitly written about: Indology, classical studies, Chinese studies, African studies and so on. Needless to say, these subjects have a place within the embrace of religious studies, and religious studies in turn have a role within these subjects. The same can be said of women's studies (DOUGLAS, 1977). This is illuminating above all because it brings new perspectives and questions into the academy, which needs continuous stirring. One of the liveliest and most transforming areas since the mid-1970s has been that of women's studies (OCHS-HORN, 1981).

Questions of ancient and modern

I turn now to consider the distribution of the religious material in the subsequent discussion. A great deal of van der Leeuw's material was ancient. I would prefer to have more of it modern. The reasons for this judgment are several. First, the only kind of religion we are actually going to meet is a modern one. We might meet the Dalai Lama, but not Paul or Buddhaghosa. Those modern religions have all passed through a certain fire, that of the colonial and industrial periods. Second, I would like this book to give people an understanding of our world, and, while I would not have them ignorant of the deep past, I would like them to resonate with the lessons provided for modern times.

Traditions have of course been greatly changed by modernity. Take the colonial period. Many cultures underwent profound disturbances as a result of European, and to some extent American and Japanese, colonial domination. Indian culture, previously seesawing between Muslim and Hindu rulers and cultural motifs, came to be dominated by the British. The sub-continent experienced a whole slew of challenges in a short period – conquest itself, the building of the railway system, industrialization and the impact of British exports, missionary endeavour and with it criticism of the indigenous heritage, especially the Hindu, new patterns in school and higher education, the English language, a new access to and appreciation of Indian history, and ideas of democracy. To an extent modern Hinduism was formed in response to such challenges. The concept of a unified whole called Hinduism, which burst forth from the pages of thinkers like Swami Vivekananda, was in some ways a new idea – certainly as expressed and forged into a modern Hindu ideology. The beauty of it was that it left so many things in place: the numerous cults and practices and pilgrimages and villages and temples and gurus and so forth could remain the same, but they could have an overarching umbrella. The new Hindu ideology favoured democracy, independence for India, moderate reform, English-speaking education, a new humanism (seeking human satisfaction within the depths of the eternal soul), a philosophy of toleration and a return to the classical texts of the tradition. In all

such matters Hinduism took on some new shapes and gave itself a strong and modern air (CRAWFORD, 1986).

Other traditions took somewhat different paths. Japan, anticipating trouble, modernized on its own, and in the process reshaped to some degree its complex religious structures, containing Shinto, Buddhist and other elements. It also created some new religions. We could go on to list the ways Islamic, African, Chinese and other cultures responded to the impact of the modern. But they were all to a greater or lesser degree transformed, and it is the resultant set of religions that we have to deal with today. This is why, without being exclusively bound to them, my treatment will incorporate examples from modern religions and worldviews. So far, though, I have mentioned the non-Western cultural areas. But what about the effects of modern change upon Christianity and Judaism? And what of the modern ideologies?

Christianity did not have to undergo colonialism, as many other religions and cultures did, but there were other challenges which needed to be met: the whole traumatic process of industrialization, the rise of new scientific knowledge, the creation of the national idea and so on. While one major part of Christianity, Orthodoxy, has remained remarkably intact, Protestantism (above all) and the Catholic church have undergone numerous reforms and changes, as they tried to adapt themselves to the new world of the last 200 years. Judaism has been transformed in not too dissimilar ways, though with a notable addition – the creation of the Jewish state in Israel has had all kinds of dynamic effects on the practice of Judaism.

The ideologies will also attract our attention, since in differing ways they express alternatives to the modernized religions. Marxism was especially important after the Second World War in providing a worldview which, while purporting to be modern, was also anti-colonial. It could promise a theory for rallying Russia, China and other countries in their struggle against the imperial powers. As worldviews incarnated in national arrangements they supply a rich source of symbols. Parallel to them, as we have previously indicated, there are the nationalisms.

We may draw on another, less formal source. There are elements of worldviews scattered through daily life: items in music, sports, educational practice, literature, television and the movies which may

have relevance to our exploration in this book, and I shall make occasional use of these resources (BELLAH, 1970).

Attempts at correlation, and networks

In making use of my analysis of the dimensions of religion I shall attempt to supply correlations. That is, I shall try to show that items in one dimension may be correlated to others, offering incipient explanatory theses. I do not want to exaggerate: one cannot make worldviews tidier than they are. But they are sometimes better patterned than at first sight appears. For instance, I think it can be shown that some typical patterns of doctrine or philosophy flow from the attempt to join the religion of *bhakti* with that of the contemplative path or *dhyāna*; or that notions like grace grow out of a certain practical soil and not out of others. Certain patterns of social behaviour can stem from the prevalence of printed books. There are sometimes circumstances which tend to transform myths into doctrines, or if you like into metaphysical ballets.

But enough wider networks can be traced, for in one way or another all the dimensions are connected. I hope therefore to provide as articulate a picture as is possible given the complexity and untidiness of the data. But because of the intertwining of items from the dimensions it is not easy to deal with them separately, that is chapter by chapter. So I shall take detours through some other dimensions in each chapter. This may justify my beginning the discussion at what may seem to some scholars an unusual point, the doctrinal dimension. I am nervous of doing so for fear of the accusation that I am being too intellectual in thinking about religions and worldviews. But there are nevertheless some advantages in this procedure. One is that some of the key expressions which are to be used in the analysis will occur in my working with the philosophical dimension. Another is that, in handling the relations between certain intellectual and philosophical notions on the one hand and rituals and other practical activities on the other, it will be possible to exhibit the practical nature of doctrines in religion.

So I shall start by exploring mainly the doctrinal or philosophical

dimension, with suitable excursions. This will give us an opening on the whole field. This book is meant to delineate a kind of taxonomy through which we can better understand the structures of worldviews. Since the mid-1960s so many fine studies of the religions of the world have been published that it now seems a propitious time to weave some of the results together.