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We would like to remind our readers that, strictly speaking, we are not reviewing the books and articles presented here (in the sense of giving a critical assessment of their contents) but intend to draw the readers' attention to the publications that are of particular interest for those who are engaged with both – anthropology and mission. The material in the bulletin partly consists of quotes taken from the presented books and articles.

Review of Books

(by Vinsenius Adi Gunawan and Othmar Gächter)

Bustos, Geovanne SVD, and Patrick Gesch (eds.): *The Word and the Words. 125 Years of SVD Engagement in Papua New Guinea. Proceedings at the Symposium "Did We Bring Light?" on the 125 Years of SVD Engagement in Papua New Guinea.* Siegburg: Franz Schmitt Verlag, 2022. 361 pp. ISBN 978-3-87710-559-7. (pbk)

The Divine Word Missionaries and Missionary Sisters celebrated the 125th anniversary of missionary engagement in Papua New Guinea in August 2021 with a Symposium under the theme "Did We Bring the Light?"

The proceedings of this Symposium are collected in this volume and deal with activities at the service of education, particularly through the Divine Word University; with historical and ethnological considerations; different services at the wellbeing of peoples, specifically with regard to medical aspects; and with different apostolates related to journalism, the formation of clergy, or in parishes.

"Have we learned from the people we have been working with? What lessons did we learn?", Archbishop Douglas Young asked at the symposium, and responds: "Most certainly we have. My own most important learnings are to not put my trust in horses and chariots, i.e. an awareness that my own strategies and techniques, however laudable, cannot replace trust in God and God's plan. We have to put our best efforts into doing the best job possible, but we have to realize that it is the Lord that gives the increase!"

Perret-Clermont, Anne-Nelly, Jean-Daniel More-rod et Jérémie Blanc (éds.): *Cultures et guérisons. Éric de Rosny – L'intégrale.* Neuchâtel: Éditions Livreo-Alphil, 2022. Coffret avec 3 tomes, 1263 pp. ISBN 978-2-88950-084-0, 978-2-88950-085-7, 978-2-88950-086-4. (pbk)

Éric de Rosny (1930–2012), est un prêtre jésuite et anthropologue français, missionnaire au Cameroun. Il est particulièrement connu pour – dans un souci d'inculturation – s'être fait initier dans la confrérie des *beyoum ba bato* (hommes-souche). Éric de Rosny consigne tout ce qui risquerait de s'oublier de la mémoire culturelle et, avec des chercheurs africains, il conduit des travaux en botanique, en droit, mais aussi sur les grands récits de la Tradition. La compréhension de l'héritage culturel est mise constamment en défi, non sans angoisse et parfois avec violence, par les bouleversements majeurs de la modernité: exode urbain, extension de la médecine des hôpitaux, système judiciaire importé, nouveaux mouvements religieux, transformations des relations familiales. Il observe aussi l'attrait croissant de la migration internationale qui emporte avec elle la sorcellerie sur d'autres terres.

Cet ouvrage rassemble pratiquement tous les articles d'Éric de Rosny, jusqu'ici uniquement publiés de façon dispersée dans de multiples revues africaines ou internationales. Avec un grand sens de la narration, à travers chacun de ces tableaux à l'écriture ciselée, Éric de Rosny s'efforce de faire voir – presque sentir – ce qu'il découvre, sans cacher la difficulté des rencontres

et les multiples questions qui se posent à lui en tant qu'anthropologue et jésuite.

Muziazia, Égide P.: Afrikanisch-katholische Migrantengemeinden in Nordwesteuropa. Zwischen Katholizität und Ethnizität. Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2021. 294 pp. ISBN 978-3-402-15193-8. (pbk)

Am Beispiel ghanaischer und kongolesischer Gemeinden beschreibt dieses Buch den historischen Entstehungskontext der afrikanisch-katholischen Migrantengemeinden in der nordwesteuropäischen Diaspora. Die Besonderheit dieser Migrantengemeinden besteht darin, es fertiggebracht zu haben, ihre während der Kolonialisierung verloren gegangene ethnische Identität zu rekonstruieren. So ist es ihnen gelungen, durchaus diverse, in Afrika verstreut lebende ethnische Gruppierungen in der Diaspora wieder zusammenzuführen.

Die Chancen und Herausforderungen, die diese ethnischen Migrantengemeinden für die Kirche in ihren Aufnahmeländern mit sich bringen, bestehen in einer Kultur der Annäherung und der gegenseitigen Anerkennung einheimischer und immigrierter Christinnen und Christen. Afrikanisch-christliche Migrantengemeinden könnten von daher beispielgebend sein, der Kirche – bei all ihrer Disparität und Vielfalt – auch in Europa neue Möglichkeiten und eine Zukunft zu eröffnen.

Thomas, David (ed.): The Bloomsbury Reader in Christian-Muslim Relations, 600–1500. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022. ISBN 978-1-3502-1409-5. (pbk)

This Reader brings together nearly 80 extracts from the major works left by Christians and Muslims that reflect their reciprocal knowledge and attitudes. It spans the period from the early 7th century, when Islam originated, to 1500. The general introduction provides a historical and geographical summary of Christian-Muslim encounters in the period and a short account of the religious, intellectual, and social circumstances in which encounters took place and works were written. Nearly all the translations are new, and a map is provided.

On the Christian side topics include: condemnations of the Qur'an as a fake and Muhammad as a fraud, depictions of Islam as a sign of the final judgement, and proofs that it was a Christian heresy. On the Muslim side they include: demonstrations of the Bible as corrupt, proofs that Christian doctrines were illogical, comments on the inferior status of Christians, and accounts of Christian and Muslim scholars in collaboration together.

Umar Ryad: This anthology ... offers the reader a unique collection of translated texts from languages that include Arabic, Latin, Greek, Syriac, and many others.

Rosa Delgado, Frederico, and Han F. Vermeulen (eds.): *Ethnographers before Malinowski. Pioneers of Anthropological Fieldwork, 1870–1922.* New York: Berghahn Books, 2022. 522 pp. ISBN 978-1-80073-531-6. (hbk)

Focusing on some of the most important ethnographers in early anthropology, this volume explores twelve defining works in the foundational period from 1870 to 1922. It challenges the assumption that intensive fieldwork and monographs based on it emerged only in the twentieth century. What has been regarded as the age of armchair anthropologists was in reality an era of active ethnographic fieldworkers, including women practitioners, and indigenous experts. Their accounts have multiple layers of meaning, style, and content that deserve fresh reading. This reference work is a vital source for rewriting the history of anthropology.

Bens, Jonas: *The Sentimental Court. The Affective Life of International Criminal Justice.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. 233 pp. ISBN 978-1-316-51287-6. (hbk)

Modern law seems to be designed to keep emotions at bay. "The Sentimental Court" argues the exact opposite: that the law is not designed to cast out affective dynamics, but to create them. Drawing on extensive ethnographic fieldwork – both during the trial of former Lord's Resistance Army commander Dominic Ongwen at the International Criminal Court's headquarters in the Netherlands and in rural northern Uganda at the scenes of violence – this book is an in-depth investigation of the affective life of legalized transitional justice interventions in Africa. Jonas Bens argues that the law purposefully creates, mobilizes, shapes, and transforms atmospheres and sentiments, and further discusses how we should think about the future of law and justice in our colonial present by focusing on the politics of atmosphere and sentiment in which they are entangled.

Kai Kresse: This book ... is a thoroughly worked, wide-ranging, and impressive piece of scholarship that weaves together ethnography, legal theory, and a condensed re-reading of the history of legal anthropology, while navigating with deep knowledge and brilliant lucidity the current and recent debates in related fields.

Lear, Jonathan: *Radikale Hoffnung. Ethik im Angesicht kultureller Zerstörung.* Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2023. 235 pp. ISBN 978-3-518-58759-1. (pbk)

Auf Grundlage der Anthropologie und Geschichte der nordamerikanischen Ureinwohner sowie mittels Philosophie und psychoanalytischer Theorie erforscht Jonathan Lear die Geschichte des Volkes der Crow im Angesicht der kulturellen Zerstörung. Sein Buch ist eine tiefeschürfende und höchst originelle philosophische Studie über eine eigentümliche Verletzlichkeit, die den

Kern der *conditio humana* betrifft. Wie sollen wir mit der Möglichkeit umgehen, dass unsere eigene Kultur zusammenbrechen könnte, wie mit dieser Verwundbarkeit leben? Ist es sinnvoll, sich einer solchen Herausforderung mutig zu stellen?

Das, Veena: *Slum Acts*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2022. 190 pp. ISBN 978-1-5095-3786-0. (pbk)

This book examines the ways in which knowledge that is inordinate, excessive, and overwhelming comes to mark everyday life in low-income, poor neighborhoods in Delhi with crumbling infrastructures and pervasive violence.

Based on long-term ethnography in these spaces, this book provides a detailed analysis of the institutions of the state, particularly of policing and law in India. It argues that catastrophic events at the national level and the techniques of governance through which they are handled secrete forms of knowing that get embedded into the nooks and crannies of everyday life, eroding trust, sowing suspicions, and leading to an exhaustion of capacity for care. Yet the paths to survival honed within these spaces generate critique that compels us to ask how punishment and torture become routinized in democracies. Following the paths of those who struggle with these questions in these neighborhoods, the book finds that deep philosophical questions, such as the inhuman as a possibility of the human rather than its boundary, arise in the weaves of these lives and are experienced as a dimension of the social.

Ash Amin: This book draws on years of meticulous research on everyday life in Delhi to open a new interpretation of slums with enormous political significance.

Hansen, Thomas B., and Srirupa Roy (eds.): *Saffron Republic. Hindu Nationalism and State Power in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. 330 pp. ISBN 978-1-009-10048-9. (hbk)

This volume examines the phenomenon of contemporary Hindu nationalism or “new Hindutva” that is presently the dominant ideological and political-electoral formation in India. There is a rich body of work on Hindu nationalism, but its main focus is on an earlier moment of insurgent movement politics in the 1980s and 1990s. In contrast, new Hindutva is a governmental formation that converges with wider global currents and enjoys mainstream acceptance. To understand these new political forms and their implications for democratic futures, a fresh set of reflections is in order. This book approaches contemporary Hindutva as an example of a democratic authoritarianism or an authoritarian populism, a politics that simultaneously advances and violates ideas and practices of popular and constitutional democracy.

Basu, Amrita, and Tanika Sarkar (eds.): *Women, Gender, and Religious Nationalism*. Cambridge: Cam-

bridge University Press, 2022. 360 pp. ISBN 978-1-009-12314-3. (hbk)

This book reflects the changing modalities of Hindu nationalist organizing among women and youth. It provides unique insights into how this immensely powerful political formation has been able to preside over a massive network of grassroots organizations among most segments of Indian society and capture national power.

The chapters explore the techniques the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and the Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) employ and the messages they convey about masculinity, femininity, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) communities, and analyze contrasting forms of women’s activism in defending and opposing Hindu nationalism.

This book contributes to the global literature on the gender dimensions of right-wing politics. By exploring why women advance the agenda of the Hindu right, despite its conservative views on gender and sexuality, the book makes an important intervention in feminist and women’s studies scholarship. The collection of these studies presents various positions in the spectrum of religiosity and a pervasive existence of masculinism across the Indian political activities. It is a demanding and complex book, as many authors take a very critical stance on the RSS and its dominance.

Kollatz, Anna, and Tilmann Kulke (eds.): *Narrative Strategies for India in Transition*. Berlin: EB-Verlag, 2023. 359 pp. ISBN 978-3-86893-425-0. (hbk)

India has been fascinating travelers from the earliest ages of history, and has been described as a wondrous world of incredible wealth, as well as a somewhat mysterious place, by authors from many countries.

The present volume is organized according to two main principles. First, we aim to dissect images of India in the long 19th century from multiple perspectives, images from a time during which the subcontinent saw a time of transition in many aspects of life, politics, and culture. Second, we seek to introduce narratology into the field of Indian cultural history as an innovative methodological tool that allows us to delve through the words of a text to its worlds and to generate our findings within a consistent theoretical and methodological framework and to compare them transculturally. To this end, the volume comprises six case studies, each analysing a thrilling and somewhat exceptional encounter with India during the long nineteenth century. The narratives under consideration are told by authors from different cultural backgrounds, in different languages, and with different aims.

Das, Veena: *Voix de l’ordinaire*. Édité par Marco Motta et Yves Erard. Lausanne: BSN Press, 2021. 231 pp. ISBN 978-2-940648-50-4. (pbk)

Que reste-t-il après la violence extrême ? Comment la vie continue-t-elle, malgré tout, dans les décombres de l'histoire ? "Voix de l'ordinaire", le premier livre de Veena Das traduit en français, témoigne des violences faites aux femmes depuis la Partition des Indes en 1947. L'image qu'elle en donne n'a pourtant rien de spectaculaire. Elle s'intéresse au contraire au travail de raffinement des relations qui apparaît en creux, dans les silences, dans les petits gestes quotidiens, et dans des formes particulières d'attention. Elle rend ainsi sensibles les forces à la fois annihilatrices et créatrices qui traversent et transforment les vies. Le soin que Veena Das porte aux détails et aux inflexions les plus infimes de l'ordinaire donne à percevoir la manière dont les relations endommagées se tissent à nouveau, fil après fil.

Prentice, Michael M.: *Supercorporate. Distinction and Participation in Post-Hierarchy South Korea.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2022. 248 pp. ISBN 978-1-5036-3187-8. (pbk)

What should South Korean offices look like in a post-hierarchical world? In "Supercorporate", anthropologist Michael M. Prentice examines a central tension in visions of big corporate life in South Korea's twenty-first century: should corporations be sites of fair distinction or equal participation?

As South Korea distances itself from images and figures of a hierarchical past, Prentice argues that the drive to redefine the meaning of corporate labor echoes a central ambiguity around corporate labor today. Even as corporations remain idealized sites of middle-class aspiration in South Korea, employees are torn over whether they want greater recognition for their work or meaningful forms of cooperation. Through an in-depth ethnography of the Sangdo Group conglomerate, the book examines how managers attempt to perfect corporate social life through new office programs while also minimizing the risks of creating new hierarchies. Ultimately, this book reveals how office life is a battleground for working out the promises and the perils of economic democratization in one of East Asia's most dynamic countries.

Greg Urban: A major ethnographic study, "Supercorporate" offers a rare glimpse into the social world within a corporation where far more than economic production takes place. Readers will be struck by the book's far-reaching implications for comprehending the conflicts between hierarchy and democracy.

Amiri, Natalie: *Afghanistan. Unbesiegter Verlierer.* Berlin: Aufbau Verlag, 2022. 255 pp. ISBN 978-3-351-03963-9. (pbk)

In Afghanistan sehen sich viele Frauen und Männer in einer Falle. 100 Tage nach der erneuten Machtübernahme der Taliban und dem überstürzten Abzug der internationalen Truppen machte sich die Journalistin

Natalie Amiri auf eine Reise voller Gefahren durch das instabile Land. Sie zeichnet ein Porträt der komplexen, multiethnischen Gesellschaft und sprach mit Afghaninnen und Afghanen über die weit verbreitete Verarmung und die nahezu aussichtslose Situation vor allem für Frauen und Mädchen. Neben Menschen- und Frauenrechtlerinnen und Unternehmerinnen sprach sie auch mit ehemaligen Politikern über die Gründe ihres Scheiterns und mit einflussreichen Taliban über ihre reaktionären Pläne für Politik und Gesellschaft. Schon lange sei erkennbar gewesen, dass die von außen ins Land getragenen Bemühungen um ein „Nation Building“ und eine Demokratisierung in der praktisierten Form trotz des enormen Aufwandes scheitern würden. Die patriarchale, traditionelle Gesellschaft, die desolate Wirtschaftslage und die Korruption hätten ihrerseits dazu beigetragen, dass die Taliban nie verschwunden waren und nun wieder mit harter Hand regieren können.

Amirpur, Katajun: *Iran ohne Islam. Der Aufstand gegen den Gottesstaat.* München: Verlag C.H.Beck, 2023. 240 pp. ISBN 978-3-406-80306-2. (hbk)

Frauen verbrennen ihren Hijab, Mullahs werden die Turbane vom Kopf gerissen. Katajun Amirpur ordnet den Aufstand gegen den Gottesstaat, der seit September 2022 im Gange ist, in eine Entwicklung ein, die vom Westen bisher kaum bemerkt wurde: Nicht nur die iranische Gesellschaft wendet sich zunehmend vom Islam ab, sondern auch das Regime selbst. Nationale Größe hat sogar offiziell Vorrang vor dem Koran. Nicht die Mullahs herrschen, sondern Polizei und Militär. Das aufrüttelnde Buch lässt uns Iran mit anderen Augen sehen.

Jackson, Peter. A., and Benjamin Baumann (eds.): *Deities and Divas. Queer Ritual Specialists in Myanmar, Thailand, and Beyond.* York: Nias Press, 2022. 311 pp. ISBN 978-87-7694-308-0. (pbk)

Across the Buddhist societies of mainland Southeast Asia, local queer cultures are at the centre of a recent proliferation of professional spirit mediumship. Drawing on detailed ethnographies and extensive comparative research, the book captures this variety and ferment.

Tom Boellstorff: *Deities and Divas* is a remarkable achievement. By linking queer studies and religious studies, this volume's contributors bring new insights to the study of Mainland Southeast Asia, transgenderism, and faith. Bringing together a range of disciplines and both historical and contemporary data from Myanmar and Thailand, this book will prove invaluable to all those interested in how ritual and queer experience intersect in the modern world.

Herrmann, Simon: *Sickness and Healing. A Cognitive Study of Mature Lele Christians in Papua New*

Guinea. Münster: Lit Verlag, 2022. 359 pp. ISBN: 978-3-643-91478-1. (pbk)

Long before the Lele people of Papua New Guinea had significant contact with the Western world and Christianity, they had developed a framework for understanding sickness and healing with a strong emphasis on the unseen world. This study examines how mature Lele Christians of the Evangelical Church of Manus assess traditional health concepts in light of their Christian faith and Scripture. By using cognitive theory as an interpretive approach, this research serves as a case study to illustrate the mental processes that take place when Christians in an animistic context make sense of their traditional culture.

Schulz, Michael, y Estrella Guerra (eds.) *Fluctuaciones del mal. Alteridad y violencia en la interpretación latinoamericana*. Bonn: Bonn University Press, 2023. 298 pp. ISBN 978-3-8471-1505-2. (hbk)

Las contribuciones que se incluyen en este libro exploran la categoría del mal en su uso fluctuante para marcar la alteridad en la América Latina colonial y contemporánea. La fluctuación del mal significa que cada uno de los actores del conflicto usaba esta categoría para marcar al otro. La experiencia del mal como violencia deshumanizadora sigue siendo una constante que determina la realidad latinoamericana incluso más allá del periodo colonial; constatamos su presencia extendiéndose hasta el momento actual (dictaduras, Sendero Luminoso, FARC, paramilitares, violencia policial, feminicidios). Pero también hay ejemplos de ello en Europa. El origen de la violencia está siempre en la demonización del extranjero y del otro, es decir, en la incapacidad de reconocer su vulnerabilidad y sus precarias condiciones de vida para ayudar a superarlas. El concepto de una hermenéutica diatópica, que abre los topoi (“lugares”) del Otro respectivo, intenta ofrecer una solución.

Schmidt, Elmar, y Monika Wehrheim (eds.): *Imaginarios ecológicos en América Latina. Crónicas coloniales, ensayos, novelas, cine y prácticas culturales*. Bonn: Bonn University Press, 2022. 310 pp. ISBN 978-3-8471-1423-9. (hbk)

Contaminación ambiental, extractivismo, cambio climático: las catástrofes ecológicas condicionan la vida latinoamericana de muchas maneras. Con el trasfondo de las experiencias actuales en un contexto de crisis ambiental, este volumen explora ideas e imaginarios de la naturaleza. Reúne contribuciones internacionales de estudios literarios y culturales sobre conceptos históricos de la naturaleza, representaciones del petróleo, perspectivas ecofeministas, contextos urbanos, escenarios distópicos así como la crítica a la modernidad y al antropocentrismo en la literatura latinoamericana. Textos de ficción, crónicas e historias naturales, películas, nue-

vos medios de comunicación y prácticas culturales indígenas sirven para determinar diferentes percepciones latinoamericanas del medio ambiente, en la era del antropoceno, en sus complejas facetas.

Hayashida, Frances M., Andrés Troncoso and Diego Salazar (eds.), *Rethinking the Inka. Community, Landscape, and Empire in the Southern Andes*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2022. 297 pp. ISBN 978-1-47732385-4. (hbk)

The Inka conquered an immense area extending across five modern nations, yet most English-language publications on the Inka focus on governance in the area of modern Peru. This volume expands the range of scholarship available in English by collecting new and notable research on Qullasuyu, the largest of the four quarters of the empire, which extended south from Cuzco into contemporary Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile.

From the study of Qullasuyu arise fresh theoretical perspectives that both complement and challenge what we think we know about the Inka. While existing scholarship emphasizes the political and economic rationales underlying state action, “Rethinking the Inka” turns to the conquered themselves and reassesses imperial motivations. The book’s chapters, incorporating more than two hundred photographs, explore relations between powerful local lords and their Inka rulers; the roles of nonhumans in the social and political life of the empire; local landscapes remade under Inka rule; and the appropriation and reinterpretation by locals of Inka objects, infrastructure, practices, and symbols. Written by some of South America’s leading archaeologists, this book is poised to be a landmark book in the field.

Tamara Bray: “Rethinking the Inka” Empire brings us new insights into the expansionary motives and methods of the last and largest indigenous state in the Americas as seen from the perspective of the south – the imperial realm known as Qullasuyu – where some of the most exciting research in Inka studies is happening today. In this volume, leading scholars from South America provide a cohesive set of studies that foreground contemporary theoretical concerns with sacred landscapes, material agencies, and social ecologies.

Mattioli, Aram: *Zeiten der Auflehnung. Eine Geschichte des indigenen Widerstandes in den USA*. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 2023. 464 pp. ISBN 978-3-608-98348-7. (hbk)

Nach der Eroberung Nordamerikas durch die USA und Kanada standen die First Peoples am Tiefpunkt ihrer Geschichte. Doch das 20. Jahrhundert brachte nicht nur eine kulturelle Renaissance, sondern auch eine Entwicklung, die sie nach und nach wieder zu Herren ihres eigenen Schicksals machte. Schon in der Zeit des Ersten Weltkriegs formierte sich eine Selbstbestimmungsbewegung, die 50 Jahre später in der »Red Power«-Zeit kulminierte. Der Autor spürt der faszinieren-

den Geschichte indigener Selbstermächtigung nach und entreißt die schicksalhaften Momente des Widerstands der Vergessenheit. Während die gängigen Darstellungen der US-Geschichte dieses hochdramatische Kapitel nicht berücksichtigen, zeigt seine packend erzählte Chronik des Widerstands, dass die First Peoples auch in der Reservationszeit nie nur willenlose Opfer waren. Aktiv und entschlossen nahmen sie ihr Schicksal oft selbst in die Hand – bis heute, im Kampf um die ökologischen Grundlagen ihres Lebens.

Chesworth, John A.: *Mixed Messages. Using the Bible and Qurʾān in Swahili Tracts.* Leiden: Brill, 2022. 292 pp. ISBN: 978-90-04-51903-9. (pbk)

The present volume sets Swahili religious tracts available in Kenya and Tanzania in their context. The book starts with an overview of tracts in Swahili from the 19th century to the present day, an examination of Swahili as a religious language, and an introduction to Swahili versions of the Bible and Qurʾān. Chesworth then introduces the range of tracts currently available, examining eight in detail. In particular he considers how they present scripture in order to promote their own faith, Islam or Christianity, whilst denigrating the other. Finally, the volume discusses the impact from modern media on these tracts.

Falola, Toyin, and Olajumoke Yacob-Haliso: *African Refugees.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2023. 591 pp. ISBN 978-0-253-06441-7. (hbk)

“African Refugees” is a comprehensive overview of the context, causes, and consequences of refugee lives, discussing issues, policies, and solutions for African refugees around the world. It covers overarching topics such as human rights, policy frameworks, refugee protection, and durable solutions, as well as less-studied topics such as refugee youths, refugee camps, LGBTQ refugees, urban refugees, and refugee women. It also takes on rare but emergent topics such as citizenship and the creativity of African refugees.

The authors showcase the voices and experiences of individual refugees through the sweep of history to tell the African refugee story from the historical past through current developments, covering the full range of experience from the causes of flight to living in exile, all while maintaining a persistent focus on the complicated search for solutions. “African Refugees” recognizes African agency and contributions in pursuit of solutions for African refugees over time but avoids the pitfalls of the colonial gaze – where refugees are perpetually pathologized and Africa is always the sole cause of its own problems – seeking to complicate these narratives by recognizing African refugee issues within exploitative global, colonial, and neo-colonial systems of power.

Whitehouse, Bruce: *Enduring Polygamy. Plural Marriage and Social Change in an African Metropolis.* New

Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2023. 221 pp. ISBN 978-1-9788-3113-1. (pbk)

Why hasn’t polygamous marriage died out in African cities, as experts once expected it would? “Enduring Polygamy” considers this question in one of Africa’s fastest-growing cities: Bamako, the capital of Mali, where one in four wives is in a polygamous marriage. Using polygamy as a lens through which to survey sweeping changes in urban life, it offers ethnographic and demographic insights into the customs, gender norms and hierarchies, kinship structures, and laws affecting marriage, and situates polygamy within structures of inequality that shape marital options, especially for young Malian women. Through an approach of cultural relativism, the book offers an open-minded but unflinching perspective on a contested form of marriage. Without shying away from questions of patriarchy and women’s oppression, it presents polygamy from the everyday vantage points of Bamako residents themselves, allowing readers to make informed judgments about it and to appreciate the full spectrum of human cultural diversity.

Parker Shipton: In some wide regions, people deem polygamy a normal, natural option. In others, it’s spurned as an archaic, immoral form of oppression. But if monogamy may be human history’s exception, eyes and minds need opening to polygamy’s enduring pros, cons, and complexities. This collaboratively researched, empathic volume does it superbly.

Probst, Peter: *What is an African Art. A Short History.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2022. 281 pp. ISBN 978-0-226-79315-3. (pbk)

This book examines the invention and development of African art as an art historical category. It starts with a simple question: What do we mean when we talk about African art? By confronting the historically shifting answers to this question, Peter Probst identifies “African art” as a conceptual vessel that manifests wider societal transformations.

“What Is African Art?” covers three key stages in the field’s history. Starting with the late nineteenth through the mid-twentieth centuries, the book first discusses the colonial formation of the field by focusing on the role of museums, collectors, and photography in disseminating visual cultures as relations of power. It then explores the remaking of the field at the dawn of African independence with the shift toward contemporary art and the rise of Black Atlantic studies in the 1970s and 1980s. Finally, it examines the post- and decolonial reconfiguration of the field driven by questions of representation, repair, and restitution.

Raymond Silverman: It is a sophisticated, insightful critique of the trajectories that collectors, curators, and scholars of African art have followed since the end of the nineteenth century. As the first monographic historiography of Africanist art studies, it is sure to seed lively debate that interrogates the past and informs the

future. An essential read for any and all students of African art.

Fancello, Sandra, and Alessandro Gusman (eds.): *Charismatic Healers in Contemporary Africa. Deliverance in Muslim and Christian Worlds*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022. 224 pp. ISBN 978-1-350-29544-5. (hbk)

Based on ethnographic studies conducted in several African countries, this volume analyses the phenomenon of deliverance – which is promoted both in charismatic churches and in Islam as a weapon against witchcraft – in order to clarify the political dimensions of spiritual warfare in contemporary African societies.

Deliverance from evil is part and parcel of the contemporary discourse on the struggle against witchcraft in most African contexts. However, contributors show how its importance extends beyond this, highlighting a pluralism of approaches to deliverance in geographically distant religious movements, which coexist in Africa. Against this background, the book reflects on the responsibilities of Pentecostal deliverance politics within the condition of “epistemic anxiety” of contemporary African societies – to shed light on complex relational dimensions in which individual deliverance is part of a wider social and spiritual struggle.

Spanning across the study of religion, healing, and politics, this book contributes to ongoing debates about witchcraft and deliverance in Africa.



Review of Articles

(by Joachim G. Piepke, Darius Piwowarczyk, Stanisław Grodz, and Vincent Adi Gunawan)

Manning, Patrick: The Origins of Social Evolution. Language and Institutional Evolution. *Anthropos* 118. 2023: 7–21.

This essay hypothesizes the emergence of new levels of human group behavior, some 70,000 years ago in north-east Africa. Syntactic language emerged as young people gathered to play collaboratively in deepening their communication. The results of their conscious innovations brought new types of communication, collaborative acts of representation, and formalization of their collective intentionality through ritual. The discourses and actions of group members created language itself and the community of speakers as the initial cases of social institutions. The same innovations launched processes of institutional replication for the benefit of later generations. Along with this inheritance, a combination of conscious and unconscious procedures yielded social selection of institutions, according to criteria that are best labeled as the level of social welfare.

Social Evolutionary Studies found a way to conduct empirical research on group behavior by comparing primate species through observations of their typical community-group sizes and measuring their average neocortical volume. Result was a correlation of these two measurements with the amount of time spent by species in grooming behavior: for species with larger groups, more time was devoted to grooming. The authors found that the size of the *Homo sapiens* neocortex yielded an expected local-community size of 150. Yet sustaining this group size would have required an immense allocation of time to grooming. The proposed consequence was that vocalized interaction was able to substitute in part for grooming, but also that large-brained *Homo sapiens* were unable to satisfy their need for social interaction until the rise of syntactic language. This led to the thesis that female exchange of gossip was key to the rise of language, although this proposal did not seem to resolve the step to syntactic speech. In later studies of modern humans, the number 150 reappeared and persisted as the basic number of human acquaintances. Dunbar developed the expanded concept of “social brain” to argue that primate brains became large to sustain long-term social relations within intimate groups and community groups, especially for group protection, thus opening the path to hominin evolution.

Biological theory and practice expanded and diversified impressively in the late twentieth century, with three influential advances. The first of these arose rather quietly with W.D. Hamilton’s papers (1964) in population genetics, identifying what became known as ‘inclusive fitness’, in that individuals shared much of their genome with siblings as well as with parents and offspring. The implications of this discovery of a path for expanding altruism in humans and animals came only gradually to be understood. More widely heralded

were the advances in genetics and epigenetics. Fuller details of genetic mechanisms were traced, while the process of genetic sequencing advanced to the point where whole genomes were sequenced for humans and many other species. At the same time, the basic nature of epigenetics became clear. In this work, expanded study of genetic mechanisms showed that genes could be regulated by proteins and RNA, opening the door to ontogenic or life-course development and yielding repeated advances in a field that had been in limbo for most of a century.

Studies in evolutionary linguistics expanded significantly from this point. Where Bickerton (1990) emphasized basic communication through vocalization of ‘protolanguage’, Noam Chomsky (1995) emphasized the internal and unspoken logic of language (i-language) as contrasted with communication and speech (e-language). Bickerton and Szathmáry (2009) edited a volume presenting the contending perspectives on social vs. biological origins of syntax, while Fitch (2010) provided a comprehensive review of debates in evolutionary linguistics. Laland (2017) expanded Bickerton’s notion of protolanguage and its long-term development through teaching, especially of closely-related children. He saw it as followed by a transition to richer forms of language through some combination of protolanguages that enabled trade. He argued that an accumulated volume of symbols created a demand for rules of usage that preceded syntax.

Meanwhile, Berwick and Chomsky (2016) expanded their case for the genetic emergence of ‘Merge’, a hypothesized algorithm for linking elements of logical strings, concluding that a single mutation had enabled it to provide the last necessary element for syntactic speech by about 80,000 years ago. Yet the problem of syntactical e-language was different, as syntax required complex social interaction that needed to be enabled through invention at the social level. Yet Merge and i-language, perhaps linked to each other, may have arisen even before 300,000 years ago, advancing logical skills yet remaining internal; a later time and a separate mechanism may have enabled Merge to connect to the external dimensions of group-based syntax, speech, and social evolution. In any case, the issues of community group size, Merge, intentionality, and i-language need to be included in studies of ‘cultural evolution’ or ‘capability for culture’, since studies of each issue were central to the various other elements of social learning and dual inheritance that developed in *Homo sapiens*.

Syntactic language is speech with rules for the arrangement of words and phrases; we-group collective intentionality is the formation of social groups by members who agree to share in objectives and in working collaboratively toward them. I argue that syntactic language and we-group collective intentionality arose together through the agency of adolescent chil-

dren. The young people developed syntax and group behavior, enabling verbal exchange of the i-language-thinking that had long been going on within individuals. The children created institutions during perhaps two generations of work and play; the institutions were structured well enough to benefit from transgenerational continuity. The new development was a breakthrough, but it was less a breakthrough in human capacity for conceptualization than it was an advance in the capacity for sharing of concepts.

The need was to surmount at once the obstacles to syntactic language and we-group behavior. Neither syntactic language nor groups characterized by we-group collective intentionality could have evolved entirely out of incremental processes: creation of syntactic language required social change. This theory, linking spoken language to collaborative groups, sits at the intersection of studies in group-level social evolution and the human capacity for individual-level culture. The hypothesis accounts for humans at various levels, allowing for distinctive dynamics in each grouping: as individuals, as populations of individuals, as I-groups or informal networks of individuals, and as we-groups linked by collective intentionality. Creating syntactic language required generating complex structures of speech, inherent specificity, and huge vocabulary; collaborative we-groups required articulate agreements that were carried out in practice. For individuals to enter the language community required years of effort in learning vocabulary, syntax, and the social graces to agree with established usage. At some point, a rapid process of reorganization was required to enable the emergence of such a new social order, through broad agreement on numerous decisions in a short-period of time. I therefore propose that the path to breaking through the two obstacles was led by adolescent children who, at the most innovative age, initiated the change by creating expanded groups and by sharing the articulation of verbal syntax in a game-like situation. These children had substantial knowledge, strong interest in group activities, and few responsibilities to distract them. In earlier times, humans had arguably communicated either through a form of 'protolanguage' without syntax, in which phrases were limited to four or five words or through a mixture of gesture and voicing.

Szafrński, Adam A.: Towards the Semasiological Function of Religion. Selected Cultural Contexts. *Anthropos* 118.2023: 23–29.

Interestingly selected contemporary publications in the field of anthropology and sociology of religion show a continued interest in the issues of religion. At the basis of the ongoing discussions on religion, we can find a philosophical question: can faith be reconciled with reason? In the context of the processual nature of the world and the expanding scope of the rational sphere, some researchers (such as M. Weber) have shown the waning importance of religion in the Western world.

The process of rationalization is related to the phenomenon of the "naturalization" of religion, which is a consequence of the Euro-American worldview adopted by researchers. It is noticeable in the questions that researchers sometimes ask the respondents. Lassiter quotes a conversation between James Peacock and an inhabitant of Indonesia who was surprised by Peacock's question: do you still believe in spirits? For Indonesians, spirits are not only objects of faith, but also part of the real world. The pattern of what is real in the religious experience of the subject may (and does) disappear in the world of the researcher. However, given the indisputable results of research by anthropologists from around the world, they show religion as "the really real" – using the language of Clifford Geertz.

At this point, Lassiter adds that trying to understand the spiritual culture of "another" is not without consequences for the researcher. He has to answer the question: are the beliefs of others on the same level as his own (e.g., are they more or less rationalized?) This is connected with the awareness of the researcher's limitations resulting from his ethnocentrism – recognizing what is science, or knowledge, and what is faith. According to Lassiter, we can prove without any doubt that the earth is round and that it orbits around the Sun. However, we cannot prove in the same way that the faith of others, e.g., belief in miracles, is limited only to "folk medicine" – which suggests that the real relationship between the prayer request for recovery and the fact of recovery, from the researcher's point of view, is "objectively" non-existent – remaining only an element of the subjective awareness of the subject. This prejudice has a history.

For K. Pike, access to its "emic" shape is characterized by an honest internal view / discovery of what the subject participates in. In this case, the inner experience of the believer is the key to understanding the phenomenon of religion, and the etic perspective – the anthropologist's perspective – has something of creation in it, it is created by the anthropologist. According to Clifford Geertz, this creation used to take the form of a "witness" in anthropology, the "transparent model" of Evans-Pritchard, the "imaginary journeys" of Ruth Benedict and the "universalizing project" of Levi-Strauss. For the purposes of this article, we will discuss the first two conceptions – the models of Malinowski and Evans-Pritchard. Especially the model of Evans-Pritchard enables a critical development of Lassiter's concept of the relationship between reason and faith.

Geertz emphasizes that in the anthropology of B. Malinowski, a certain undefined methodology of action can be seen, characterized by a sense of isolation, memories of home and what was left there, awareness of a vocation and the whims of emotions. The "Self" that is to affirm something is a very diverse "Self" – full of internal tensions and contradictions. At the same time, this feeling of isolation of the researcher resulting from staying in a foreign territory, intensified by memories from the family home, but also the awareness of a vocation seen in the context of the whims of emotions,

moments of weakness and loss – meant that, by anti-thesis, Malinowski designed the outside world as a world free from the inconsistencies and contradictions. The assumed functionality of cultural elements was a specific form of escapism (Geertz) from disharmonies occurring in the deepest layers of the researcher's personality.

In the exploration of spiritual culture, Edward Evan Evans-Pritchard adopted a slightly different strategy in his work "Nuer Religion." From the structural and functional perspective, he reconstructed the object of religion in relation to the world, social groups, and individuals. Using scientific knowledge, Evans-Pritchard explains, within the objective language, the objective nature of reality, while the truth (read: "logical order") of the existing beliefs is determined by the adopted cultural assumptions. In Nuer culture, a sudden, violent storm is a sign of the "other" reality. For the Nuer people what is primal is the image of the Sacred – it is both terrifying and attractive. On the other hand, from the point of view of, for example, the Azande people (as Evans-Pritchard puts it), sorcerers are responsible for the misfortunes suffered, but objectively it is a given social structure (beliefs functioning in it) that makes the imaginary person responsible for the injuries suffered. Evans-Pritchard's suggestion about the existence of an objective reality, confirmed by anthropologists educated at Western universities, can now be read as an unauthorized form of "naturalization" of the subject of research.

It is true, however, that researchers "at the turn of the century" are less and less interested in the description of beliefs in the objective aspect and more in a description in which only the functional, instrumental meaning of religion becomes apparent. It is a symptom of "diminishing" the role of the supernatural factor in favor of the common-sense perspective in the interpretation of the contemporary world. It enables quite efficient functioning in the modern world, and even though it does not give answers to the questions that people ask in difficult situations, it is often used by theologians explaining the problems of the present day. Geertz calls this process the ideologization of religion. In this shape, "the anxieties of the heart" which Geertz refers to, can be summed up with a slogan: "Other beasts, of course, other mores". However, Geertz says that only religion – the one arising out of mystical experiences – has survived as "something which hasn't failed yet." Religion is not tantamount to the crystallization of collective consciousness but is something most primal, which allowed Geertz to see the autonomy of religion.

It is stated that, in traditional society, accepted symbols guaranteed not only the understanding of the world, but also a joyful existence in it, even in the shadow of death. This was done through obedience to a religious authority. On the other hand, the ritual is only a sign of the presence of religious institutions that appear spontaneously. The operation of the ritual becomes real thanks to the performative function of language. At the core of this function, we find collective

intentionality that allows people to create a shared reality. The main function of religion, according to C. Geertz, is the structuring of human life. This process gives room for hope. At the ritual core, there are real mystical experiences, rooted in the supernatural world.

Belmekki, Belkacem: Revisiting the Origins of Muslim Cultural Exclusivism in British India. A Colonial Calculated Strategy? *Anthropos* 118.2023: 31–41.

Upon his visit to the Indian subcontinent in 1017, Abu Rayḥān Al Biruni, the famous eleventh century Muslim scholar, objectively remarked that one "must always bear in mind that the Hindus entirely differ from us in every respect" and that "the barriers which separate Muslims and Hindus rest on different causes." Notwithstanding this statement, centuries-long relatively peaceful co-existence based on mutual understanding and respect between the Indian Muslims and the Hindus became a reality, and a virtually harmonious relationship was forged.

Simply put, the stability and continuity of the Mughal Empire depended to a large extent on the co-operation of the local population which, in turn, could be obtained through the respect and tolerance of the Hindu faith. In this regard, Bisheshwar Prasad commented that religious toleration was the keynote of the Mughal policy, and that so long as the emperors "gave the appearance of impartiality in the matter of faith, the willing submission of the Hindu majority was a recognized fact."

In a nutshell, the experience of sharing the land for a long period of time brought both Muslims and Hindus closer to each other and that, in spite of the sharp and conspicuous differences that Abu Rayḥān Al Biruni had evoked centuries before. Indeed, the cultural interactions which took place over time gave rise, spontaneously, to the emergence of a Muslim-Hindu composite culture, and in the process, cultural differences between both communities became progressively blunted as Muslims increasingly adopted many Hindu customs and mores.

Nevertheless, the gradual takeover of the subcontinent by the British East India Company in the wake of the battle of Plassey (1757) had a serious impact on the Indian society in the longterm in that this socio-cultural closeness and relatively conflict less, fraternal Muslim-Hindu relationship began losing ground. In fact, a wind of change started blowing in South Asia as early as the late eighteenth century, and picked up strength during the nineteenth century, which adversely affected communal relationships in South Asia. The context in British India in the post-1857 Revolt era, more precisely, was marked by the emergence of consciousness among the Muslims whereby they developed a sense of belonging to a cultural entity that was distinct from that of the Hindus. This shift towards cultural exclusivism, which, later on, gave rise to a separatist tendency among the "Muhammadans" of India, has been a moot point that drew a great deal of interest among scholars

who provided different interpretations. Hence, what made the Indian Muslims become so conscious about their cultural differences vis-à-vis the Hindus and, therefore, see themselves as a separate group with distinct cultural traits?

It goes without saying that the arrival of the British in the subcontinent and the toppling of the Mughals that occurred subsequently provoked different responses among the Muslims and Hindus. Whereas for the latter the coming of the British simply meant a ruler replacing another, for the former it was a usurpation of their power. In this regard, they – Muslims – had a hard time trying to come to terms with the fact that power had slipped out of their hands and that now it was the British who became the new masters, ruling the roost in the subcontinent. This new state of affairs made the Indian Muslims recoil in despair and, except for few fruitless attempts at anti-colonial resistance, adopted a passive attitude towards the new establishment. As a matter of fact, looking at the British with a mixture of distrust and suspicion, the Muslims' negative reaction took the form of avoiding contact with anything associated with them, including their culture and education.

With this mistrustful mindset, there was little wonder that the Indian Muslims shied away from the modern education that the British had introduced in the subcontinent. Instead, they clung tenaciously to traditional Islam, a tendency that was amply encouraged by the orthodox *ulama*, i.e. Muslim religious scholars, who engaged in a widespread campaign to distance the members of their community from everything that symbolized Western civilization, including the English language. According to Mian M. Sharif, "the Muslim child who went to a West-oriented school was deemed to have crossed the limits of the Holy Law and placed himself outside the pale of Islam." Hence, under the influence of the traditional *ulama*, Western education was construed as a serious threat to the Muslims' religious upbringing because – as claimed by these religious scholars – it lacked compatibility with the Islamic teachings. Nevertheless, as historical facts would prove later on, by turning their back on Western education the Indian Muslims simply shot themselves in the foot.

In other words, unlike their Hindu fellow countrymen, who had embraced Western education wholeheartedly, the Indian Muslims failed to see through the benefits of this education and, therefore, missed the many opportunities it conferred. The result was that the Hindus fared much better in almost all walks of life, leaving the Muslim community trailing far behind. Thus, under British rule, the respective socio-economic development of the Muslim and Hindu societies followed divergent trajectories, a condition that would decisively affect the course of events in the subcontinent in the decades to come.

The language issue provides a good example illustrating British implication in sparking off misunderstandings between Muslims and Hindus, culminating in the polarization of the Indian society into two opposed factions. But first, prior to setting out this issue, it must be noted that there is general consensus among scholars

that Urdu, as a language, was born in the Indian environment during the Mughal era as a product of Muslim-Hindu coexistence. Notwithstanding the absence, to date, of any clear-cut and definite explanation as to the exact circumstances leading to its coming into existence, it is often taken for granted that this language came to symbolize Muslim-Hindu cultural unity and fraternity. In this respect, Farman Fatehpuri commented that "Urdu ... was born in the indo-Pak subcontinent; nurtured and developed by Indians and is a living example of the fusion of Hindu-Muslim culture." Meanwhile, Rajmohan Gandhi pointed out that cultural fusion between Muslims and Hindus was a fact mirrored through acts such as jointly celebrating religious festivals, like Diwali and Holi; however, as he further declared, the "most significant fusion was over language," namely Urdu. Simply put, Urdu became a *lingua franca* spoken almost everywhere in South Asia.

The Urdu-Hindi language issue broke out by the end of the 1860s in the city of Benares in the north of India when a group of high-profile Hindus clamored for the replacement of Urdu by Hindi – which used Devanagari characters – as the official language to be used in the court and as a medium of instruction. The repudiation of Urdu by this group of Hindu notables was motivated by the fact that it was regarded as representative of Islamic culture since, as mentioned earlier, it was rich in Middle Eastern loanwords as well as used *nasta'liq* Persian script. As underscored by F.E. Keay when he wrote: "Urdu ... had a vocabulary borrowed largely from the Persian and Arabic languages, which were specially connected with Muhammadanism." In addition to that, given the fact that this language thrived during the time when the Mughals held the reins of power, it was seen as a reminder of Muslim supremacy in South Asia. This prevalent anti-Urdu stance soon gathered momentum and led to the emergence of like-minded *sabhas*, or associations, which mushroomed throughout the subcontinent, especially in the North-Western Provinces, with Allahabad as the nerve center. The campaigns led by these associations converged on a single objective: the substitution of Urdu by Hindi as the "national language of a united India."

Modern Hindi was a new creation, or, as expressed by the Indian scholar Tara Chand, it "existed nowhere." It came into being at the behest of some British officials, mainly at Fort William College, whose printing press was used to produce textbooks in the new language – or "artificial language", using Devanagari script. These officials were, as it happened, staunch supporters of Hindi who did not conceal their anti-Urdu attitude, as can be reflected through their prodding of and unwavering support for the Hindi activists in their attempt to Sanskritise Urdu (or Hindustani). The Sanskritization of the latter took the form of purging it of Middle Eastern vocabulary and replacing its *nasta'liq* Persian characters by Devanagari.

Inevitably, this new development in the Indian scene took a religious dimension since *nasta'liq* Persian – which is Arabic-like script – was associated with Islam and Sanskrit with Hinduism – as is Latin with

Catholicism and Hebrew with Judaism. Therefore, the bifurcation of the once-lingua franca of the people of India into two differentiated languages, namely modern Urdu and modern Hindi, had a serious repercussion on the Indian society as it paved the way for the emergence and assertion of two separate cultural-cum-religious identities: Muslim vs. Hindu.

Dole, Ferdinandus, Frumensius Dole, and Alexander Elias: The *Nggua Kéu Uwi* Planting Rite of the Indigenous Lio People of Detukeli (Flores). *Anthropos* 118.2023: 55–67.

The main symbols in the *Nggua Kéu Uwi* rite are areca nut and yam. These foods are considered sacred because they are closely related to the history and livelihood of the Lio-Ende people, as told in the myth of *Iné Paré* (the story of the emergence of rice) and the story of Lengo (founder of the village of Detukeli). In ancient times, before the emergence of rice agriculture, the Lio-Ende people relied on areca nut and yam as staple foods. Their living conditions improved after the emergence of rice, which is considered the “fruit” of the cosmic marriage of two divine powers, heaven and earth, symbolized by areca nut and yam. In other words, areca nut and yam are personifications of *Dua ghéta lulu wula*, *Ngga'é ghalé wena tana* (the male ruler of the Heavens, and the female Earth).

The Lio-Ende people tell the story of *Iné Paré* to explain the emergence of rice agriculture. In ancient times, a young woman named *Iné Mbu* lived with her father Bobi, her mother Nombi and her two brothers Ndálé and Sipi. One day, *Iné Mbu* was collecting firewood near a swamp. She cut one of her arms and began bleeding. Where her blood fell in the mud, rice grew. The people who found out about it asked *Iné Mbu* to sacrifice herself so that more rice would grow, and they could begin to cultivate it. At first, *Iné Mbu* and her family objected strongly. However, knowing the intention of the crowd (the common welfare) *Iné Mbu* was ultimately willing to have her body chopped up in a ritual on Mount Kéli Nida. The mountain is also called *Kéli Ndota*: *kéli* means “mountain” and *ndota* means “chopped.” With her sacrifice, the rice plants then spread to various areas and the people no longer experienced hunger. As a mark of respect, people tend to avoid using the name *Iné Mbu* in everyday usage and refer to her as *Iné Paré* (Mother Rice).

While the deity is seen as a single supreme entity, it can also be separated into two parts: on the one hand, the male ruler of the Heavens, and on the other hand, the female Earth. The areca nut, which grows at the top of the areca palm, symbolizes the male ruler of the Heavens, while the yam, which grows underground, symbolizes the female Earth. Their union is believed to have given rise to *Iné Paré*, in the form of rice. Therefore, rice is not only a crucial staple food for the indigenous people of Detukeli, but also the fruit of the divine marriage between the male Heaven and female Earth.

The *Nggua Kéu Uwi* rite is said to have been carried out first by Lengo, the founder of the village of Detukeli and ancestor of the indigenous people who live there today. Oral tradition relates that Lengo left his hometown (Wologai) and went to other areas to expand his power and establish a new village, namely Detukeli. It is assumed that *Nggua Kéu Uwi* was a rite that Lengo had brought from his place of origin, Wologai. It is possible that this rite originated with and was practiced by the indigenous people of Wologai or other indigenous peoples.

At the beginning of the rainy season (September), the community begins to prepare new gardens. This activity is known as *ngeti uma* (“opening the garden”). They await a sign from the sky, namely the appearance of the stars *wunu* and *wawi toro*. *Wunu* is the name for the star Pleiades (sic) in the Seven Sisters or Kartika star cluster, while *wawi toro* is the name for the bright star Antares in the constellation Scorpius. These two stars are considered by the Lio-Ende community to be husband and wife. The positions of the stars are believed to indicate the time for planting as well as a prediction of the yield they will get in that year. The time for carrying out the *Nggua Kéu Uwi* rite falls in October, or *wula mapa*, after the activity of *ngeti uma* is completed and the *wunu* and *toro wawi* stars have appeared.

The *mosalaki*, or traditional elders of Detukeli, play an important role in this rite. The *Nggua* rite has a high value because of the role of the *mosalaki* as the main actor and intermediary between the transcendental and the common people. It is the duty and obligation of all *mosalaki* to lead their community in all aspects of life, including in spiritual matters such as carrying out traditional rites. There are seven *mosalaki* in Detukeli, although the number of *sa'o ria* is only six. *Nggua Kéu Uwi* is the largest rite and must be performed annually in the village of Detukeli. The tradition passed down from generation to generation requires that there be seven *mosalaki* who serve in this rite. Each *sa'o ria* has one *mosalaki* except *sa'o wulaleja* which has two *mosalaki*. The task of the two *mosalaki* from *sa'o wulaleja* is to take the areca nuts and yams from the garden and bring them to the *sa'o pu'u* or *sa'o nggua*. The *sa'o wulaleja* is known as the *sa'o* of residence of the *mosalaki* who carries out the *Nggua Kéu Uwi* rite.

The first thing to do is to look at the condition of the areca nuts and yams. This check is initiated by the *mosalaki pu'u*. He sends at least two men from the *sa'o wulaleja* to go check on the condition of the areca nuts and yams in each garden of the *ana kalo fai walu* over the course of a few days. When the two men have found areca nuts and yams that are good, healthy, and in proper condition, they mark the two trees with a special sign (*téo tanda*). The *mosalaki* gather in the *kuwu* and the determination of the day of the ritual begin to be discussed. The *Nggua Kéu Uwi* rite usually lasts for 12 days, which are known by the phrase *sembulu kobé rua* (12 nights). Two days after the start of the week, two *mosalaki* beat the gongs and drums in the morning, around 6:00 a.m. There are seven gongs and two drums:

the gongs are beaten by the *mosalaki riabéwa*, while the drums are beaten by the *mosalaki* of *sa'o keti uta*. The doors in all the *sa'o ria* begin to open. All the preparations taking place in each traditional house begin to be carried out.

On the seventh and eighth days since the start of the week, the *wari paré* or “drying rice” event is held. The *wari paré* activity, which lasts two days, is symbolic. This means that the rice is not dried in the sun for long (only about half an hour). On the morning of the seventh day, a woman from the *sa'o nitu* comes out of the traditional house carrying rice that has been gathered in a large basket and dries it in the middle of the *koja kanga* yard. A little while later, the woman gathers it back into the large basket, and then takes it to the *sa'o pu'u*. There, a number of women from each *sa'o ria* are waiting with mortars and pestles. They pound the rice as a group and separate the rice from the husks. After that, the rice is put back in the basket. The rice is brought and stored in the *sa'o pu'u*. Gongs and drums are sounded as a sign that the ceremony is over. The same is done the next day. *Wari paré* or the activity of drying rice actually symbolizes gratitude for the yearly harvest. This is because the rice that is dried in the sun, pounded, then stored in the *sa'o pu'u* is the rice harvested by the *ana kalo fai walu* that year (usually the harvest season is in June/July).

The eleventh day is the first day of the core celebration of the *Nggua Kéu Uwi* rite for the indigenous people of Detukeli. This stage is usually called *nai kéu koé uwi* which means “climb the areca and dig the yam.” Two *mosalaki* from the *sa'o wulaleja* are in charge of this stage. Before heading to the garden to collect areca nuts and yams, the two *mosalaki* together with the *mosalaki* of the *sa'o pu'u* must first hold a ritual to make offerings to their ancestors in their respective traditional houses. This ritual takes place around 7:00 a.m. The offerings to the ancestors are rice and chicken that are placed in a *pané*, a black bowl-like container made of clay.

Two *mosalaki* together with several people leave their traditional house and head to the garden of the *ana kalo fai walu*. When they arrive at the designated garden, they first look for betel leaves and pick them in large quantities. The betel leaf will later be distributed with areca nut to the indigenous people of Detukeli who want to eat it. The betel leaves are rolled and then tied with a rope that has been prepared beforehand. After that, they head to the areca palm that was marked earlier. One *mosalaki* prepares to climb it with a knife. Arriving at the top, the *mosalaki* slices or stabs the areca bunches which will be brought down seven times from left to right. When finished, the *mosalaki* pulls the areca bunch in one go hard enough that the areca bunch is released from the stem. The bunches of areca in his hands are brought down and begin to be cleaned and decorated.

After the areca nuts are decorated, another *mosalaki* goes to dig up the yam, bringing along a *rémbi* filled with a little rice. Upon arriving at the designated location, the *mosalaki* sprinkles rice around the base of the

yam plant before digging it up. This is done as a form of offering, to “ask permission” to take the yam. After that, he starts digging up the yams. Three yams are taken. Then the yams are wrapped in a traditional shawl and stored in a *rémbi*. Yams are brought to the group under the areca palm. A basket filled with yams and knives is tied to the palm fronds with the areca bunches, and it is ready to be paraded towards the village. While this is taking place, the entire group must not speak, stumble, or fall, and are not even allowed to cough or sneeze. If this happens, it is believed that it will bring bad luck to those who do it. Anyone who encounters the group of people carrying the areca nuts and yams immediately step aside or run and hide.

Areca nuts and yams are symbols that contain masculine and feminine elements. The male is symbolized by the areca nut and the female is symbolized by the yam. The areca nut relates to the penis or male reproductive organs, while the yam can be related to the vagina (female reproductive organ) and the uterus, where human life originates. In a higher sense, areca nut and yam represent the presence of *Du'a ghéta lulu wula*, *Ngga'é ghalé wena tana*, or *Du'a Ngga'é*, in the world. God who is above (the sky or the moon) is symbolized by the areca nut, while the God who is below (the earth) is symbolized by the yam. The union of the two is a form of cosmic marriage which is believed by the indigenous people of Detukeli to give birth to life in the form of rice. Areca nuts and yams are decorated and paraded in the villages like brides.

The activities on the twelfth day begin at around 8:00 a.m. If the dance from the night before is still going on, the *mosalaki riabéwa* has the right to stop it so that the next ceremony can be carried out. That morning, all the *mosalaki* march into the *sa'o pu'u*. They hold the *jaka uwi* (boil yams) ceremony. This ceremony is the culmination of the entire series of *Nggua Kéu Uwi* rites. Inside the *sa'o pu'u* or *sa'o nggua* there are two women, one sitting at each of the hearths (Lengo's hearth and Bedo's hearth). The ingredients that have been prepared, such as areca nut, yam, and betel leaf, are placed in winnowing baskets (*kidhé*). The other tools that will be used are water (*ae*), an earthen pot (*podo tana*), a knife, a clay plate or bowl (*pané*), and one shell (*ké'a*). They all sit down and are not allowed to make a sound as the messenger from Wologai begins to perform the *jaka uwi* ritual.

First of all, the leader of the ritual (the envoy from Wologai) lights a fire in one of the hearths (Lengo's hearth). Then, he begins slicing the yam into thin pieces. The sliced yam is put in a pot, which is filled with water. Then the earthen pot is covered with coconut shells and lifted onto the hearth to cook the yams. The leader of the ritual constantly pays attention to the condition of the cooked yams. The yams are ready when the water begins to boil. The leader then moves or lowers the earthen pot. The cooked yams are removed from the earthen pot with bare hands and placed in the pan. Then, the leader begins to pluck areca nuts off the bunch and store them in the winnowing basket. Before the *mosalaki* eat the yams and areca nuts, the

mosalaki pu'u is given an opportunity to pray. The prayers said by the *mosalaki pu'u* are addressed to the ancestors.

The leader eats one areca nut and one betel leaf. The spit from chewing the areca is put into the *pané*. After that, he takes a bit of lime and adds a little water to it. With this areca mixture, the leader makes a mark (like a cross) on the foreheads of all the *mosalaki*. This is a symbol of the carrying out of the *Nggua Kéu Uwi* rite. Next, the leader ties the knives to the areca bunches with ropes made of plants and throws them under the *sa'o pu'u* along with a piece of firewood which still has embers. This is a sign that the ritual has been completed.

The *Nggua Kéu Uwi* rite can be seen as serving two main purposes. On the one hand, it fills the spiritual need of the indigenous people of Detukeli to leave profane time and space and to commune with the sacred by re-enacting their creation myths, in accordance with Eliade's theory of the "eternal return." On the other hand, it serves a number of social functions related to regulating and maintaining the common good of the community, in accordance with Durkheim's view of religion as a means of social regulation.

Ugarte, Sophia: Skilling race. Affective Labor and "White" Pedagogies in the Chilean Service Economy. *American Anthropologist* 124/3.2022: 536–547.

The author examines the effects of racialization practices in everyday encounters between migrant Haitian women looking for work and Chilean recruiters in job interviews and skills-training programs in Santiago de Chile. Drawing on her ethnographic fieldwork, she demonstrates how racialized differences are made material and emotional based on a particular history of white supremacy and mestizaje. Ugarte argues that in order to become hireable and appropriate workers in the service economy, Haitian women transform their appearance, movements, feelings, and attitudes according to white pedagogies of affective labor. She also shows how the skilling of labor performed through these pedagogies is deeply affective, shaping Haitian women's sense of worth and their self-constitution as migrants beyond labor encounters. The analysis of how anti-Black racism toward migrant women perpetuates local manifestations of white-mestizo privilege reveals how affective labor and racialization practices articulate intimate experience of transnational mobility with intersectional script of power.

Thus, Chilean instructors leading training sessions for migrant women in private recruitment agency in Santiago emphasize that one important thing is "personal appearance": the Haitian female worker must not look like a supermodel because "she is a worker." They cannot, therefore, "wear provocative clothing, fancy earrings, red lipstick, nor have giant hair like this" (Afro hairstyle). Many of those sessions trained migrant women to become care and domestic workers. There was a default assumption that migrant women

lacked the skills and specific understanding to succeed in the Chilean workforce, and so improving their "work skills" would increase their chances of finding and keeping jobs. In other words, in these migrant women were taught how to dress and arrange their hair and makeup – that is, how to discipline their bodies and make their physical appearance palatable to Chilean employers, who, at the same time, perceives themselves as "whiter," "better," and "cleaner" than other Latin American and Caribbean migrants. These racial ideologies at the base of Chilean mestizo-whiteness are impacted, however, by Latin American migrants' transnational movement into Chile and Haitian women's adjustment of their bodies, attitudes, and emotions as they look for work in Santiago. The historical configuration and present manifestation of white pedagogies in the service economy reveal how myths of racial homogeneity and ideologies of mestizaje emerge from racial projects that perpetuate a specific version of white supremacy and further enact racial, gendered, and even class-based forms of exclusion. Through the ethnographic analysis of white pedagogies, Ugarte demonstrates how nonelite Chilean national perform racial ideologies as part of collective memories of good work and labor hierarchies. She also examines how these pedagogies position recruiters, employers, and instructors as "whiters" and hence "better" vis-à-vis Afrodescendant and Indigenous migrants, materializing race in Haitian women's bodies and thus solidifying the heavy history of Chilean racial exclusions. The racialization of Black Haitian women in encounters with white-mestizo Chileans shows the effects of a specific form of mestizaje that denies its history of constitutive Blackness and promotes miscegenation toward national ideals of Whiteness. "In doing so, the working of white pedagogies show how racialization as an analytic tool helps us understand the historical, multiscalar, and everyday configuration of racial hierarchies from Latin American perspective – one that incorporates contemporary intraregional migration and moves beyond the Black/white binary."

Note: I selected this article as an example of the "absurd turn" that characterizes cultural anthropology today – the situation in which the ideological jargon (e.g. higher case "Black" against lower case "White" in the same grammatical context) gradually replaces good science and common sense. In this way though, anthropology perpetuates exactly the same thing that it aspires to combat, namely racism (DP).

Morris, Julia: Managing, Now Becoming, Refugees. Climate Change and Extractivism in the Republic of Nauru. *American Anthropologist* 124/3.2022: 560–574.

Note: Although my task in this review ("A&M") is to summarize articles concerning the Americas, here I would like to draw your attention to a topic that has been concerning me since I was a high school kid in the 1970s, namely – the developments, especially the environmental destruction, in one of the smallest (and

once the richest) countries of the world, the island state of Nauru in Micronesia. It was part of the German protectorate of New Guinea from 1888 to 1918 (DP).

The Republic of Nauru, the world's smallest island state, used to be almost entirely economically dependent on the phosphate industry in the 20th century as part of a colonial extractive arrangement. After the phosphate deposits, from which Nauru derived its wealth, were depleted in the 1990s, the by then (since 1967) sovereign state engaged in the refugee industry, agreeing to process and resettle maritime asylum seekers who reached Australia.

In this article, Morris explores how Nauru's refugee policies (which she terms – using the postmodern anthropological gobbledygook – “refugee extractivism”) relates to “Nauruans’ ontological experiences of climate change” – (the “climate change” being another postmodern fuzzword). While Nauruans are now managing a refugee-related program, financed mostly by Australia, the phosphate related environmental challenges are heightening the prospects of islanders becoming refugees themselves. Morris argues that Nauruans’ understanding of refugeehood is entangled in the operations of the local “refugee industry” as well as in humanitarian and philanthropic portrayals. In Australian activist campaigns, in turn, Nauruans are distanced from refugees through representations of savagery and underdevelopment. These discourses intersect with how islanders see and experience refugeehood, while also revealing the logic employed by refugee campaigners.

Anthropologists have long shown how people interpret climate-related differently. Experiences of rain, drought, and climate change relate to culture, technology, and politics, producing different ways of understanding the weather and the environment. Adding to this account, scholarship also reveals disjuncture between global categorizations of refugeeness and senses of self. Apocalyptic representations of displaced Nauruans as future climate refugees are demeaning identities contested by those who live in the Pacific islands. In Nauru, climate change discourses are entangled in local cultures of extractivism, whereby islanders are enveloped in an industry of managing asylum seekers and refugees. Given that other Western countries are advancing similar extractive mineral and migrant arrangements to Australia, it is imperative to consider human-environmental relations in the context of anthropogenic climate change.

The argument Morris develops in this article takes work on the climate theme a step further by factoring “extractivism” into these debates. Extractivism is the form of accumulation associated with colonialism and imperialism, whereby territories, populations, and animal and plant life were rendered into commodities for the taking so as to enrich world economic centers. It is also an ideological mindset of removing resources under the guise of “development” ultimately benefitting wealthy countries at the expense of the poorer ones. In this context, the author asks how “extractive complexes” can shape the way people conceptualize

climate change. Her analysis builds on her previous research exploring the international refugee system as a global industry and an intimately extractive system, as it operates microcosmically in Nauru.

This article makes therefore two major contributions. First, it contributes theoretically and empirically to anthropological research on resource extraction. Second, it contributes to understandings of the future condition of refugeehood as documented by anthropologists of migration.

Ross, Norbert: The Intersection of Violence and Early COVID-19 Policies in El Salvador. *American Anthropologist* 124/3.2022: 617–621.

In El Salvador, poverty has long been constructed as suspect and dangerous. The social exclusion experienced by inhabitants of peripheral barrios of urban centers and of rural areas has allowed for early COVID-19 emergency measures to take the form of social triage. Through multiples forms of coercive measures, or “threat governmentality,” the protection of the properties classes was made possible at the expense of people declared as “violent,” of lesser value and hence “dispensable.” Confronted with the pandemic, the Salvadoran government immediately earmarked US \$ 75,000.000 to construct the largest hospital in Latin America. All the while, the strict quarantine measures made people from indigent barrios desperate for basic food supplies. In a country that still suffers from consequences of a twelve-year civil war (1980–1992), peripheral communities raised white flags indicating hunger and desperation, thus surrendering to military occupation that enforced the quarantine measures via roadblocks and street patrols.

Ross writes this essay from the perspective of engaged anthropology. As part of his research, he co-founded and directed the Salvadoran NGO “Actue-mos!” whose purpose was to attend to the needs of youth, children, and their families in marginalized areas. In one of those barrios, the organization still runs after-school youth center. At the height of the pandemic, however, they provided food for over two hundred families, mostly single mothers and their children. Much of the data in this article, therefore, comes from working with the children and their families prior and during the pandemic.

The focus of this essay is the barrio El Cerro, founded in 1990 – the year when the military forcibly removed its first residents from their prior homes and forced them to start over next to a military base. At that time, the area had no streets, running water, or sewers. Each family received a water barrel, some sheet metal, and cardboard to build their new dwellings. Yet, they were left with no employment opportunities and without support for any form of long-time survival. This force relocation of poor Salvadorans during the civil war should be understood as a way of controlling poor sectors society, rationalized by claims that they were supporting the insurgency.

(DP: Well, in fact they did – in most cases).

Moreover, shortly after the foundation of the barrio, and following the end of the civil war in 1992, deportations from the USA brought members of the “MS 13” and “Barrio 18” gangs founded in Los Angeles, to El Salvador, thus transforming existing youth gangs into organized and “professionalized” maras. A mara (from marabunta = “roaring ants”) is a form of gang originating in the United States, which spread to Central American countries, mostly El Salvador, but also Honduras and Guatemala. It has an organizational structure in which there is a leader in charge of a cadre which, in turn, branches in several cadres. Each of these subgroups has internal functions such as recruiting followers for drug trafficking, logistics, attacks, intelligence, collection, propaganda, murder, and extortion among other criminal activities. Although each mara has its internal rule, violence action is the most apparent characteristic of this multi-ethnic group.

Several consequences follow from this article. One of them is that one needs to take the “naturalness” out of natural disasters, exploring victimhood within a historical perspective. Specifically, it is necessary to see how the inhabitants of marginalized barrios have been constructed throughout history as a population in need of containment and control.

Murray, David A. B.: Redemption Songs: Women, Religion, and Moral Politics of HIV in Barbados. *Culture and Religion* 21/2.2020: 101–120.

At an historical junction where HIV/AIDS is rapidly disappearing as a public health issue throughout the Caribbean region, alongside stagnant or reduced funding for HIV-related support services, spirituality and membership in Christian communities of faith occupy a central role for older, working-class women from Barbados living with HIV. However, many of those Christian religious organizations are historically responsible for discriminatory discourses about people living with HIV, creating practical and moral challenges for HIV positive members. On the basis of interviews and ethnographic fieldwork, the author explores how and why a group of Barbadian women living with HIV develop a strong personal commitment to a spiritual life, and why membership in communities of faith, where HIV infection is often associated with sin and immorality continues to be important for many of them. Murray argues that these women’s HIV status transforms and/or intensifies their personal spiritual commitments as well as contributes to a critical reflexivity of the wider institutionalized religious communities to which they belong.

Murray’s findings indicate that a strong personal commitment to Christian-based beliefs, values and/or practices helped many of them rebuild and reestablish a sense of self-worth, dignity, and emotional fortitude after their diagnosis, or what some authors term “spiritual resilience,” despite HIV-positive status and ongoing health, personal, and/or financial challenges, many

of which have been exacerbated through the gradual retraction of international and local funding providing material and psychosocial support for Barbadian PLHIV (“People Living with HIV”).

The majority of these women’s dedication to regularly attending church services and engaging in a publicly ecumenical life also reflects their investment in a gendered “politics of respectability” – a long-standing practice across the Caribbean region of many working and middle-class Afro-Caribbean women’s increasing involvement with mostly Christian religious organizations as they age. However, an HIV positive status throws a spanner in the work of personal spirituality and a respectable standing within wider religious communities, as these women experience and/or witness ongoing stigma and discrimination towards PLHIV in Barbadian society, some of which has been aided and abetted by the leaders and congregations of the churches and wider religious organizations they belong to, who claim that HIV infection is evidence of sin, immorality, and problematic lifestyle. Stigma and discrimination impact all PLHIV, but it is important to acknowledge the sociocultural, racialized, classed, and gendered dimensions of these forms of prejudice for working-class Afro-Barbadian women for whom spirituality and religious community are key ethical-moral orientations and sites of respectability and social belonging as they grow older.

These personal spiritual orientations and complicated relationships to wider communities of faith reflect some of the challenges of everyday living with HIV in a context where institutional and governmental support for PLHIV is limited to the provision of medication and basic biomedical services, and popular opinion of HIV is still rife with judgment and fear. These orientations and relationship are structured through various, multilayered prejudices, all of which are deeply embedded in and shaped through the historical forces of colonialism in Barbados, and the embodiment of and resistance to its attendant race, classed, and gendered hierarchies.

Lauterbach, Karen: Mission and the Anthropology of Christianity: Africanist Perspectives. In: K. Kim, K. Jørgensen and A. Fitchett-Climenhaga (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Mission Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, pp. 403–419.

“This chapter considers what the study of mission has drawn from anthropology overtime and how the anthropological study of Christianity might benefit mission studies in its contemporary form. [...] The chapter begins by tracing the long history of mutual influence between anthropology and mission studies. Generally, these entanglements have been described as limited, because the focus has been on the more recent anthropological scholarship. Moreover, the focus has been largely on American and British anthropology rather than work that can be placed in the junction between history, anthropology, and African studies. The chapter

proceeds into a short outline of some of the main trends in the more recent work on the anthropology of Christianity and lays out how this literature can be helpful in the field of mission studies. Finally, I use the making of Congolese churches in Kampala, Uganda, as a way to illustrate how mission is part of Christian life, how it mirrors the circumstances and particularities of that life, and how it furthermore intersects with the broader trends of mobility and connectivity that are of interest to anthropologists. This leads to a final discussion of how the anthropology of Christianity can enable a focus on Christianity and mission seen through lived and ordinary life and how this can enhance epistemological diversity and openness” (403–404).

“One of the overall questions that the anthropology of Christianity asks is what it means to be a Christian and what difference Christianity makes. An important point made by Fenella Cannell is the recognition that ‘it is never obvious in advance what *Christianity* is.’ Christianity is contextual and historical in its expressions and in the different ways in which it is understood and practiced. Taking such an approach demands taking the diversity of Christian experience, practice, and belief around the world seriously. This, however, does not imply that we cannot talk about Christianity in more systematic and comparative ways, but rather that we always need to pay attention to what Christianity looks like in a specific context. There is a noteworthy overlap here between the increased anthropological interest in Christianity and theology’s opening up to World Christianity, including mission studies’ acknowledging more diverse and changing forms of Christianity and mission. This has implied that the focus has shifted from being mainly on the encounter between a monolithic Christianity and indigenous forms of religion to being about a plurality of Christian experiences and ideas about mission” (408–409).

“By looking at subjective experiences and lived Christianity, the two authors [Girish Daswani and Devaka Premawardhana] question the idea of a linear or ‘permanent Christianization’ and suggest multidirectional and circular forms of conversion and being a Christian. These approaches offer a useful contribution to mission studies as they highlight movement and existential mobility as ways of being in the world and being a Christian.

In what follows, I will discuss a form of mission Christianity that takes place in a context marked by displacement and mobility. It is an account of churches founded as a consequence of protracted conflict and ensuing forced migration, but also, simultaneously, as part of the founders’ commitment to Christian mission. I follow the approaches outlined earlier in that I favor an analysis that captures the ethical work at stake in this as well as the lived experiences of being a Christian in a displacement context.

Such an approach takes into consideration both ideas and experiences of mission and evangelization, but it also includes other aspects of what Christianity is in that context and what Christianity looks like from the

perspective of the lifeworlds of Christians. I propose an approach that sees this form of mission, today described as ‘South to South mission,’ in a way that takes into account the overall ideas and practices of mission work and simultaneously looks at how this is expressed and made sense of in the lived and mobile lives of people in this context. I follow Andreas Bandak and Jonas Jørgensen in their call for seeing context not only as something in which Christianity takes place but also as something that is produced by Christianity” (409).

Conclusion: “In this chapter’s analysis of the evangelizing and mission work of Congolese churches in Uganda, I have focused on how Christianity is reflected in perceptions of rootedness and mobility and in social relationships and reciprocity. I have also analyzed how a displacement context shapes the ways in which being a Christian is perceived and assessed. Anthropology, especially the anthropology of Christianity, offers a helpful conceptual language for the field of mission studies today, as it redefines its focus and recognizes the worldwide scope of contemporary and historical Christianity. Mission studies focuses on the diversity of Christianity as a world religion, while also recognizing the fact that mission in itself is from everywhere to everywhere, and that mission is just as much about lived experience as it is about ideology and systematized ideas. Drawing on these anthropological insights can help mission studies in moving away from a continued tendency toward a functionalist focus on religious worldviews and the encounters between them by looking instead at how religion and mission is lived and experienced in the everyday lives of Christians – for instance through the lens of ethics and existential mobility as I have shown in this chapter. The challenge is to move beyond seeing Christianity as an ‘ordered, coherent, and logically consistent’ system of belief and to include lived experience as a form of ordinary theology that sees ‘people over principles’.

Anthropology also encourages the study of Christianity and mission worldwide to move beyond questions of geographical scope, and to include experiential and consequently epistemological diversity. This implies questioning mainstream definitions of mission studies and the inclusion of diverse Christian experiences. These approaches offer ways into seeing the lived worlds of Christians as open spaces that are influenceable and permeable. Meanwhile, the focus of mission studies on ethical, historical, and theological aspects is useful for anthropology’s concern to take religion seriously.

Mission exists and needs to be understood in relation to various social contexts and life worlds, and the anthropology of Christianity is useful for this analytical task. At the same time, the self-perception of pastors and Christians as missionaries, as well as their missionary activities, is often not the focus of more recent anthropological studies of Christianity, which have focused more on conversion and change. The anthropological study of Christianity can also benefit from this call for epistemological diversity by drawing on a wider range of religious and theological knowl-

edge produced in the areas they typically work” (414–415).

Prempeh, Charles: Decolonising African Divine Episteme: A Critical Analysis of the Akan Divine Name of God (*Twereduampon* Kwame). *Journal of Religion in Africa* 52/3-4.2022: 269–291.
(DOI:10.1163/15700666-12340231)

Abstract: “The goal of this paper is to decolonise Akan divine episteme from undue Euro-Christian influence. Since the 1920s, cultural anthropologists have argued that the Akan concept of *Twereduampon* Kwame is because God either revealed himself to the Akan on a Saturday or the Akan worshipped God on that day. Employing in-depth interviews and a secondary data research approach that incorporates analysis of extant literature, I challenge this assumption by arguing that the name of God as *Twereduampon* Kwame is based on the significance of day names. This is because the name intermeshes with the enigma of death and God’s positionality as the source of the answer to the disruption caused by death. Contrary to the assumption of revelation or Sabbath observance in the Akan region, the name *Twereduampon* Kwame points to God’s appellation as the greatest herbalist” [*Twereduampon* = trustworthy, reliable, the one you can lean on].

“One such anthropologist, who was initially a staff of the colonial administration in the Gold Coast and later trained as an anthropologist at Oxford, was R.S. Rattray. Rattray concentrated the bulk of his research among the Asante, the largest and most influential subgroup of the Akan. He stayed among the Asante and became one of the earliest anthropologists of this group. His publications constitute an important source of reference for reconstructing the Akan cultural past. Like most anthropologists before the 1950s, Rattray positioned himself as keenly sympathetic to the Akan culture(s). His aim was partly to denounce the disparaging reports the missionaries had written about the Akan indigenous religions.

Given Rattray’s interest, he presented the Asante God as no different from the Christian God that the missionaries had introduced. He wrote, ‘[I] am convinced that the conception, in the Ashanti mind, of a Supreme Being has nothing whatsoever to do with missionary influence, nor is it to be ascribed to contact with Christian or even, I believe, with Mohammedans’ (1923: 140). Given Rattray’s mission to challenge the assumption that the Akan could not independently conceptualise the idea of God, he concluded that the God of the Ashanti was the Jehovah of the Israelites (Rattray 1923). By equating these two, Rattray smuggled in the assumption that the day of worship for the Akan God was Saturday. [...] I [i.e., Ch. Prempeh] argue that the Akan did not have Saturday as a day of rest (Sabbath), characterised by worship or cultic practices and directed specifically at Onyame – hence deconstructing the theological and historical basis of *Twereduampon* Kwame” (271–272).

The author asserts that the leading scholars – J.B. Danquah, K.A. Busia, S.G. Williamson, W.H. Debrunner – “wrote about the idea of *Twereduampon* Kwame by leaning on Rattray” (273). “However, it is also important to emphasise that Debrunner, just like Rattray, was interested in indicating that ‘Christ was there before the arrival of the missionaries’ (1967: 1). This assertion reflects the idea that the Akan indigenous religion was in an evolutionary state that needed the Christian missionaries to bring it up to the level of acceptability. That Christ was already in the cultures of the Akan was part of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century fulfilment theory of the Christian missionaries ‘which taught that all other religions were preparations for the gospel, which was in turn was [sic] the ultimate fulfilment to non-Christian religions. Missionaries therefore went in search for *points of contacts*, i.e., higher ideals in other religions that coincided with aspects of Christian teaching, which will serve as steppingstones for proclaiming the gospel’ (Akromong and Azumah 2013: 69)” (273).

Further on, the author writes: “[Kofi Asare] Opoku studied indigenous Akan indigenous religion from the perspective of practitioners and their ancestors. As a practitioner and insider of the religion, he expressed his concerns about the approaches that several scholars have deployed to study Akan religion:

‘The life of the practitioner of African Traditional Religion has always been interpreted by non-practitioners, both insiders as well as Africans, who have sought to explain the religious life of Africa by the standards of external criteria. African scholars who have written about African Traditional Religion have been non-practitioners, mostly Christian, who have tended to look at it from the perspective of their religious persuasion. This has often led to African Traditional Religion being described as a *praeparatio evangelica*, which implies that the only African Traditional Religion lies in its being a preparation for the coming of the Gospel which is the final revelation of god. And the fact that such an Interpretation of African Traditional Religion represents an unwillingness to look at it as a religion in its own right is often overlooked (2018: 16)’” (274–275).

Prempeh identifies himself: “As an insider, being Akan myself, I depended on observation and interviews I conducted with some Akan persons in Ghana. I analysed my data by highlighting the multidimensionality of interpretations of *Twereduampon* Kwame from the perspective of scholars of religion with Christian orientation and Akan religious practitioners, some of whom are scholars. The paper contributes to the discussion on decolonising, deconstructing, and reconstructing of African theocentric episteme in modern universities, both in and out of Africa” (276).

“Francis Nyamnjoh argues that it is important for African scholars to embrace African traditions of knowing and knowledge production to remedy the epistemic violence that Africa has suffered (2020). This implies that African epistemologies must be integrated

into the ethos of knowledge production in the universities. It is along this line that I discuss the Akan divine name of *Twereduampon* Kwame. I seek to liberate it from the prisons of Eurocentric interpretation that Ratray, Danquah, and Busia have suggested. As part of the discussion, I challenge the assumption that God either revealed himself to the Akan or that the Akan worshipped God on a Saturday. In doing this I argue that the Christian version of worship and revelation is fundamentally different from that of the Akan. I then conclude by responding to why the Akan refers to God as *Twereduampon* Kwame” (277–278).

“We can deduce from the discussion that imposing the Christian perspective of revelation on Akan indigenous religion is an error on the part of African scholars who had been trained in the philosophical and theological perspectives of the West. Consequently, as Thomas observes, ‘the Christian concept of revelation should never be used as the criteria to critique African religion’ (Thomas 2015: 41)” (283).

“Thus instead of conjecturing about God’s self-disclosure among the Akan, which as I have demonstrated does not resonate with Akan cosmogony, I argue that Akan day (natal) names and their attending appellation provide an answer. Day names are important among the Akan. It is through naming that a child is incorporated into his or her family and society (Opoku 1978). The child’s legal entity and social orientation are all embodied in the name given to him or her. The child is humanised through naming since it indicates he or she has come to stay with the living on earth (Sarpong 1974: 90). Names are particularly important because ‘there is an identity between the name and the person who bears it, and the name can be used for cursing and blessing purposes’ (Sarpong 1974: 88). In the course of writing this paper I interviewed persons who believed that one’s day name could be used for imprecatory prayers and incantations.

When a child is born, the child’s first name is his or her day name. Day names are symbolically entwined with a child’s destiny and fate in life. Day names are also considered an important index of determining the social behaviour of a bearer (Agyekum 2006). For the Akan day names are thus important in unmasking a person’s sex, since they are given to differentiate one’s sex. Every Akan day name has a particular appellation. It is through the appellation that beliefs embed and serve the function of articulating the aspiration of families and society. [...] ‘people born on particular days are supposed to exhibit the characteristics or attributes and philosophy, associated with the days’ (Agyekum 2006: 215). In the same way, it has been observed that people are held accountable for the ideas, concepts, and beliefs their names embody. [...] It is because of the importance of day names that the name ‘Kwame’ was assigned to Nyankopon. The appellation of Kwame is ‘*ɔteanankan-nuro*’ (combat-ready, snakebite herbalist) (Agyekum 2006). Kwame is therefore the snakebite herbalist (‘Master of the Serpent Antidote’) that people always remember” (284).

“It is the debilitating effect death wreaks on human societies that cause the Akan to largely celebrate God as the *Twereduampon* Kwame, the one who has the ultimate antidote to death. As the creator of life and everything on earth, the Akan believe that God alone has the answer to the ravaging effect of death. They maintain that it is only God who can restore life to the dead. The concept of *Twereduampon* Kwame reorients Akan people to see death as a transition, not extinction, and, more so, as redeemable” (286).

“The infrequent use of *Twereduampon* Kwame corroborates my fieldwork observation that, apart from the terms Nyame and Nyankopon that are now frequently used because of Christian and Muslim cultural missiological interest in translation, all the other names, including *Twereduampon* Kwame, are out of use or used only in specific circumstances (Bempah 2010: 31).”

Ferreira Dias, João: The Making of Religion. An Essay on the Definition of “African Religion” through the Cases of the Yorùbá and Candomblé. *Journal of Religion in Africa* 52/3-4.2022: 374–394. (DOI:10.1163/15700666-12340235).

Abstract: “This essay aims to focus on the concept of religion and its conceptual implications in the observation of African religions, taking the Yorùbá and Candomblé religious attitudes and beliefs as case studies. I intend to trace a new itinerary in the conceptualization of African religious experiences, using native structures as the setting for theory. I point out that African-Yorùbá religious experience is deeply merged with ritual practice – religion is *made* – and tied to a sense of origins and duties that must be fulfilled. In that vein, I present alternative categories to the classic ones of monotheism, polytheism, and pantheon.”

Conclusion: “This is a very dangerous debate for several reasons, I must admit. First, I am derogating (not for the first time) long-term solid and sacralized concepts and shaking the solid building of anthropology. Second, as Palmié (2014) mentions for the Afro-Cuban case, when anthropologists state that something is not a religion in a classical sense, practitioners are delivered into a fragile judicial situation since the authorities will quote scholars to deny legal protection for the temples under the religious freedom law. The same reasoning can be extended to the Afro-Brazilian cults.

Nevertheless, since anthropology may not be and is not yet ruled by civil, public, and political institutions, I am free to disagree with prior studies and frameworks and present new ideas on the study of Yorùbá religious life, both in Yorùbáland and in the diaspora. To think of religion in the Yorùbá context, it is necessary to strip away the classical Occidental categories of religion, as Horton (1960, 1993) states. As I understand it, the starting point is the definition of religion we are applying in a certain case and how the notion of religious and nonreligious attitudes is framed. Based on the Yorùbá case, I aimed to reveal how difficult it is to map non-

religious attitudes, and how wrong the classical distinctions such as magic versus religion, or religion versus ritual, are since religion enters into all aspects of daily affairs, and western patterns of thought are not valid in this context.

Despite my recognition of Horton's theory on African religions as based on attitudes of explanation, prediction, and control, but also in a sense of *communitas*, I would rather apply a definition of Yorùbá and Candomblé religious contexts based on communication, manipulation, and efficacy. [...]

Nevertheless, this practical attitude toward religion in the Yorùbá and Candomblé contexts does not preclude a conceptual-theologian outlook. Instead, theology/mythology/philosophy are literary products of religious making, while the making gives substance to dogmatic ideas. The making of religion is a very powerful idea in contexts grounded in a sense of duty such as Yorùbá and Candomblé, and the reason why the native word for religion *èsin*, meaning duty or service, a concept we cannot separate from tradition, knowledge, origins, secret, and taboo. As we notice, those mindsets are indeed far from a Judeo-descendant view of religion.

Regarding the systemic model, I made an effort to refute the classical and inadequate ideas of monotheism and polytheism. The pluridimensional Yorùbá and Candomblé experiences – the Ifá system, compound, personal Òrìṣà, local and familiar cults, ancestors, among others – opened the way to proposing the notion of fluid or dynamic systems. On a parallel path, taking into consideration the category of pantheon – which represents a process of Hellenization – vis-à-vis local and personal complex models, I propose the idea of clusters, groups, or circles of Òrìṣà that change according to the standpoint.

Thereby we are inevitably led to recognize that each cultural cluster produces a particular notion of religion based on its landscape and notion of *oikos*. Having that in mind, it is not possible to propose categories that aim to be universal in the attempt to understand particular cases. Cultural boundaries are local and dynamic. In that sense, Yorùbá religion is 'made' as truly as the harvest of the land, which it reflects, is made" (389–390).

Arweck, Elisabeth: Social and Religious Dimensions of Mixed-Faith Families: The Case of a Muslim-Christian Family. *Social Compass* 69/3.2022: 386–403. (DOI:10.1177/00377686221087069)

Abstract: "The article reports data from a study investigating the religious identity formation of young people in mixed-faith families. This involved parents from Christian, Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim backgrounds, with a spouse of these four faiths. One of the 'Muslim–non-Muslim' families is considered here as a case study to shed light on social and religious dimensions pertaining to both parents and children. One parent has a Muslim, the other a Christian background. The article examines

how the parents understand and approach the 'mixed' nature of their family and how this translates into socialising their children into their respective religious traditions. It also engages with the perceptions of the children, exploring their sense of religious identity and social belonging. Drawing on interviews, the article discusses participants' perspectives regarding 'dual heritage'/'mixedness' and cultural and religious transmission, referring to studies on mixed-faith families to embed the data in existing research."

"The article is structured as follows: it makes a case for the case study before placing the case study in the context of the project and existing research, followed by the profile of the family, providing the backdrop to the family's perceptions of how religious and cultural dimensions form part of their individual and collective identities. The conclusion draws the various strands together, discussing some of the general themes."

The excerpts below briefly introduce the family studied by the researcher. This is an interesting case study and since the article is published in Open Access, it is worthwhile to read it in extenso. The quotes are not page-numbered because the electronic version of the article was consulted:

"The case study family,

The parents.

The Bertrams combined a White English Christian (Anglican) background with an East Asian Muslim immigrant background. They identified as Christian and Muslim, albeit nonpractising or nominal. The interviews revealed the narratives of respective life trajectories, as individuals, as a couple, and as a family – outlined in the following.

William grew up in a family not particularly religious, not attending church, except for 'hatchings, matchings, and despatchings' (baptisms, weddings, funerals), in his words, because it was the 'done thing'. There were no discussions about religion or religious matters. However, William and his siblings were sent to Sunday school. He attended for several years (between the ages of 6 and 11 or 12); he was bored and did not feel engaged. The same applied to Religious Education at school. [...]

Ferhana was a nonpracticing Muslim due to events in her life which involved estrangement and resulting distance from both her family and Islam. Her family came to England when she was in her late teens, relocating from a former British colony in Africa where her grandparents had moved from Gujarat about 1950. Ferhana's upbringing followed the family's cultural and ethnic heritage, regarding caste, language, and religion; it was not overly strict. The maternal grandparents were devout Muslims. After school, Ferhana and her siblings attended *madrassa*, where they learned to read the Qur'an in Arabic. Practice at home consisted of prayers, although not five times daily, and marking the holy nights in the Muslim calendar. Ramadan was observed and Eid celebrated with the maternal grandparents. Some religious practices were explained, some modelled. Ferhana and her sisters were expected to dress modestly (no low-cut tops, no showing of legs),

but not required to wear the *hijab*, although head and hair were covered for *madrassa*. [...]

Ferhana met William through work. The first meeting with her future mother-in-law was somewhat fraught – for various reasons – but this was overcome quickly. Other family members were very welcoming. The initial tension was partly due to William giving his mother no indication of Ferhana's ethnic background. His attitude was: 'Why should I have told her? You are a person [and that's what's important, not the colour of your skin]'. Also, as she lived in a different part of town, William's mother had no experience of different ethnic backgrounds.

Marriage changed Ferhana's views and attitudes to some extent. The beliefs with which she had been brought up resurfaced and regained importance, even if not all the practices. She did not expect William to change his religion. Their civil wedding did not make her feel 'properly married'. As indicated, William raised no objection to the customary Muslim marriage ceremony (*nikah*), which an uncle of Ferhana's arranged and conducted. It involved William saying prayers in Arabic (their meaning was explained to him) and making the customary donation to the community. Neither side of their families knew of this. This was not about deception, Ferhana emphasised, just a private matter. When Jasmin was born, the Muslim custom of saying a prayer (in Arabic) in the child's (right) ear, just after s/he is born, was observed, with a cousin of Ferhana's performing this ritual. Again, William knew and did not object. [...]

The children

Jasmin identified with Islam, considering herself 'somewhat Muslim'. She had faith, she said: 'I still believe in God and I still pray, but I'm no longer as much his servant'. She read the Qur'an occasionally ('when I have time'), at random, in translation, drawing from it inspiration, guidance, and comfort. She did not eat pork, but did not shun alcohol. This state was preceded by an intense religious phase, when Jasmin was a practising Muslim, observing prayers (five times daily), Ramadan (when she tried wearing the headscarf), and dietary rules (*halal* meat, no pork or gelatine), and reading the Qur'an. [...]

For Caleb religion was, on the whole, not important, although he respected religious people. He identified as an atheist. This accords with research on parents with divergent religious affiliations whose children are less likely to develop affiliations common to their parents and more likely to switch religious affiliations or become apostates. [...]

An advantage of growing up in a mixed-faith family, in William's view, was that the children would have more than one outlook on life. On the contrary, it would be easier if parents had the same background. William was clear that the family's mixedness was not confusing for his children, thus, like Caleb, countering stereotypical views. Ferhana saw the ethnic (rather than the faith) element of the mixedness as most prominent. While she wanted people to know that a mixed marriage worked (which had motivated participation in our

study), she saw both advantages and disadvantages. The children had both cultures and were therefore broad-minded, although 'Muslims get very defensive'. The children were 'lucky' realising that not every Muslim was a terrorist or fundamentalist. The disadvantage was risk of friction – not in the immediate, but the wider family, linked to the wish to please them. This is an aspect which applies to a number of families in the study. Jasmin saw her dual heritage as positive; she could not imagine having parents of the same background. For Caleb, it was 'normal' – simply part of his life. Despite the oblique reference to the wider political landscape, neither William nor Ferhana saw this affect family life. The biggest tests for the family had been major medical interventions for Ferhana and William. These seriously challenged Jasmin's faith (see above), taught Caleb to find ways to cope, and strained family relationships at times."

Pohran, Nadia: Belief-Inclusive Research Does Strategically "Bracketing Out" a Researcher's (Religious) Beliefs and Doubts Limit Access to Ethnographic Data? *Current Anthropology* 63/6.2022: 691–713. (DOI:10.1086/722329)

Abstract: "This article outlines a methodological posture that I consciously adopted during recent ethnographic fieldwork. I call this methodological posture "belief-inclusive research" (BIR), and I see it as a complementary contrast to existing methodological frameworks that suggest the bracketing out of a researcher's own beliefs. I offer BIR as a distinctive methodological posture for ethnographers who work in and with religious contexts. I demonstrate that the long-standing tradition of bracketing out questions of metaphysical truth during the writing-up phases of anthropology seems to have also impacted the fieldwork phase. I explore the ways that some degree of shared belief – which, crucially, I do not limit to doctrinal beliefs – between researcher and informants has the potential to widen a researcher's access to certain types of data. In highlighting that the long-standing practice of bracketing has limited a researcher's access to some kinds of data and in offering BIR as a new methodological posture, this article lays the groundwork for anthropology to construct new conceptual spaces that actively encourage a researcher to include their own (religious) beliefs and doubts in the midst of fieldwork."

"These methodological debates [on bracketing of one's own beliefs/convictions] apply in particular to the discipline of anthropology, which emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century from the desire to understand humans and cultures. In the self-understanding of most anthropologists, anthropology is especially distinct from theology in this particular regard: whereas confessional theologians make their inquiries 'explicitly in relation to a specific religious confession, or a combination of sacred texts, traditions, and confessions' (Wildman 2016: 242), anthropology has never presented itself as a doorway to universal truth. Instead,

anthropology has dedicated itself to understanding how and why things are the way they are in a particular time and place. It highlights the local, the incidental, the particular, the fragmentary, and the liminal; anthropology therefore has a methodological antipathy to configuring universalizing claims in the style of grand theory or transcultural narrative. M.F.C. Bourdillon (1980) clearly delineates these distinctions between the two disciplines by claiming that ‘theology studies the traditions from within ... anthropologists look at different cultures from the point of views of outsiders’ (5). Joel Robbins (2018: 238–242) emphasizes that a key difference lies in anthropologists’ unwillingness to pass judgment on the phenomena they study. Anthropology tries to combat social forms of ethnocentrism by highlighting cultural relativities across diverse local settings of different groups of outsiders, and these context-dependent variabilities render questions of absolute universal truth problematic, if not unanswerable. Thus, anthropologists are taught that they must ‘neither affirm nor deny the existence of the gods’ (Smart 1973b:54) lest they confuse their methodological and theoretical frameworks with those of theologians.

While theological questions are sometimes interesting to the individual anthropologist qua individual, they are not – at least not within the common disciplinary matrices – questions that an anthropologist raises qua anthropologist, let alone seeks to answer. While it is this conscious refusal to explore questions of metaphysical truth that, as we saw above, Berger referred to as an intrinsic limitation of the discipline, this restriction should not be read in a negative sense. Berger does not begrudge the social sciences for this methodological limitation, and he also does not urge social scientists to find a way to overcome it. Rather, for Berger, this limitation is a constitutive aspect of the social sciences since the moment a social scientist has moved beyond that which is empirical, she would no longer be exploring topics qua social scientist. Indeed, even in very recent dialogues between anthropologists and theologians, some scholars from both disciplines continue to assert the need for each discipline to maintain its ‘autonomy’; anthropologists – even those who are keenly interested in learning from the disciplinary activities and insights of theologians – must remain anthropologists (Lemons 2018: 6). Thus, it is not surprising that social scientists, even or rather especially those within the anthropology of religion – a scholarly circle where, as Jon Bialecki (2014) comments tongue in cheek, the optimistic and the innocent ‘might expect [talk of God] the most’ (33) – often do not speak of God at all, let alone make metaphysical truth claims regarding God” (695–696).

“Having discussed the bracketing approach along with its justifications and limitations, let us return to my critical argument concerning a researcher’s belief and access to ethnographic data. In many ways, my questions here might appear rather simple – but it is sometimes those simple questions that can be cast aside and overlooked for so long. I wonder, are we approaching our research in a way that invites our informants to

speak truthfully and, without glossing over their spiritual viewpoints, openly speak with us in an interview setting? Furthermore, are we approaching our research in ways where our informants would be comfortable enough to invite us to observe or even to participate alongside certain events? Or does the absence of conversations concerning our own metaphysical beliefs and quests – and, indeed, even our very disciplinary tendency toward secularist explanations and an absence of ‘talk about God’ (Bialecki 2014) – limit our access to ethnographic data, thereby resulting in incomplete, if not inaccurate, explanations of the very emic views that we are striving to understand? In other words, do ethnographers experience any belief-related limitations in their attempts to collect ethnographic data?” (696).

“Throughout the fieldwork I conducted at a Christian ashram for my PhD, I consciously chose to honestly incorporate my beliefs and doubts about Protestant Christian doctrines into the conversations that I had with my informants. To be sure, I did not always share the same beliefs as my informants, but I also did not strive for a Geertzian form of neutrality. My willingness to speak openly about my own beliefs and doubts to my informants indicated a more general willingness and eagerness to understand, in turn, their own beliefs and doubts. As they saw it, I was evidently interested in and committed to discussing metaphysical truth, and this conveyed a form of interest in and commitment to the category of belief itself” (697).

“Concluding Remarks. We have seen that the habitual placing aside of the question of metaphysical truths can limit our access to ethnographic data. Thus, I contend that we need more conceptual space in anthropology for ethnographers to adopt, cultivate, and sustain a stance of BIR when conducting their fieldwork and writing up their ethnographies. The content of this article has demonstrated that the need for this sort of conceptual space is vital; we need a methodological posture like BIR to be not only tolerated but also actively encouraged so that individuals within the wider anthropological community can confidently choose to approach their research in a way that actively discusses metaphysical truths without worrying that they are betraying the normatively secular foundations of their discipline or worrying that they will be ‘dismissed by colleagues as one who has foolishly gone native’ (Turner 1991). I hope that this article and its articulation of some of the more utilitarian reasons behind adopting BIR can lay the groundwork for encouraging other scholars (and me) to creatively and laboriously imagine, design, and enact some of the ways that this can look. Embracing such a posture will involve significant rethinking of the ways that we advise young anthropologists to approach their fieldwork – but the potential fruits of this change are well worth the inevitable toils involved” (701).

The text of the article is followed by seven short comments by Bree Beal, James S. Bielo, Brian M. Howell, Nicholas Lackenby, Eloise Meneses, Julian Sommerschuh, and Natalie Wigg-Stevenson (701–707) and the response from the author (708–711).

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