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VII

REVIEWS

Book Reviews

ALTNURME, Riho, ed., *Old Religion, New Spirituality: Implications of Secularisation and Individualisation in Estonia.* xii, 185 pp., 6 tables, 1 map, references, index. Leiden: Brill, 2023. Paperback, $54. ISBN: 978-90-04-52446-0.

Old Religion, New Spirituality not only serves as a source of information for students, scholars and others interested in religious studies but also challenges readers to look beyond traditional categories of sacred/secular, new/old religion, and so on. Religion is a multifaceted phenomenon that is constantly changing. It is not a neutral term but a politically charged category because it has a particular history behind (of Western origin), and it is up to lawmakers to decide what are characteristics of groups that could be registered as religious. Widespread usage of the term 'spirituality' (often understood as an opposite to the term 'religion', associating the latter with institutionalism and dogmatism) has activated debates in the field of religious studies. The blurring of boundaries between various categories pushes scholars to analyze the problematics of religion discoursively and not so much look for precise definitions but rather ask who and why uses one or another term, what's the context behind.

These are first thoughts that come to mind after reading the book edited by Estonian scholar Riho Altnurme (University of Tartu). Its chapters have been written by Lea and Riho Altnurme, Alar Kilp, Indrek Pekko, Ringo Ringvee, Priit Rohtmets, Toomas Schvak, and Marko Uibu, who analyze how Christianity in Estonia has moved from being as self-evident to being a vicarious religion. The subject of the book—religion/spirituality in Estonia—is intriguing because sociologists have described Estonia as one of the most secularized countries in the world. Secularization in the context of the book has two meanings: the decline of institutional religion (reflected, for example, in surveys from Gallup or the World Values Survey) and dechristianization—Christianity has lost its former place in society. Despite hopes raised at the end of 1980s and in the 1990s, when Christianity in public mind was associated with campaigning for political changes, it did not become a part of national identity. Attempts to unite nationalism and Christianity have borne little fruit. Later the significance of Christian churches started to show itself in the form of vicarious religion as the protector of conservative values. Like in neighboring Baltic countries (Latvia and Estonia) and in other parts of the world it means that churches are forming alliances with political actors.

Typical to post-secularism, this results in a new visibility of churches in media but does not mean that the number of practicing believers is increasing. New political partners are first looking to the churches as like-minded bearers of conservative values and preservers of cultural memory. For larger churches it may mean getting some privileges, financial gains, and symbolic capital. As mentioned in the book, the military chaplaincy of Estonia requires the chief of chaplains to be a clergyperson of the Estonian Evangelical

Lutheran Church. The adviser-chief of prison chaplains must be ordained in a member church of the Estonian Council of Churches. The Council gets annual allocations from the state budget. When the reopening of St. John's (Lutheran) Church in Saint Petersburg was celebrated with a worship service in 2011, the Estonian president, foreign minister, and minister of culture argued that this church symbolized Estonianness. At the same time, identification of religion with particular cultural identities and political meanings closely attached to them may lead to clashes, like one seen in the Orthodox faith (if people outside Estonia know something about religion in this country, it is probably the reality of two separate Orthodox churches, each under different canonical jurisdiction).

Dechristianization is discussed by the authors of the book not only as a result of current transformation of religion toward a remarkable growth of individual religiosity but also as a result of the intellectual clash with modern ideologies and social changes (including urbanization, immigration, industrialization, and inner secularization of church organizations). For religious organizations it has both negative and positive implications: they may have a more deeply committed membership, and they are pushed to pool resources and increase cooperation at all levels, thus developing a 'practical ecumenism'.

Starting from the historical discussion to the contemporary situation, this book is trying to answer two important questions about Estonia: why is it so secularized, and what is the link between secularity and the picture of individualized religiosity in the country? The latter phenomenon, which scholars often call a sacralization, spiritual revolution, or re-enchantment, is not coherent and institutionalized but instead consists of a wide variety of ideas and techniques. Without strong commitments spiritual practices are situational and necessity-based. Situationality is also expressed in the fact that people tend to see themselves in a constant spiritual search. At the same time, as indicated by the authors, self-orientated spirituality is not completely individualistic because in the context of consumer culture it is acquired through the influence of opinion makers (spreading their message through books as well as online) and collective practices of contemporary spiritualities.

In general this collection is one of the few books in English on religious life in Estonia. It is an important contribution to studying religions in Europe because it provides readers with often lacking information on religion in smaller countries and avoids simplistic assumptions about religion in postcommunist countries that are focusing on explaining current dechristianization as a result of the Soviet past or make large generalizations about post-Soviet cultural space without differentiating between various countries.

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CHAMEL, Jean, and Yael DANSAC, eds., *Relating with More-than-Humans: Interbeing Rituality in a Living World*. xvi, 254 pp., 25 b/w ills., index London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2022. Hardback, $129. ISBN: 978-3-031-10293-6.

Relationships between humans and the larger-than human community have been gaining significant scholarly and wider attention in recent decades. In *Relating with More-than-Humans*, Jean Chamel and Yael Dansac have brought together an excellent range of contributors who advance critical engagement and debate in fascinating ways. The title alone points to the key themes that make this book and its constituent chapters valuable. It promises a focus of acts of relating—not only ideas about relationality. By emphasizing 'relating with' it goes further than 'relating to'—which might otherwise have collapsed the focus purely onto what humans do to the larger world or how different humans imagine our relationships. 'With' at least encourages readers to expect discussion of interactivity, per-

haps including mutual effects and affects. Contributors to the related fields labeled the 'ontological turn', 'new materialism', and 'new animism' (to name but three relevant arenas within contemporary social sciences) vary in their preferences for phrases like 'more-than-humans', 'other-than-humans', 'larger-than-human world', and others.

Sometimes, as in this book, there seems to be little difference in the implications of such phrases. They are certainly better than 'nonhuman' with its hint of some kind of priority or privileging of humanity. In this book 'more-than' does not imply 'better than' but alludes to a wider community that the subtitle identifies as 'a living world'. It turns out that this phrase is, like others, multivalent. Some chapters discuss or at least mention 'Gaia', 'the Earth', or 'Nature'—each of which assembles a vast diversity of beings into an apparent singularity. Most talk of more specific existences (stones, plants, animals, and so on) who somehow participate in communities which, again, can be assembled as a 'world' or 'worlds'. 'Interbeing rituality' functions as a single phrase within some chapters. Unless I missed it, 'interbeing' is left undefined and is probably used as a synonym of 'relations' and its cognates. Perhaps there is an implication that as 'relations' or 'kin', all beings are constituted not by individualized interiority but by interactivity. That would chime with other critical interventions into efforts to understand what persons or agents might be. 'Rituality' is more evident and more clearly emphasized within the book. Many different rituals and kinds of ritual generate specific author's foci, but together they contribute to a book about how humans and other beings relate with others. That is the most significant feature of this book.

Taking ritual or 'rituality' as its key critical term and focus of attention makes *Relating with More-than-Humans* a distinctive contribution to the anthropology of sustainability (the theme of the series in which this book appears). 'Sustainability' might be another multivalent term but is also a slippery one embroiled in contests over what it might convey. 'Sustainability' can be asserted both in support of and in opposition to economic development, or of 'growth' and 'de-growth' in both production and consumption. But this is not a book about economics, agriculture, markets, and consumerism. These do provide the contextual field in which rituals are the privileged modes of interrelationship between humans and "more-than-humans". Thus, yak herding, corn growing, and crystal trading exemplify provide the authors with opportunities to convey the importance of ritual relations.

Within the nine main chapters (divided among three sections), analysis of data from different modes of research in diverse locations and communities in three continents is presented to good effect. We not only meet ritualists and learn about their interactions with more-than-humans but are also instructed about the authors' research methods and invited to consider or reconsider significant elements of existing ideas about ritual, personhood, relationality, and more. For instance, Chamel writes about documents and observations of international gatherings promoting the 'rights of nature', which not only bring 'naturalism' and 'animism' into uneasy dialogue but also evidence how authority and routinization occur in and around rituals. Dansac's fieldwork at Breton and other archaeological/heritage sites of significance to earth mysteries and personal growth seekers presents analyses provoking renewed thinking about liminality in ritual.

There is considerably more in the book than I have noted here. Each chapter adds something to understanding of specific human interactions with other beings and existences. Each says something about methodologies and about theorization of ritual and of community. *Relating with More-than-Humans* ends with a powerful afterword in which Michael Houseman reflects on the arguments and conclusions of the authors and editors. He draws out a distinction between 'action-centred' and 'actor-centred' modes

of ritualization. In the one, ritual acts have effects in themselves. In the other, the "personal dispositions" of ritualists "are held to play an essential role" (p. 242). The former, then, might create more coherent communities, while the latter, although participative, reinforces individuality or even individuation. Indeed, he concludes that what some of the book's chapters present is evidence of humans seeking to become 'more-than-human' themselves, while other chapters focus on joining larger communities. Houseman's afterword, then, incites readers to go back and start again—and thereby we learn much more about rituals—including those integral to being scholars, researchers, and communicators. I concur with Houseman that it is a pleasure to be enthusiastically encouraged to speculate further on these matters.

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CHATTERJEE, Moyukh, *Composing Violence: The Limits of Exposure and the Making of Minorities*, 184 pp., 6 ills., bibliography, index. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2023. Paperback, $24.95. ISBN: 978-1-4780-1966-4.

As "India's first televised pogrom" (p. 5), the violence performed in 2002 in Gujarat against Indian Muslims has been widely documented and debated. So too has the role of state institutions and, prominently, Gujarat's then Chief Minister and current Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The 2023 BBC documentary *India: The Modi Question* (banned in India) is a recent example of the exposure, through those events, of the relationship between religious violence and political ascension in 'the world's largest democracy'.

Why, then, yet another book about Gujarat 2002 and its afterlives, and why now—more than 20 years later? Multiple answers come to mind as I navigate the disturbing but beautifully written pages of Moyukh Chatterjee's *Composing Violence*. I have space here for just one: in revisiting those events and, more importantly, unpacking how violence visibly sticks (in Sara Ahmed's sense) to the skin of a city and its people, *Composing Violence* provides us with a necessary punch in the stomach. Its urgency lies in the way in which it forces us to look at, and begin to think anew with, what we know well but persist in overlooking: that violence against (religious) minorities is not exceptional or deviant, but mainstream.

From the beginning of the book, we are presented with an Indian brand of this violence. This juxtaposes "mass destruction with mass pleasure" (p. 1), as pictured in the fabric of Ahmedabad after the 2002 pogrom, in which the burnt remains of Muslim shops were just next to Hindu shops full of customers and where the proud statement "we finally taught them a lesson" could be pronounced casually in a Hindu tea stall. This brand of violence evidently does not need to be uncovered, excavated, or reconstructed through collection of previously unheard or silenced voices. Two decades later, it circulates and is consumed widely through global flows of hatred as perpetrators share videos of lynchings live on YouTube. The impulse to expose violence against religious minorities, though, remains powerful because "it is tied closely with notions of justice" (p. 128). But to Chatterjee, exposure fails to shed light on a violence that is cherished and performed with impunity. What else is there to say, and how, "when violence is not repressed, not located at the margins of the state, and not even disguised by the participants?" and "what forms of legality, sociality and politics transform spectacular violence into durable order?" (p. 4)

These urgent questions animate the book's five chapters, each of which revolves around objects encountered by the author repeatedly during longitudinal research on the afterlives of the 2002 violence in Gujarat among human right activists, survivors, journalists, paralegals, and lawyers. The riot, the archive, the witness, the trial in the courtroom, anti-impunity activism, the fact-finding report, and

the newspaper article are crucial in the exposure of violence, but here they serve as prisms through which to compose violence. 'Composing' (a term drawn from Bruno Latour) is proposed as a new approach that assembles ways in which violence continues within and nurtures, both state institutions (the police and the courts) and the sites where resistance against it is practiced (the archive and activism); crucially, composing is to interrogate the role of violence in the making of a religious minority.

Anti-minority politics are conceived of not as an aberration of bad governance but as a somewhat productive and recurring force at the heart of democratic institutions and life. A promising aspect of the compositional approach is precisely its willingness to question the relationship between majority and minority across the heuristic divide of good/evil, activist/state, and victims/perpetrators. The reproduction of majority and minority, the author shows, is rehearsed in the politics of exposure, in which activists and paralegals too may play a role, though unwittingly.

A thick ethnographic gaze animates Chatterjee's compositional approach, which successfully accounts for the messiness of ground reality and contradictory genealogy and workings of violence, and pushes the limits of exposure. But couldn't this ultimately be seen as another way of exposing, or at least documenting, what would otherwise be reduced to 'minor' details? On the other hand, as suggested by the number of detained activists and academics and the rise of cases related to religious offences in 'new India', exposure of violence continues to be perceived as a threat to majoritarianism. How are exposure and composition entirely distinct paths? Beyond scholarly debates, can composing violence inform an emancipatory agenda for vulnerable people? And if the role of activists and paralegals in the politics of exposure can be examined unflinchingly (as this book bravely does), why not those of researchers as well? More detailed reflections about the author's own positionality and research journey would help complicate the relationships between exposing and composing violence.

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De JONG, Ferdinand, and José MAPRIL, eds., *The Future of Religious Heritage. Entangled Temporalities of the Sacred and the Secular*, 244 pp., 6 b/w ills., bibliography, index. London: Routledge, 2023. Hardback, $160. ISBN: 978-1-03-202194-2.

Anthropologists have tended to disregard the study of Christian beliefs, practices, and sites in Europe as if their analysis pertained to the realm of sociology. When Notre-Dame Cathedral was devastated by a fire in April 2019, the threat of an irreversible loss entailed a huge movement of national and international mobilization along with the expressions of collective emotion, or of a 'heritage emotion' to use a term coined by the French anthropologist Daniel Fabre (2013). In his pioneering work, Fabre has acutely pointed out the diverse types of valuation (religious, aesthetic, symbolic, civic, and affective), as well as the distinct temporalities underlying heritage discourses and practices. In a certain sense, the Notre-Dame fire forced scholars to reexamine on the one hand the intertwined links between the heritagization of religion and the sacralization of heritage and, on the other hand, the tense and unease relationships between secularism, religion, and heritage in European countries.

Recently, World Youth Day 2023, assembling around a million young Catholics in Lisbon, ignited the debate on the justifications and the reasons for financing a religious event in a secular state. Thus, we must rethink, in the wake of Cyril Isnart and Nathalie Cerezales's insights, the "divide between religious and secular domains" (2020: 209). From this perspective, *The Future of Religious*

Heritage's contribution to the current debate on religious heritage is twofold: on the one hand, as Ferdinand de Jong emphasizes in his introduction to the volume, it attempts "to contribute to the wider project of decolonising the epistemology of secularism" (p. 2), by adopting "a measure of scepticism regarding the state's claims to secularism and secularity" (p. 4). On the other hand, by focusing on Europe and its Christian, Islamic, and Judaic legacies, this volume brings to the forefront "*the work in/of time* in heritage sites and practices" (p. 12) and the diverse and entangled temporalities of the sacred and the secular.

The Future of Religious Heritage is introduced as the product of a panel presentation at the 2019 Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK conference and of two subsequent online workshops. In turn, the panel and the workshops were the product of the HERILIGION project (2016–2020), funded by the Humanities in the European Research Area. The book comprises an introduction, six chapters in part I ("Futures of Places of Worship"), and four chapters in part II ("Choreographies of Futures"). The chapters in part I focus on how places of worship such as mosques (Istanbul's Hagia Sophia analyzed by Stéphanie Machabée and the project of a new mosque in Lisbon's 'Moorish' neighborhood by José Mapril), cathedrals (Durham, York, and Canterbury cathedrals examined by Simon Coleman), churches (the rebuilding of the Garrison Church in Potsdam by Agnieszka Halemba and the creation of a museum by a Pentecostal church in Southwest Nigeria by Theo Weiss), and ruins (of a Benedictine abbey in Bury St Edmunds by Ferdinand de Jong) are being reused, their (in)compatibility with being open to the public, and the tensions over conflicting interpretations.

The chapters in part II are concerned primarily with rituals and performances (the role of music in two churches of the Church of England by Alina Apostu, the Salesian Passion Play performed in Kraków by Kamila Baraniecka-Olszewska, the Passion Play performed on the streets of Gouda and on Dutch television by Ernst van den Hemel and Irene Stengs, and the various strategies of heritagization of Anne Frank's *Diary* on theater and in film by Remco Ensel) and how they inevitably take on new meanings when they are shifted into new spaces, entailing multiple and sometimes contradictory memories and conflict of values. The 10 case studies are varied and a bit uneven. The volume could do more to make obvious the ties across the chapters by including a brief introduction to each section and some concluding remarks.

Drawing on the notion of "the religious heritage complex" (Isnart and Cerezales 2020), the chapters explore the uses of religious traditions as cultural heritage and the blurred and unstable boundaries between places of worship and heritage sites. Focused on materialities (physical spaces as well as objects such as candles; Coleman, chap. 2), sensory-affective practices (music and singing practices; Apostu, chap. 7), and the ways in which visitors/tourists interact with and relate to places of worship, this collection will form a very useful addition to studies in the fields of heritage, anthropology, and religion. De Jong attributes great importance to how "cultural heritage affords the crafting and curating of different futures" (p. 126) and issues of conservation and preservation are "mapped on anticipations for religious and secular futures" (p. 11). However, the volume does little to develop this argument, instead devoting space to the future of religious heritage, though it also deals with religious heritage futures. In this regard, as Rodney Harrison et al. (2020: 485) noted, different kinds of futures and of temporalities are "implied, imagined and produced as a result of the conservation and preservation practices," to the extent that heritage can be envisioned as "future-making practices." One could have wished for a slightly more nuanced discussion of de Jong's criticism, somewhat expeditiously, of the critical heritage studies approach (p. 11). These few remarks are by no means intended to take anything away from the contribution this

volume makes to the debates on secularism, heritage, and religion.

On the eve of the European Heritage Days, more precisely on 15 September 2023, French President Emmanuel Macron announced the launch of a national subscription (replicating the model deployed to rebuild Notre-Dame) to renovate religious buildings in small villages across the country. One might expect that this book will inform *future* religious heritage practices.

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Isnart, Cyril, and Nathalie Cerezales, eds. 2020. *The Religious Heritage Complex: Legacy, Conservation, and Christianity*. London: Bloomsbury.

KING, Rebekka, ed., *Key Categories in the Study of Religion: Contexts and Critiques*, 246 pp., 4 b/w figs., references, index. Sheffield: Equinox Publishing, 2022. Paperback, $35. ISBN: 978-1-78179-966-6.

Key Categories in the Study of Religion considers how categories of citizenship and politics, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and class and economy could be used in the study of religion. As part of the North American Association for the Study of Religion working paper series, the volume has several distinct features. The first is that the chapters are working papers and thus meant to be part of a conversation. Chapters are shorter than those in a standard edited collection, and some do not have many citations. Each section has its own introduction and conclusion, and, crucially, each section's chapters speak to the other chapters while offering concrete examples from a specific approach to the study of religion.

Michael J. McVicar introduces the first section, on citizenship and politics, through the example of sovereign citizens in the United States. Tenzan Eaghell, Daniel Miller, and Lauren Horn Griffin respond to his introduction by speaking to citizenship for Muslim people in Myanmar today, early modern Europe, and the issues that arise when transferring citizenship from paper to digital formats.

The second section, on race and ethnicity, proceeds in a similar way. Richard W. Newton Jr.'s introduction asserts that religious studies should use models that explain rather than fetishize human social difference, and each chapter approaches this issue from the perspective of the discipline as a whole. Robyn Faith Walsh uses examples from Myers-Briggs to the Hellenistic period, Rudy Busto focuses on power from an ethnic studies perspective, Craig Prentiss asserts that race and religion are positions rather than categories, and Martha Smith Roberts looks at examples from Trump rallies. This section, in dialogue with Newton, repeatedly recurs to the work of Jorge Luis Borges to suggest that religion and race have something to do with one another. As a scholar of Latin American literature, I found this to be somewhat odd, as Borges is not unique in this regard; the selected vocabulary could apply to any writing about crime, from newspaper articles to crime fiction. The comments about the weaving together history and fiction have also been common in the Hispanic tradition since Cervantes.

The third section, on gender and sexuality, is introduced by Megan Goodwin, who emphasizes centering marginalized voices and asserts that "every piece of writing about religion offers a theory of what religion is and religion does" (p. 137). Emily D. Crews expands on Goodwin's assertion in her dis-

cussion of anthropological research and states that narratives crafted through life histories and memory work ought to be understood "as theorization" (p. 149). Tara Baldrick-Morrone discusses inherent biases in martyr texts, and Tim Langille addresses the muscle Jew and Zionism in early twentieth-century Britain. Jennifer Selby's chapter, in lieu of a conclusion, focuses on issues facing Muslim women in Quebec and combines these ideas.

The final section, on class and economy, explores the "nexus of religion, class, and the modern socioeconomic order" (p. 204). Suzanne Owen introduces the section, drawing on scholars like Gramsci and examples from current Welsh charity law. Thomas Carrico responds, offering an Althusserian approach to social structures with case studies of nineteenth-century Britain. Neil George approaches the issue of economy through Druids' legitimization via charity status. James Dennis LoRusso, quoted above, interrogates Marxist theoretical applications through examples from the study of pagans. John Strijdom discusses how the discipline normalizes the same types of hierarchies the other chapters mention.

My summary illustrates the volume's range of approaches, from interviewing to analysis of legal and literary texts. Multiple chapters' discussions of the discipline also touch on working conditions in universities today. While the expanded scope of programs within religious studies has undoubtedly led to university leaders looking askance at departments and programs, and the volume's own professed desire to interrogate categories, the collection's contributions and contributors are from the United States, Canada, and Britain, and primarily draw on the study of groups of white and/or English-speaking people.

This book will be useful to scholars who want to think about how their own work could fit into conversations within religious studies and to consider that whatever their example, and whatever the scholar's identity, their work might also be considered theoretical. In so doing I think that we as readers could take up the call of the book—in discussions in classrooms and at conferences—to imagine other futures beyond interrogating and dismantling hierarchies.

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KHOJA-MOOLJI, Shenila, *Rebuilding Community: Displaced Women and the Making of a Shia Ismaili Muslim Sociality*, 280 pp., 32 b/w ills., bibliography, index. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2023. Paperback, $29.95, ISBN: 978-0-19-764203-0.

Rebuilding Community: *Displaced Women and the Making of a Shia Ismaili Muslim Sociality* asks how women sustain their communities through religious ethics of care, particularly in the wake of displacement and migration. Shenila Khoja-Moolji demonstrates that for Ismaili women—members of a "multiply minoritized" Shia Muslim community—"ordinary ethics . . . respond to experiences of displacement" (p. 6). Ismaili women perform care work as a way of building intergenerational community and religious sociality. Through the stories of Ismailis across the globe who perform the unrecognized routine labor of "assembling" religious communities, *Building Community* argues for the social influence of histories of care that are overlooked in traditional archives (p. 7). In addition to its narrative richness, the book powerfully integrates an ethics of care into scholarship through Khoja-Moolji's own care for the place of shared stories, trauma, and belief at the center of her interlocutor's cultivation of community.

Conceptually, *Rebuilding Community* centers women's understandings of *seva* and *khidmat*, two overlapping terms that emphasize service and devotion to God and are drawn from Sanskrit and Urdu, respectively. Through oral histories, community magazines, and "Ismaili women's memory texts," including "memoirs, personal journals, pho-

tographs, and cookbooks," Khoja-Moolji weaves together the disparate stories of individual women's lives and service into a cohesive analysis of Ismaili ethics of care (p. 34). *Building Community* analyzes how women's practices of *khidmat* and *seva* responded to two moments of Ismaili displacement in the early 1970s. The first was the displacement of Ismaili families from Bangladesh (previously East Pakistan) during that country's war of independence in 1971. As an Urdu-speaking group that had previously migrated from India to East Pakistan, Ismailis faced violence from Bangladeshi forces, forcing many to flee to West Pakistan. Contemporaneously, Ismailis in East Africa were subject to Idi Amin's 'Asian expulsion' policies in Uganda in 1972. Others faced anti-Asian violence in Kenya and Tanzania, and many resettled in the United Kingdom, North America, and other regions.

The book opens with an introduction featuring the story of Khoja-Moolji's own mother, Farida, who fled from Dhaka to Karachi in 1971 and later moved to Atlanta as an adult, where she engaged in service to other Ismaili immigrant women. Farida's story reflects themes that emerge in the subsequent chapters, including multigenerational histories of displacement and resettlement, and the relationship between acts of community support and the Ismaili faith. Chapter 2 examines longer histories of resettlement among Khoja Ismailis, who trace their ancestry to western India and follow the Nizari tradition, in which the present Imam is understood as the successor of an unbroken chain of authority traced back to the Prophet Muhammad. Khoja-Moolji discusses Khoja women's earlier histories of "emplacement" in East Africa and East Pakistan, asking how women's experiences of migration shaped Ismaili "social formations" and ethics of care (p. 41).

To set up several subsequent chapters that explore how Khoja Ismaili women in post-1971–1972 diasporas remade sacred and social spaces, Khoja-Moolji provides a brief "interlude" offering a sense of "the trauma that this generation carries" (p. 79). Chapter 3 emphasizes the "continuities" of women's engagement with *jamatkhana*s—sites of congregational worship for Ismailis—in the process of resettlement, demonstrating the cultivation of *seva* through care for sacred and ritual space. Chapter 4 examines stories of *moujza* (miracles) remembered by displaced Ismailis. Khoja-Moolji argues that these stories have "emplacing effects," as they show believers the intervention of the Divine—through the intercession of the Imam—on an often violent or threatening material world (p. 123).

Whereas chapters 3 and 4 draw on interviews and oral histories—many provided in a context of shared belief and community trust—chapter 5 turns to a distinctive archive of Ismaili women's community memory: cookbooks. Cookbooks, Khoja-Moolji demonstrates, are "memory-texts" that "instruct their readers to view cooking as an occasion for practicing spirituality," emplacing migrants and their faith in the process (p. 145). In chapter 6, through the experiences of her interlocutors' daughters, Khoja-Moolji examines how a new generation of Ismaili women critique both "narratives in which Ismailis cast themselves as a 'model minority'" and forms of anti-Blackness (p. 184). Through these stories, she illustrates how second-generation Ismaili North Americans position care for community as predicated on "critical conversations" that challenge forms of exclusion. The conclusion draws the book's varied narratives together to argue that "care work has a reparative dimension," positioning it as central to community renewal (p. 200).

Rebuilding Community expands our understanding of how women's care practices create community histories and solidarities, especially in diaspora. The book highlights the specific ways in which Ismaili faith shapes women's "ordinary ethics" of service, asking, for instance, how the directives of the Imam surrounding community unity and support shape a "collectivist impetus" among displaced Ismailis (p. 195). At the same time, Khoja-Moolji powerfully argues for schol-

arly attention to histories that are cultivated through women's care practices. The book is simultaneously a 'witnessing' of Ismaili women's deeply personal work of 'emplacement', and a model for how to study the lived religious ethics cultivated by care work.

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LAZZARETTI, Vera, and Kathinka FRØYSTAD, eds., *Beyond Courtrooms and Street Violence: Rethinking Religious Offence and Its Containment*, 114 pp., illustrations, bibliography, index. London: Routledge, 2022. Hardback, $136. ISBN: 978-1-03-225265-0.

Beyond Courtrooms and Street Violence, edited by Vera Lazzaretti and Kathinka Frøystad, explores the relationship between religious injury, law, and everyday practices of mitigation. Based on a previously published special section in *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* (Frøystad and Lazzaretti 2021), the collected volume aims to move beyond established debates in the social sciences, which argue that legal proscriptions around religious injury—or blasphemy laws—often have the unintended consequence of heightening interreligious tensions. The six chapters take an opposite approach and consider alternative, nonlegal practices to manage religious offense. Drawing on historical, anthropological, and sociological perspectives, the editors and authors direct attention to the variety of "alleged" (p. 3) or potential religious injuries in India, which are deescalated locally, outside legal institutions and without media attention.

The theoretical strength of the collection lies in its nuanced exploration of the concept of containment: the idea that neighbors, religious institutions, and even urban developers actively work to resolve and prevent budding, or possible future, religious frictions within their communities. The authors explore containment by turning away from a discussion of high-profile blasphemy controversies and, instead, shining the spotlight on the often-inaudible stories of resolution and redressal that preclude religious hurt from intensifying and erupting. Here, the collection also makes an important analytical contribution: it highlights that in multireligious societies, peace and conflict are not binary social states. Rather, religious struggle and acceptance coexist within the same sociopolitical sphere, so the notion of social peace becomes a double-edged sword: it may indicate the absence of physical violence on the surface but can at the same time hide unequal interreligious power structures, as well as historical and spatial erasures.

On an empirical level, two aspects of the collection are particularly impactful: first the varied constellations of religious disagreement, which the authors examine. Within the current landscape of social science scholarship on South Asia, discussions of religious offense almost always evoke commentary on violent Hindu-Muslim clashes. Frøystad and Lazzaretti's collection adds welcome ethnographic and historical nuance to these debates by emphasizing that conflicts around injured religious feelings equally arise *within* Hindu communities (Schier, chap. 3), as well as *between* Hindus and other religious minorities like Christians (Frøystad, chap. 6). Second, the contributors show that such conflict must not necessarily result in outbreaks of physical violence, as people engage diverse strategies to calm hurt religious feelings—from rituals (Hüsken, chap. 2) to the display of alternative hagiographies (Parciack, chap. 4), spatial planning (Chopra, chap. 5), and learning about different religious traditions (Frøystad, chap. 6).

The narrative arc of the book successfully guides the reader from the exclusively religious to the more officially legal arenas of 'containment'. The first two chapters, by Hüsken and Schier, offer a discussion of inter- and intra-sectarian friction among Hindu communities in South India. While Hüsken analyzes the potential and limits of ritual reme-

dies to religious offense within Hindu temples, which are both secular and religious spaces, Schier delineates how inter-sectarian tensions between different Hindu sects in Tamil Nadu can be managed through coordinated rituals of mutual insult during religious festivities. Parciack's contribution turns to the possibilities for containment inherent in vernacular, religious history by exploring how one Sufi shrine in Hyderabad uses hagiographic narration to present Hinduism and Islam as mutually interdependent religious complexes.

Chopra's chapter then analyzes the remembrance and production of Hindu-Sikh relationships in Punjab through a spatial ethnography of the golden temple in Amritsar. She argues that the infrastructure around the temple aims to promote a particular vision of Punjab as a site of Sikh heritage while silencing competing Hindu architectures that could offend Sikh sentiments. Meanwhile, Frøystad ethnographically examines how the simple process of learning more about Christian norms helped a Hindu woman in the North Indian city of Kanpur come to terms with the actions of a Hindu family that had recently converted to Christianity. The final chapter, by Lazzaretti, explores the role of policing in the management of Hindu and Muslim frictions in the city of Benares. Ironically, her data reveals that policing can exacerbate communal tensions, forcing Muslims to rely on local knowledge to self-contain potential conflicts. By ending with Lazzaretti's contribution, the editors successfully bring the analysis full circle, demonstrating once more that the top-down approach state law takes to managing religious offense often exacerbates the conflicts it aims to address.

If the collection can be critiqued it is for not pushing its own analysis far enough. I was left wondering where and how the contributors draw the line between legal and non-legal engagement and mitigation. It seems that the editors and contributors primarily equate the legal realm with the courts—or with written statutes—which is contrasted with containment practices that are "so thoroughly embedded in everyday life that they are hardly ever thought of as containment practices" (pp. 5–6). This rather neat analytical equivalence between law and legal institutions is especially problematic in the South Asian context, where multifaceted legal discourses and practices are often embedded in the interstices of daily life (e.g., Moore 1993) and where legal technicalities have emerged as an arena for new socialites (Suresh 2023).

While the volume is, doubtlessly, a sensitive, empirically grounded, and theoretically nuanced effort to push blasphemy scholarship beyond established debates on the unintended effects of legislative interventions, reflecting more carefully on the empirical and theoretical boundaries of, and interdependencies between, the legal and the everyday would help nuance the analysis further.

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O'BRIEN-KOP, Karen, *Rethinking 'Classical Yoga' and Buddhism: Meditation, Metaphors and Materiality*, 280 pp., 10 b/w ills., appendices, bibliography, index. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2023. Paperback, $39.95. ISBN: 978-1-350-23003-3.

Karen O'Brien-Kop's new book is a welcome addition to the growing literature on the importance of the dialogue between Yoga, Sāṃkhya, and Buddhism, particularly

during 200–500 CE, in which texts such as the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* (Patañjali's *Yogasūtra* with its *bhāṣya*, which the author accepts as an auto-commentary, following Maas) were written. The author emphasizes the strong cultural role of debate, which led to undeniable intertextuality between these works, and highlights that reading them independently misses a fundamental element of their ideas. She challenges the notion of a 'classical yoga' exclusive of these other traditions and urges a reconceptualizing of this period to include texts such as the Buddhist *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the *Yogācārabhumiśāstra*, which she examines closely.

O'Brien-Kop adeptly summarizes and brings together existing literature in the field. The book goes into extensive detail about the idea of rice cultivation as a metaphor for soteriological pursuit, mapping the domain of agricultural cultivation onto spiritual cultivation. The most poignant example is the need to burn the seeds of the *kleśa*s (afflictions) completely—as one would scorch the wild rice, threatening to overtake the cultivated rice—in order to reach liberation. These ideas of burning the *kleśa*s continue to be pervasive even in the much later *haṭha yoga* texts, so this nuanced examination of the origins of these metaphors is potentially quite far-reaching in its implications. The book highlights these shared metaphors as evidence of the interconnectedness and cross-pollination between Buddhist and Brahmanical literature.

O'Brien-Kop emphasizes that the path of *kriyā yoga*, described at the beginning of the second *pāda* of the *Yogasūtra*, has been undervalued in relation to the *aṣṭāṅga yoga* path described later in the chapter. Through examining intertextual examples, she concludes that Patañjali must have been aware of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and that this *kriyā yoga* portion of the text is in dialogue with Sarvāstivāda and Sautrāntika Buddhism, serving as either a direct response or an independent text incorporated into the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra*. O'Brien-Kop also argues for the influence of *yogācāra* Buddhism on Patañjali, particularly through the *Yogācārabhumiśāstra*, which she thinks slightly predates the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* and represents an earlier systemization of yoga that may have been familiar to him.

While investigating the shared nature of these texts is important, perhaps more attention needs to be paid to their differences, and to how the same metaphors are used with a different underlying ontological understanding, in service of contradicting soteriological goals. The book suggests that these metaphors could have been used to "'smuggle' in doctrines and philosophical positions from other schools" (p. 73), but it seems just as likely that these were common analogies used for slightly different purposes. For example, O'Brien-Kop brings attention to the prevalence of the term *bhāvanā* (cultivation) in both Brahmanical and Buddhist texts, and though she mentions in a footnote that the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* uses the neuter *bhāvanam* rather than the feminine *bhāvanā*, this seems to merit further investigation, as the former seems to have more of a connotation of 'contemplation' rather than 'cultivation'.

The book then switches gears to examine the potential implications of this acknowledgment of the influence of Buddhism on what we have come to call 'classical yoga', emphasizing the anglophone origins of this term, which was first used to align it with European classicism, in terms of periodization and/or scope, in order to place it on par with Greco-Roman philosophy. O'Brien-Kop highlights the many ways in which this title has been appropriated and used with varying definitions, with the prevailing modern notion of being synonymous with Pātañjala yoga. The book concludes by suggesting the potential use of a term such as *śāstra* or *śāstric yoga* instead, which would widen the definition to include other texts of the period. While I agree that it is important to interrogate the origins of these labels and whether they serve us, my concern is that perhaps it is not our place to take the 'classical' out of 'classical yoga'.

Relatedly, the two essential projects of this book are somewhat in contradiction to each other: the first half seems to do the very thing it argues against in the second half. On the one hand it brings awareness to 'classical yoga' as a misnomer and oversimplified categorization, while on the other hand, it recreates the same problem by looking at these metaphors through the modern Western lens of the conceptual metaphor theory of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson rather than on their own terms. Though O'Brien-Kop briefly explains in an appendix why classical Indian metaphor theory does not apply in these contexts, a diagrammatic representation might serve to illustrate the parallels more clearly. Future work could perhaps bridge these ideas by paying more attention to what happened in the intervening years—between the 'classical' and the modern—through the voices of the tradition, which have chimed in over the years through commentaries, subcommentaries, and doxographies.

Regardless, this book sheds important new light on the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* through the examination of contemporaneous Buddhist texts. It addresses a void in the scholarship and raises important points that will hopefully lead to further conversation and research. As O-Brien-Kop suggests, it is imperative that our understanding be broadened to include these influences and allow them to once again dialogue with each other to "reach a more grounded understanding of Pātañjala yoga in its own conceptual and material context" (p. 154).

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Author's response to Zoë Slatoff's book review of *Rethinking 'Classical Yoga' and Buddhism: Meditation, Metaphors and Materiality*

The material cultural backdrop of these early Hindu and Buddhist meditation treatises, however dimly understood it can be, was of interest to me as a window onto the lived religion and worldviews in which these texts are steeped. Underlying religio-philosophical ideas, discourses, outlooks, and doctrines are cultural expression, existential need, and socially embodied awareness. It is rewarding to hear that the technical research in the deep recesses of the SOAS library on the topic of rice farm cultivation and irrigation technologies has been of interest. It is also reassuring to hear Zoë Slatoff's assessment that the interconceptuality of the early Buddhist and Hindu traditions can yield deeper readings of the *Yogasūtra* and its *bhāṣya* (I am not attached to the theory of the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* (PYŚ) as a single text, but it is a current heuristic).

Slatoff's assessment of "common analogies used for slightly different doctrinal purposes" makes an important point—although I would question the relevance of analogical thinking in conceptual metaphor theory. Yet it was a consistent objective of this book to explore the *connections* between early Hindu and Buddhist religious and philosophical concepts on the topic of yoga. Indeed, overplaying the principle of doctrinal difference can be an inheritance from the rigid 'world religions' paradigm, and this book aimed to employ some of the contemporary sensibility of 'lived religion' to understand how these early communities may have coexisted and interacted. If this book does not illustrate awareness of doctrinal difference sharply enough, then I trust that my broader work has—for example, in my analysis of how *dharmamegha* (the cloud of dharma) carries different meanings in the PYŚ and Buddhist texts such as the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* (O'Brien-Kop 2020). The related term *bhāvanā* (cultivation in relation to meditation) will indeed, as Slatoff points out, benefit from more in-depth investigation in future scholarship. I have continued to research the relation of Patañjali's text to Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. Yet, this focus on the intertextuality of the *Yogasūtra* with its Buddhist 'cousin' texts is not designed to detract from the wealth of schol-

arship that already evidences the rooting of the *Yogasūtra* in Brahmanic contexts. For example, my argument that sections of the *kriyā yoga* portion of the PYŚ are in close dialogue with the Buddhist sphere also leaves room to argue that *kriyā yoga* as a formula is in intimate relation to the *Bhagavad Gītā*. This book's investigation is not an *either/or* task but an *and/both* approach; the manifold roots of the PYŚ drew on several conceptual groundings, not only Hindu and Buddhist but also, of course, Jain.

Let's turn now to the continued uses of the term 'classical' in the academic study of yoga. The book's deconstruction of the term is deliberately blunt. I agree that it is not "our place" to remove "the classical" from humanities scholarship on yoga, if "our" refers to Western scholars who may also be religious and cultural outsiders. Yet there are nonetheless valid and ethical grounds for challenging continued unreflexive use of 'classical' in a time of increasing scrutiny and awareness of what it means to decolonize scholarship. As a white anglophone scholar I see it as vital to examine the term and its embedded historical and political presuppositions—as has been done for decades in most corners of the humanities. Individual scholars will and should, of course, make their own assessments about the continued semantic valences and values of 'the classical'.

As for not employing Patañjali's contemporaneous theory of metaphor, part of the precepts of ornamentation (*alaṃkāraśāstra*), this is another salient point. The book briefly explains that metaphor is not examined in the literary sense of stylistic embellishment. Perhaps 'conceptual metaphor theory' as a label occludes its basis in cognitive linguistics; the alternate label of 'cognitive metaphor theory' may be more accurate to denote this book's preoccupation with systems of thought (e.g., on liberation) and functions of concepts within those systems. (I have in my most recent book [O'Brien-Kop 2023] offered a brief discussion of the literary aesthetic value of metaphors in the PYŚ.) *Rethinking 'Classical Yoga'* represents an effort to engage aspects of Hans-Georg Gadamer's 'fusion of horizons', which entails acknowledging the limits of our hermeneutical frame—including both the label 'classical' and the reading strategy of conceptual metaphor theory. This approach asks us to bracket some of our contemporary assumptions about what 'affliction' (*kleśa*) might mean, for example, and try to unfold its conceptuality in the material culture in which the *Pātañjalayogaśāstra* was produced. This can only be a flawed enterprise, but by retaining a reflexive approach and highlighting certain material details that the metaphors of the text describe, the book seeks to provoke a sensitive conceptual and cultural reading of the *Yogasūtra* and its first commentary (*bhāṣya*).

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ORELLANA, Marjorie Elaine Faulstich, *Mindful Ethnography: Mind, Heart and Activity for Transformative Social Research*, 186 pp, 4 b/w ills. London: Routledge, 2020. Paperback, $59.95, ISBN: 978-1-138-36104-1.

Marjorie Elaine Faulstich Orellana's book *Mindful Ethnography: Mind, Heart and Activity for Transformative Social Research* is groundbreaking, as it conjoins two seemingly contradictory and unrelated fields and applies contemplative traditions of mindfulness to ethnographic social research. Social science research has a long tradition of advocating rationality, logic, reasoning, and objectivity

since the Age of Enlightenment. Orellana challenges this normalized approach to social science research and the Western dominant conception of duality, the 'self-other' dichotomy in the colonist history of anthropology. However, she does not simply reject rationality and logical reasoning. She tries to embrace logic and reasoning, spirituality and intuition, action and embodiment in the context of conducting ethnography. Raising epistemological and axiological concerns, Orellana addresses her aim of this book, which is to consider "how the unification of mind, heart and activity might lead us to new ways of understanding them and facilitate the doing of mindful and transformative research" (p. 26). Mindfulness is at the heart of Buddhist meditation. Practicing mindfulness in ethnography helps researchers "see things as they are, no more, no less" and therefore offers "the clear seeing and nonjudgmental acceptance of what's occurring in the present moment" (*Neff 2015: 80). Integrating ethnography with mindfulness, Orellana suggests "ways of enhancing the best aspects of ethnography and expanding our capacity to understand the lives of others with both clarity and compassion—and with compassion for ourselves, as well, as we navigate both academia and the world" (p. 1).

The book is beautifully and thoughtfully penned, as Orellana writes from an authentic, vulnerable, truthful human perspective, sharing her experiences with loving kindness that eschews the standard academic dominant discourse. The book flows as a prose poem with open hearts and minds, a sincere dialogue with the readers, and a meditation practice with grace and mercy. The book contains an introduction, seven chapters with interludes between each, and 'boxes' with information offset from the main text. In the introduction, Orellana provides an overview and explains how she brings mindfulness into ethnography. She presents a way of viewing mind, heart, and activity as a triad rather than in more typically dualistic ways (e.g., mind vs. heart, doing vs. thinking). Chapter 1 foregrounds the conceptual framings and raises epistemological and axiological questions about how we know what we know and our ethical and moral responsibilities as researchers. It addresses key conceptions of nonduality and challenges the traditional Western dichotomy of the knower/the known, self/other, and insider/outsider. It suggests how the idea of "non-duality can inform our thinking and our actions as ethnographers and scholar-activists" (p. 35).

Chapter 2 offers mindful ways of entering the research field with open hearts and minds and practicing seeing things from the Zen "beginner mind," which helps "reveal to us what we first notice and what we miss" (p. 51). It echoes the Buddhist notion of 'be here now', or focusing on the present. It also suggests "ways of slowing down those analytical processes, becoming more aware of our thoughts and feelings and creating more room to listen, and see, with our hearts" (p. 16). Chapter 3 offers suggestions for the ongoing work of the fieldwork and "the *participation* phase of participant observation" (p. 80) through mindful practices, which is "trying to experience its 'suchness'" before rushing to analysis and comparison by "categorizing, labeling, and evaluating" (p. 16). It also discusses a central dilemma of ethnography, the relationship of self and other, and shares meditative centering strategies for re-centering oneself when feeling overstimulated in the field. Chapter 4 centers on a mindful approach to writing up fieldnotes as "be[ing] there, again" (p. 17). Orellana suggests finding joy in the writing process while acknowledging the pain and the hardships ethnographers may experience in the field. The mindful approach helps us accept it all, both pain and joy. Chapter 5 discusses a mindful approach to analysis through deep listening, seeing, unsettling, and resettling, which balances the traditional way of finding emergent patterns, categories, and taxonomies. Chapter 6 addresses approaches to

re-presentation mindfully, consciously, and compassionately through reflecting on positionality. Chapter 7 applies Buddhist wisdom of letting go when leaving the field.

Overall, the book suggests powerful connections existing in contemporary academic disciplines between social sciences and spirituality, which are often considered incompatible and conflicting on the issue of origins and how realities and truths are perceived and pursued. Scholars in the fields of humanities and social sciences will benefit from the depth, sensibility, and richness of Orellana's work, as well as the innovative approach of connecting mindfulness to ethnographic research, which can be adapted to many contexts such as anthropology, education, sociology, and religious, cultural, and gender and ethnic studies. It would have been helpful if Orellana could explain what each element and component mean in her drawing (p. 132) since the triad of heart, mind, and activity vis-à-vis mind-body dualism is the book's core argument. Nevertheless, this is far outweighed by the richness of detail and creative practices of mindfulness in this book. Orellana's book is an inspiring pilgrimage, a revolutionary journey, and a transformative practice of reexamining humanity, activism, and spirituality. Just as Orellana reminds us, "working thoughtfully *both* with differentiation/categorization *and* with unification/interrelationships requires the kind of 'both/and' thinking that Patricia Hill Collins calls for in her approach to Black feminist epistemology. De-colonizing our minds is not easy. But acting mindfully, we can get better at it" (pp. 30–31).

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TATEO, Giuseppe, *Under the Sign of the Cross: The People's Salvation Cathedral and the Church-Building Industry in Postsocialist Romania*, 256 pp., 28 ills., bibliography, index. New York: Berghahn Books, 2020. Hardback, $135. ISBN 978-1-78920-858-0.

As emerged frequently in the international media, Romania is the country with the highest percentage of places of worship, or rather churches per inhabitant in the world. This situation may sound a little bit strange, as one may imagine that this achievement should concern a Third World country within the vortex of underdevelopment, and certainly not a(n) (increasingly secularized) member state of the European Union. Giuseppe Tateo's book disproves this common misperception: the above societal trend, which is widespread in other countries of the Eastern European and Balkan contexts, is precisely an index of commercial and economic development and an industrial field regulated into church-state relations. Furthermore, the construction of impressive cathedrals that since the 1990s has marked the capitals of the countries in the referred areas (one may think to the new ones built in Belgrade, Bucharest, Moscow, Tbilisi, and Warsaw) does not merely exemplify a more evident aspect of the above socioeconomic and religious paths. It also shows a reshaping of the public memory and national identity of the countries involved, which find in their native religion a powerful space for nurturing significant social and political transformations and an anticommunist rhetoric. Thus, *Under the Sign of the Cross* embodies an outstanding contribution in this recent social scientific debate, and offers fresh conceptual insights in the anthropological study of Eastern Christianity and that of postsocialism, as well as in the social investigation of space and place in the urban fabric.

Through the prism of the study of the recently inaugurated national cathedral in Bucharest, namely the Catedrala Mântuirii Neamului (People's Salvation Cathedral), the

book "looks at the complex church-state relations that have emerged in the last thirty years and at the strategies employed by the Romanian Orthodox Church (henceforth ROC) to restate its prominence in contemporary Romania" (p. 1). According to Tateo, the church-building activity in Romania, which counted the construction of 34 cathedrals and 4,000 Orthodox churches in less than three decades, is overlapped with a major phenomenon concerning the multiplication of crosses and cross-shaped monuments in Romanian capital's space. This latter phenomenon is understood as a broad process of profound 're-signification' of postsocialist urban context through the implementation (enhanced by different political regimes) of the material and architectural public presence of religion. Tateo coins the concept of 're-consecration' for grasping this process of dissemination of religious 'signifiers' in the public space. In other words, the book explores the consolidation of the anti-communist discourse in Romania by detecting the modification of the urban built space and its bonds with the Eastern Orthodox religion. Shaped within the manifold entanglements between the religious and political institutions, the installation of crosses in public space quickly becomes an anti-communist marker of the Romanian identity, which aims to sign a new season of the national history. In a rather evocative vein, Tateo states that "acts of re-consecration are by definition related to purification and are meant to deliver a place from evil, in this case represented by any connection with communism" (p. 4).

The book is organized in two parts. Part I focuses on the building project of the national cathedral. Its four chapters describe the initial conception and the controversial history of People's Salvation Cathedral, the background of its geographical setting, the stances of the multiple actors involved in its construction, the implications of its aesthetic predicaments and architecture, the polemics concerning its funding, and growing social phenomena related to the final steps of its elevation such as anticlericalism. Part II concentrates on the church-building industry in Bucharest and Romania. Through the analysis of relevant cases, its two chapters show how postsocialist governments celebrated the democratic transition by placing cross-shaped monuments and allowing a 're-consecration' of Bucharest performed by the ROC. However, although Tateo argues to study the structures of economic and political power within church-building industry and ROC's ties with the political sphere, not much empirical material has been collected on the politics field. While the economic side of the ROC is extensively documented and examined, that of the political parties/forces and state elite seems to be more meager in its ethnographic account. As a book concerning the anthropological study of postsocialism, it may consider more the shaping of social opportunities and expectations that steer political regimes to nurture an anticommunist rhetoric, and of persisting sociocultural mechanisms (like potential communist government legacies) driving their 'foggy' relationships with the ROC.

To conclude, as mentioned in both the introduction and the conclusion, the book is an ethnographic examination of a construction project rather than of the organizational developments of the ROC. Nevertheless, one may endorse that it sheds light on the main crucial strategies pursued by the ROC for its organizational revival over the past three decades. While this multifaceted institutional pattern has enabled the ROC to expand its hegemony in Romanian society, the book masterly describes how this requires novel ROC's social legitimations for addressing the growing anticlerical stances.

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Film Reviews

Dana RAPPOPORT, dir., *Death of the One Who Knows*. 82 mins. In Toraja and Indonesian, with English subtitles. Sulawesi, Indonesia (Le Miroir, Gabriel Chabanier; Planimonteur; Centre Asie du Sud-Est), 2021. Available through Documentary Educational Resources.

Death of the One Who Knows opens and closes with scenes from the funeral of an elderly traditional ritual specialist (Nene' Lumbaa) in the Toraja highlands of Indonesia. The filmmaker is ethnomusicologist Dana Rappoport, who worked with Lumbaa from 1993 until his death in 2018. He adopted her as a fictive daughter; she recorded and studied the traditional music and poetry about which he was an expert; she made several visits to his village; and, after his death, she created this 82-minute film from images, video, and audio recorded at various times over the three decades. The film presents a vivid and moving soundscape of Torajan ritual life (and of ambient sound and everyday life). In a mix of black and white and color, in both still shots and video, close-ups and wide-angle views, with both live sound and prerecorded audio, the film shows Lumbaa in the many different ritual settings in which he officiated and provides an accessible sampling of the traditional Torajan genres of music and chanting: from the quiet prayer spoken over a chicken about to be offered to the deities; to the loud solo declamation from a high platform or at the side of a young water buffalo about to be sacrificed; to the melismatic choral songs sung by men in colorful ritual attire at a house celebration or in the black of mourning at a funeral. The varied soundscape also includes Catholic and Protestant liturgy, Pentecostal church singing, and the loudspeaker-enhanced announcements of the new secular 'speechmakers' (emcees). And in the final funeral scenes, the sound is turned to a low volume and instead we hear a voiceover in the form of a recording of the funeral song spoken by Lumbaa himself.

While much of the film consists of performed musical and spoken ritual, conversations about ritual practice are also salient, and, as a result, the film relies to a considerable extent on the written word: transcription, translation, and subtitles, often not accompanied by narration. Rappoport's conversations with her two key consultants, the elderly ritual specialist and Yans Sulo', a younger Catholic pastor, provide insight into the two men's different ways of interpreting ritual practice. The priest comes across as much more accessible: speaking slowly and mostly in Indonesian, with some Torajan expressions mixed in, he offers his theological and sociocultural interpretations in an outsider-friendly manner. He emphasizes the need to "explain" the "meanings" of the ritual words (e.g., the expression "to go downstream" at a funeral), which he claims most Toraja today no longer "understand." According to his view, traditional ritual speech instead is felt to have "energy" and "power" (he uses these English loanwords) to which people nowadays respond with what the translation calls "longing" (BI *merindukan*). Such interpretations differ from those offered by Lumbaa, from whose commentary three themes emerge: his evaluations of the cohesion or organization of the speech; his sense of himself as someone who gives moral advice; and the accommodations he makes with Christianity.

As an example of the first, in one scene early in the film, Rappoport and Lumbaa are work-

ing on a typed transcript of a ritual text when, prompted by Rappoport, Lumbaa disputes its correctness. Rappoport's intention seems to be to show that the knowledge of this poetic language has declined so much that he alone knows the correct words of the text. Yet the commentary that he volunteers shows how he evaluates ritual speaking. When Rappoport presses him on what is wrong with the transcription, she elicits responses like "it's not true" (translated "counterfeit") and "it's not original." He (along with an off-camera elder) adds that something has been "added" and "[the speakers] are boasting of their wealth." Later in the film, he complains (in reference to the words of a secular "master of ceremonies") that they mix elements that ought to be kept separate ("what is first is put last, what is last is put first").

In addition, Lumbaa emphasizes his role as "a place for asking" (as this is described poetically)—that is, as one who considers the moral consequences of human action and gives authoritative advice. A word that he uses repeatedly is *pakilala* (BT): "to remind, advise, warn." Throughout the film we see him telling assistants what to do as they set up a ritual space. We hear him inside the house advising a visitor from another village how many water buffalo to sacrifice on which days of the man's father's funeral. And we see him teaching his grandchildren how to clean and cook a chicken over the fire and how to read chicken entrails. When Lumbaa meets with Pastor Yans, the priest asks about offerings made in response to transgressions (BT *massuru'*), a longstanding point of theological difference between Christianity and Aluk to Dolo. Lumbaa then replies that instead of doing sacrifices to atone for transgressions, people come to us and ask us "what does this mean?" (BT *apa batuannana?*), and we answer and then they pray (BI *sembayang*). In other words, he continues to give advice and moral guidance, even in the context of Christian practice.

We see more of this accommodation with Christianity and modernity nicely presented in a sequence filmed over New Year's 2015–2016. Before the festive meal is eaten, Lumbaa explains how in the past the "new year" happened after the rice was harvested (in September), but now it is the government who determines and writes down when the New Year happens. This sort of commentary and interaction reminded me of the kinds of interpretations I often heard from Aluk to Dolo people when I did fieldwork in the highlands in the early 1980s.

Given that this film is a tribute to Nene' Lumbaa, and as a counterweight to its tone of sadness and loss, it is fitting that the final scenes of his life are so beautifully presented. Near the end of the film, speaking to Rappoport and an off-camera grandchild, from the floor of the rice barn, he describes in poetic couplets the knowledge of ritual (BT *mangilala* and *pangissan*), which is inside the *to minaa* and emerges—like music—through the throat, tongue, and voice. And then the last time he appears, we see him from behind, walking barefoot with his cane slowly up a steep, narrow, partly paved road lined by stands of bamboo. He is wearing the handsome, red silk jacket that he was wearing when he met with Pastor Yans, along with a colorful traditional batik head covering. A motorcycle slows down, the driver greets him, and Lumbaa turns halfway to the camera so that the viewer sees his face, which is smiling and animated. Although the film has already presented several vivid juxtapositions of the old and the new, this quiet encounter of an elderly man on foot along a mountain road exchanging greetings with young people riding a modern mode of transportation suggests the resilience of this way of life and this way of making sense of life and death.

Elizabeth Coville (retired)
Hamline University

On the ethnographic antonyms of loss and change

Death of the One Who Knows—or, as the original French title, *Quand un poète disparaît*, more aptly suggests—is a beautiful ethnographic and nearly lyrical meditation around loss. In this powerful documentary, ethnomusicologist Dana Rappoport masterfully attends to the intricacies of our experience with loss, understood here both as an existential event (i.e., the severing of intimate intersubjective entanglements ensuing from an individual's death) and as a collective and systemic phenomenon (i.e., the structural displacement and social discontents emerging from processes of cultural and linguistic shift).

The film kicks off with a deeply moving scene: 23 June 2018, interior day shot of a rural Toraja house, two women desperately wail over a coffin wrapped in red fabric; the older one, her head completely covered in a black cloth, intersperses her sobs with the singing of a mortuary chant. Rappoport's voice-over reveals that the deceased was a speech master, a ritual poet, an expert in officiating the rites of the East. His name was Ne' Lumbaa, but he was more often referred to as *burake Tattiku'*, a title "reserved for those who had inherited the small snakeskin drum." As Rappoport further explains, "masters like him were referred to by the names of musical instruments such as drums, gongs, flutes, or sitars, because their sounding voices connected the living with the invisible, the ancestors, and the deities." Ne' Lumbaa was a *to burake,* a chief master of the rituals of the rising sun, and a *to minaa* (another ritual title, which literally means 'the one who knows'); he was one of the last surviving experts of the Toraja indigenous religion, locally called *alukta* ('our way'), or *aluk to dolo* ('the way of the ancestors').

Dwelling in the central highlands of South Sulawesi, in eastern Indonesia, the Toraja are renowned for their complex dualistic ritual system: the rites of the East, associated with life and fertility and devoted to the deities, and the rites of the West, associated with death and addressed to the ancestors. Several ethnographers have documented the highlanders' intricate patterns of exchange and slaughtering of conspicuous amounts of pigs and buffalo, their elaborate forms of parallelistic speechmaking, and, above all, their sumptuous mortuary practices, which entail (for high-ranking individuals) lengthy two-stage funerals and the protracted storing of the corpse in the house of the living, before the performance of a secondary burial. Since the beginning of the twentieth century, the arrival in the highlands (in 1913) of Calvinist missionaries from the Dutch Reformed Alliance and the subsequent incorporation of the region within the Indonesian post-colonial state in the mid-1940s have engendered important changes. On the one hand, the missionaries, aiming at purifying Toraja rituals of what they considered pagan and anti-economic elements, established strict inventories of ritual dos and don'ts and inflected a monotheistic bend into the local polytheistic religion by assigning theological prominence to Puang Matua (a creator deity) over other deities of the Toraja pantheon. On the other hand, the Indonesian state ideology (Pancasila) mandated that all citizens believed in one God, which (despite successful campaigns for official recognition of several indigenous religions, *aluk to dolo* included) de facto legitimized the cultural hegemony of world religions, stigmatizing local belief systems and promoting massive conversion to Christianity.

As the film unfolds, the viewer is introduced to an exquisite longitudinal account of Ne' Lumbaa's life and ritual undertakings during the long collaboration (1993–2018) he had with Rappoport. Delicate glimpses into the intimacy of the protagonist's domestic life are juxtaposed with momentous fragments of his powerful ritual performances, whereby we grasp a sense of his genealogi-

cal knowledge and verbal dexterity. Besides offering a rich sensorial rendition of the grain of everyday life in the highlands, the film is a precious source of ethnographic insights into local ideologies of eloquence and linguistic apprenticeship. As we get to know Ne' Lumbaa, we discover a stark contrast between his unintentional and effortless attitude toward his craft and the strenuous and deliberate endeavors whereby Catholic priests or Christian pastors seek to learn the ritual language. Though no longer organically used for its original purposes, the ritual register is still considered a prestigious code and is widely deployed at Christian ceremonies, often in an incongruous way: they "put at the beginning what should be at the end," says Ne' Lumbaa. Like other speechmakers I encountered during my own fieldwork in Toraja, Ne' Lumbaa represents his verbal expertise as a form of inherent consciousness and natural inspiration (*mangilala*), as a spontaneous recollection of the 'words of the ancestors'. Toraja ritual specialists often self-effacingly downplay their individual authorship and portray themselves as sounding boxes of others' words. Only priests, pastors, and professional emcees methodically study and struggle to learn ritual couplets and songs. Rappoport encounters a young Catholic priest (Yans Sulo Paganna') who is an eager student of the ritual register. Realizing that the priest shares her commitment to the words of the ancestors, she introduces him to Ne' Lumbaa. The two meet and talk, but they seem to belong to two different worlds and their encounter does not spark the promise of a lasting master-disciple rapport.

Ne' Lumbaa is a cultural emblem, his life and death and his forced conversion to Pentecostalism (in 2009) are allegorical representations of a broader collective narrative: the gradual—and yet inexorable—process of cultural and linguistic loss, triggered by the encounter with global forces. As Rappoport bluntly puts it: "This is the story of a world that is going to die, that has no more mouths to tell it, no more wiggling tongues to sing it." From its late-nineteenth-century beginnings, the trajectory of the anthropological imagination has been characterized by a gradual shift from the trope of cultural loss to that of cultural change. After an initial impetus at documenting vanishing indigenous practices and languages on the verge of extinction—what historians of the discipline call 'salvage ethnography'—during the second half of the twentieth century, anthropologists have started to adopt a different approach: dismissing as problematic and outdated the earlier documentary efforts, they focused on the unpredictable outcomes of cultural contact and on the effervescent dynamics of social change. Transcending this disciplinary dichotomy, Rappoport's movie compellingly shows how cultural change is inextricably interlaced with cultural loss. Her camera has captured Ne' Lumbaa's beautiful chants along with majestic processions of precious ritual banners (*bate manurun*) made with sacred textiles, which were plundered by Western collectors, and ritual meat distributions to honor the ancestors performed from a raised bamboo platform (*bala kaan*), which can no longer be seen in the highlands. While marveling at these precious sounds and images, one wonders whether this film is not also the story of another imminent disappearance: that of a mode of doing fieldwork based on in-depth longitudinal research and on a radical commitment to a specific place and language. Rappoport's work is a powerful demonstration of the value of old-school, hard-core ethnolinguistic fieldwork, which entails the meticulous and time-consuming transcription and translation of high-quality recordings. We can only hope that this slow craft will not succumb to the ever-increasing demands for fast-paced research outputs posed by the quasi-corporate audit cultures, rampant in today's academic world.

Aurora Donzelli
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Director's Response

In response to my two colleagues, I'd like to pick up on an idea I was barely aware of when making this film, strange as it may seem: that of a double loss, the loss of a loved one and the loss of a collective socio-aesthetic memory. The loved one is the officiant Ne' Lumbaa, born before World War II. A ritual specialist whose practice has been outlawed by the Church since the early twentieth century, he was the guarantor of the relationship between the living and the unseen (ancestors, the deceased, and divinities)—a relationship made possible thanks to his ritual knowledge, his mastery of speech, songs, facts, and gestures. Since being forced by his community to convert to Protestantism (Pentecostal) in 2009, Lumbaa no longer officiated, but before that time, beginning in 1993, I was able to study a cycle of ritual songs and speech that he continued to recite and sing until his change of religion, albeit less and less often given the gradual extinction of the 'rule of the ancestors' (*aluk nene*') rituals. Lumbaa, the last official of the Rising Sun rituals in Toraja country, entitled as *to burake*, was responsible for promoting fertility, prosperity, and the salvation of homes and large families.

Having been adopted by Lumbaa when I started out, our bond of affection was one of the driving forces behind this film, which I was only able to make after his death. I had always wanted to tell the story of this society through images but had never been able to. When I was still working there, it had been suggested that I should bring a film crew into this photogenic society, but the idea didn't seem right to me: how could a film crew enter into the intimacy woven over many years with my adoptive father? I was using my video camera all the time, but I never felt technically up to the task of making a film.

However, the despair I felt on my return to Toraja country in 2014 pushed me to tell the story, to recount the liquidation of a socio-aesthetic memory. There was nothing left for me to do but alert young 'poets' who thought they were 'the one who knows' (*to minaa*) to study the words of the real *to minaa*. But how could I, the European, the intruder, have any right to teach them a lesson? So I went in search of the Toraja's feelings about their own society. In 2014–2015, I discovered that the Toraja themselves were shaken by the loss of their culture. At the end of the film, one scene is edifying: a young emcee takes the floor during a debate on my book. He speaks out against the loss of reference points and accuses the Church of responsibility. Another speaker addresses government representatives, pointing out that their actions are contrary to the preservation of traditional culture. Instead of preserving memory, they're building Christs all over the landscape. Both words, scathing and vibrant, also form the basis of the film. They show a real anger toward institutions, colonization, and the government's lack of action to preserve anything.

The origin of the film is thus linked to loss, announced right from the title of the film, in all the languages in which it is titled: French, English, or Indonesian (*Quand un poète disparaît*, *Death of the One who Knows*, *Hilangnya Pujangga Dewa*). What do humans do with loss? Societies have different answers. For the Toraja, loss is unbearable. This is one reason why death is so much a part of Toraja life. Here, the dead are transformed into ancestors so that something remains and nothing disappears, thus absence is transformed into presence, into vital energy, and it is recalled regularly (the dead are taken out with their bones from their coffin). If we look more widely, in the small societies of Southeast Asia that have resisted evangelization as best they can, we see that human beings counterbalance loss by creating something (a spirit, an ancestor, an effigy, a memory, a representation).

Loss seems to irrigate all my work as an ethnomusicologist—wasn't it also one of the driving forces behind the first ethnologists, and here I'm thinking of Franz Boas? Since 1993, in the 30 years I've been practicing my

profession, I've witnessed the pure and simple destruction of oral and traditional music, which is being struck down with an axe. How can we fail to react when there are possible ways forward? Just as the Toraja transform their dead into ancestors, I myself want to document this music so that it doesn't disappear forever. So that something remains of its absence.

In 2009, thanks to a collaboration with Elizabeth Coville and the late Stanislaus Sandarupa, we were able to publish a trilingual translation of the Toraja musical heritage I had collected. *Songs from the Thrice-blooded Land* brings together a corpus of songs and stories accompanied by their interpretation. The book was accompanied by a DVD, but over time this proved to be an unsustainable medium. Unfortunately! I was all about permanence and transmission, yet my medium became obsolete. But here I am again, 10 years later, converting all this work into a forthcoming website (Penanian – Toraja ritual music). Continuing to transform disappearance into something else. This work served as the groundwork for the film: the ritual poetry is widely deployed in the film, thanks to Elizabeth Coville's marvelous work.

Ethnographic research, the foundation of our work, seems to have fallen into disuse. Perhaps because collecting oral heritage and translating it requires long-term work, often involving several journeys, several years. Nowadays, only thesis students or full-time researchers are lucky enough to be able to do this. In relation to such long-depth fieldwork, Aurora Donzelli mentions the term 'salvage ethnography'. Philip Yampolsky, a fellow ethnomusicologist, has remarked to me that the term is often used (though not by Donzelli) in a disparaging sense, to dismiss the work of documentation that he and I both do. The premise is that since the old ways of doing things (making music among them) are dying out, they are no longer of interest. This is a form of 'presentism': only what is current is worth studying, documenting the past is nostalgia. My work, in this film and in all my study of music, has the opposite premise: that the past must be remembered. I seek to record for future generations *ways of knowing* and *ways of expression* that are now being lost, to preserve the evidence of alternative ways that people have lived. That is the idea behind the title that Philip suggested for the English version of the film. *Death of the One Who Knows* tells of lost forms of knowledge and creativity.

Dana Rappoport
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