

BOOK REVIEWS

POLITICAL SPIRITUALITIES: THE PENTECOSTAL REVOLUTION IN NIGERIA.

By Ruth Marshall. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2009. x + 349 pp. \$65.00 cloth, \$24.00 paper.

African Pentecostalism has been marked by many apparent contradictions, even in single localities. It has been described as alternately modern and premodern, having elements of both continuity and rupture, moral regulation, and individualism. In this innovative book, Ruth Marshall takes these contrasting elements head-on and makes this very ambivalence a central theme of her narrative. Grounding her analysis in the Foucauldian problematic of “subjectivation,” she argues that the born again movement is primarily a regime of the self acting on the self to transform it, bringing a variety of old and new elements of Nigerian culture into play.

In order to make this argument, Marshall offers a rich description of Nigeria’s recent history, narrated as a progression of increasing discordance between signs and their objects. Its political upheaval is thus not just a material one, but a spiritual and psychological one. Witch-hunts and corruption scares coincide with increasing inequality and distrust of existing systems of status and sociability. The result is that Nigerians find themselves in the midst of a disordered symbolic universe, easily manipulated by opportunistic political entrepreneurs.

The born again movement arises in the late 1970s, initially as a strict holiness movement. Later, it takes on the form of the prosperity megachurches for which urban Lagos is now well known. Two of its largest churches, the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) and Deeper Bible Church, are now likely the largest churches on the continent. Marshall does the field a major service by crafting a richly contextualized local history, never straying from her focus on discourse, signs, and language as imminently political elements. She eschews academic terms such as “neo-Pentecostal,” in favor of the term “born again,” which is actually used as a self-referent in Nigeria. It is

perhaps the most thorough analysis of born again discourses in Africa to date, and it shows her considerable knowledge of Christian texts and their applications in both public sermons and personal narratives. For Marshall, the born again ethic is unique because its central element is not a code (i.e., a text or a catechism) but rather a moral program or set of techniques of the self. Born again conversion is thus a conversion of praxis, more so than an alignment with a new set of propositional doctrines. While not the first scholar of Pentecostalism to make this suggestion, hers is perhaps the most theoretically grounded and fleshed-out version available.

Marshall is indebted to Birgit Meyer’s work in Ghana, and in particular her description of the Pentecostal imperative to “make a complete break with the past.” For Marshall, this break with the past and with its associated modes of status based on kinship, gender, ethnicity, and traditional spirituality, is central to the born again agenda. Nevertheless, she is careful not to oversimplify this process, arguing that all religious practice is *bricolage* and thus utilizes both old and new elements. She also wants to avoid getting stuck in the entrenched modernity debate, arguing for a more localized and precise understanding of how global relations influence African societies. She further claims that while the born again project is about individual empowerment and self-control, authority structures in born again churches are rarely democratic. Rather, they are usually spiritual autocracies. Her description of Nigeria’s religious superstars, such as Benson Idahosa of RCCG or David Oyedepo of Winner’s Chapel, is neither rosy nor scathing. Instead, their fabulous and conspicuous wealth is described as a natural outgrowth of Pentecostalism’s inherent problematic, in that it liberates Nigerians from old distinctions and hierarchies but fails to provide a new comprehensive basis for sociability and trust. In time, the leaders who pioneered the movement fall victim to the same symbolic discordance as their political counterparts and religious predecessors.

Although Marshall begins the book by calling for an analysis that takes faith seriously, in the end she is quite critical of the movement’s positive potential for political equality

and justice. While its critique of Nigerian politics is well taken and its attempts to make order out of chaos justified, its extreme individualism inhibits its capacity to envision a new political program, and thus inadvertently adds more fuel to the existing fire. In making this argument, though, the book suffers slightly from an empirical undertreatment of actual daily *practice*. I was left wondering whether born again lifestyles are as different as they claim to be, and whether in practice they engage the political sphere differently than their counterparts. Clearly, she wants to avoid reducing political activity to voting and party membership, and sees discourse and language as central foci of political analysis. Yet in order to fully address the movement's political impact, further attention to actual changes in relations and social behaviors among born again individuals in Nigeria and elsewhere is sorely needed. Still, this book makes an invaluable contribution and is an engrossing read particularly for those interested in how Christian conversion movements interact with political structures in postcolonial Africa.

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BLOOD AND FIRE: GODLY LOVE IN A PENTECOSTAL EMERGING CHURCH. By Margaret M. Poloma and Ralph W. Hood, Jr. New York: New York University Press, 2008. ix + 257 pp. \$42.00 cloth.

Blood and Fire is a fascinating book in several senses. First, it looks at a progressive, Pentecostal church in a major American city and shows the enthusiasm that its social mission can generate. Research on Pentecostalism is continually pushing our understanding beyond basic stereotypes of Pentecostals as uneducated, other-worldly, or inherently conservative. Blood-n-Fire Church, while ultimately unsuccessful, shows a church dedicated to the problem of homelessness, as well as bridging the gap between inner-city poor and educated suburban professionals.

Second, *Blood and Fire* is one of a number of recent books pushing toward a greater

emphasis on emotion and ritual. Sociology of religion has, not unreasonably, been dominated by a focus on meaning and belief. However, it is increasingly apparent that we need to, on the one hand, see how belief actually works out in the travails of everyday life but also consider how interaction, ritual, and practice generate emotion. The authors use some plausible conceptual tools from Randall Collins to theorize the Pentecostal and the congregational experience as interaction ritual generating emotional energy.

Third, *Blood and Fire* is the first empirical study I know of to actually use an approach called "methodological agnosticism" in addressing religious experience. Poloma and Hood say this approach seeks to move beyond the methodological blinder called methodological atheism—that rests on the assumption that no part of a religious experience can be explained by the object of that experience, that is, the divine—and instead start from a stance that neither assumes nor precludes supernatural realities from scientific explanation. Their main inspiration in this assertion is Douglas Porpora, who has persuasively argued that in a postpositivist world, reified notions of experience, nature, and science have been thoroughly critiqued and there is, therefore, no *prima facie* reason to exclude experience of the supernatural from scientific explanation. Indeed, Poloma and Hood freely mix in theological explanations alongside standard social scientific explanations. For example, their key concept of "godly love" is defined as "personally knowing the love of God" and "experiencing its energizing power" (p. 2). This statement is unintelligible unless you assume that God exists and provides energizing power.

I think Porpora has provided a largely cogent argument and that Poloma and Hood have correctly used the perspective. However, I would like to point out that the term agnosticism is more complex and has more possible meanings and directions than the one they choose to take. There are, in fact, multiple agnosticisms—from the agnostic atheism of Bertrand Russell, who thought that insufficient proof of the existence of God meant the only reasonable position was unbelief; to the agnostic theism of Soren Kierkegaard, who

thought such insufficiency required a leap of faith.

Even within sociology we can see quite different conclusions drawn from the idea of agnosticism. In his 2006 *Theory and Society* article on the sociology of morality, Gabriel Abend argues that the early 20th-century rejection of the concept of moral truth has been surpassed by most postpositivist moral philosophy (Gabriel Abend, "Two Main Problems in the Sociology of Morality," *Theory and Society*, 2007). However, he points out, there is still no clear consensus on what these moral truths are. The issue is important because if there were clear and evident moral truths, then certainly they would need to be part of causal explanations utilized by sociologists. Thus, he asserts, sociologists need to take an agnostic stance in which they realize that their explanations could well be incomplete, but in practice do not include moral truths in their causal explanations.

Abend provides a very simple justification based on the idea that "the scientific ethos is conservative and values certitude." If you worked with the assumption that there is no moral truth and did not include it in your explanation, and in the end it turns out that there is a moral truth, you would be committing Type II error; in other words you falsely negated a truth, and you would have an incomplete explanation. If, on the other hand, you worked with the assumption that there is a moral truth and you included that truth in your explanation that ends up being false, you would have committed a Type I error. In other words, you have incorrectly affirmed a falsehood. Instead of just an *incomplete* explanation you would have a *false* explanation. Abend says the first type of error should be preferred. "Given the epistemic values supported by the scientific ethos, it is preferable to give a true account that misses part of the story rather than to affirm that *x* is true when in fact *x* is false."

I agree with this preference for Type II over Type I error. But in the end it largely depends on your views of science and society. If you view science as a type of discourse limited to systematic and replicable doubting, Abend's "strong" version (i.e., more strongly agnostic) of methodological agnosticism is in no way threatening to theistic belief. And if

the history of religious certitude troubles you more than the history of doubt and suspension of belief, it provides a prudent foundation for research on religion. If, in contrast, you see no significant boundary between scientific and theological discourses, and are more troubled by secular humanism than religious certainty, then Porpora's "weak" (i.e., only provisionally agnostic) version of methodological agnosticism is the more logical choice.

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QUIVERFULL: INSIDE THE CHRISTIAN PATRIARCHY MOVEMENT. By Kathryn Joyce. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2009. xiv + 258 pp. \$25.95 cloth.

Recent studies of fundamentalist women have sought to correct feminist stereotypes of such women as "doormats," suggesting that there are ways that patriarchy can empower them. While such correctives are important, they can sometimes border on apologetics. Joyce's analysis of the Quiverfull movement, a small but ideologically significant wing of conservative Christianity articulates a necessary critique of such accounts and provides fresh perspective on the role women play in patriarchal religious communities and in the broader culture war.

Joyce provides some compelling evidence that the structure of these communities—for example, the way wives are kept busy and separated from other women, so as to reduce gossip and awareness of dissatisfaction; or the way that fathers control courtship and marriage of their daughters—is objectively oppressive and that any power women gain from "choosing" to submit is ultimately still dependent on male benevolence. What keeps women in the movement, Joyce argues, is the Quiverfull ideology that allows them to see themselves as leaders of the battle for the future of America. These women may be barefoot and pregnant, metaphorically at least, but they will win the culture war by literally outreproducing everyone else.

Quiverfull is engaging, and fortunately readability does not come at the expense of careful research. Joyce provides a thorough explanation of the movement's theology, its links to Christian Reconstructionism, and its roots in American history. There is detailed information about connections between the various branches of the evangelical movement and its leaders, such as James Dobson of Focus on the Family, or Al Mohler of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and about the cross-over between conservative Protestants and Catholics. I was intrigued by her description of interdenominational and international profamily alliances between evangelicals, Catholics, and Mormons; and her reflection on the tension between fundamentalist Christians' mission to win the demographic battle against low-fertility liberals on the one hand and their fear of Islamic population growth on the other. Each of these fascinating threads deserves further research.

The book also raises important points about the ongoing war between feminism and fundamentalism. To the extent that the Bible is a patriarchal document, especially if taken literally, feminism will always be a threat to conservative Christians—but it is also an opportunity. Bashing feminism seems to be a useful career tool for many of the fundamentalist women described, who rise and become famous in their organizations and the broader evangelical movement for their books extolling traditional womanhood. While Joyce is correct that fundamentalists demonize feminism, she might admit that they are influenced by it too.

Joyce provides keen insight into the human dimension of this movement, describing how ordinary, well-meaning individuals can get caught up in struggles over power and ideology that can spiral out of control. She tells of one couple, Jennifer and Mark, who struggle with their church's decision to discipline them for failing to live up to the standards of Christian patriarchy. Their messy personal relationship (her extramarital affair, his anger) and their resistance to church authority incites ever more repressive responses until they opt out and join a different church and begin a drawn out, nasty vendetta with their former pastor. We come to see that Jennifer and Mark are not zealots but searching and flawed human beings. And

though the pastor is portrayed off as a hypocrite, one senses that it is his position of power that has corrupted his ideals.

What troubled me about this book was its sometimes muckraking style, dramatizing individual stories without providing more hard data as context. After describing the movement's efforts to isolate children from the outside world, Joyce introduces two zealous teenagers, suggesting they will promote the Christian patriarchy movement. But there is plenty of research to suggest that younger generations of sectarian movements are less fervent followers than their convert parents. Joyce also provides accounts of women who were beaten by patriarchal husbands, suggesting such actions are legitimated by Christian patriarchy. Perhaps this is the case, but many secular women also stay in abusive relationships. There has been quite a bit of sociological research on the relationship between religion and abuse; drawing on some of it in this book would have enhanced these parts of the book. I was most uncomfortable with the chapter on exiting the movement; it centered on the dramatic story of one woman, Cheryl, who left the movement and now hates it as much as she previously was devoted to it. Relying on stories of apostates who got out is a time-honored and effective journalistic technique, but one that has been widely rejected in academic circles because ex-members rarely provide objective information.

I was thus relieved to find the final chapter centering on Joyce's friendship with Donna, one of the Christian women she met in her research, and her honest reflection about the ambivalence of that relationship. "I don't despise Donna," Joyce writes, "but I still don't know what to make of her." In the end, this book does the same for the reader. Its rich descriptions of real human beings help readers move beyond the hateful reaction to this movement that would come so naturally, but its sometimes "cult-exposing" style can also get in the way of real understanding. When all is said and done, we still do not fully understand the Christian patriarchy movement.

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VOICES OF THE FAITHFUL: LOYAL CATHOLICS STRIVING FOR CHANGE. By William D'Antonio and Anthony Pogorelc. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2007. xviii + 252 pp. \$24.95 paper.

With this volume, William D'Antonio and Anthony Pogorelc make an important contribution to the public sociology of religion and Catholic studies in particular. Their recognition of the importance of tracking the emergence of a prochange group within Catholicism in the wake of the priestly sexual abuse scandal provides a depiction of a religious social movement in its first years. Voice of the Faithful (VOTF) formed in January 2002 just days after the *Boston Globe* began its in-depth coverage that resulted in a Pulitzer Prize for Public Service. By 2003, D'Antonio and Pogorelc had secured funding and begun interviewing movement leaders, area clergy, and theologians and in 2004 launched their web-based survey to the membership. The goals of their study were rather modest and focused on getting a clear demographic picture of who belongs to VOTF, the extent of their commitment, and how that commitment correlates with their belief and practices within Catholicism. As the title indicates, the book is clear in its conclusion that, contrary to what some church elites may think, by sociological measures, VOTF members are indeed "loyal" Catholics. In fact, they are much more active in attendance and taking on ministerial and administrative roles than other Catholics.

The first four chapters of the book report these findings, with special attention to the fact that VOTF is a largely homogenous group, with overrepresentations of women, Irish ancestry, the two older cohorts of Catholics identified as Pre-Vatican II and Vatican II Catholics, high levels of education, and those in higher income brackets. These demographics pose opportunities and challenges as the six scholars who respond to the study in the ensuing chapters point out from their differing disciplines. Nancy Ammerman and Michele Dillon weigh in as sociologists of religion. They are joined by two Boston area theologians, Mary Hines, taking an ecclesiological view, and Robert Imbelli, looking at VOTF from a systematic theology perspective. Finally, Bill Gamson and John

McCarthy review the data through their expertise as scholars of social movements. Consensus emerges around a few issues: that VOTF represents an important phenomenon of the mobilization of lay energy and interest; that VOTF should be concerned about how to attract and extend membership to mainstream Catholics who are more diverse and younger and have fewer educational and financial resources; and that in order to have a long-lived and effective presence in the church, VOTF members may have to broaden their focus to bridge the gap between themselves as critics and members of the Catholic hierarchy, who are, in fact, institutional leaders. While all the other scholars suggest ways to facilitate dialogue, which for the sociologists shows an interactionist leaning, McCarthy's chapter underlines a conflict perspective as he often refers to VOTF members as "insurgents." In a volume that overall seems to take a positive view of VOTF, McCarthy reminds the reader of how fraught the relationships can be between church elites and those who are striving to exercise "critical fidelity."

The use of "critical fidelity" as a descriptive harkens back to another age of American Catholic upheaval, the removal of Charles Curran from his post as professor of Catholic morality at the Catholic University. The back and forth between then Cardinal Ratzinger and Curran leading up to that event brought the notion of what it means to exercise *loyal dissent* in the center of Catholic discourse toward the end of the century, a question that Ammerman underlines again here. It is a sad irony that as I was driving to my office to finish this review, National Public Radio was reporting on the investigation of whether Pope Benedict XVI was aware of the transfer of suspected pedophile priests in his diocese when he was Archbishop of Berlin in the early 1980s. This notice gives substance to McCarthy's suggestion that VOTF has ongoing opportunity to demonstrate the continued relevance of its concerns and the urgency of its message.

Dillon indirectly points out the limits of this study when she notes that the survey reveals few strategies that VOTF uses to accomplish its goals, beyond withholding and redirecting monetary contributions that it might have made

to parishes or fund drives. More of the story needs to be told. While giving a clear and accessible picture of the beginnings of this social movement activity has been very useful both to group insiders and outsiders, other questions need to be addressed. These include the group's development (or lack thereof) of strategies to affect the changes it seeks, and to understand the dynamics and interactions VOTF members have with multiple others, church elites, the media, and with other Catholics who might view them variously as disloyal insurgents or as role models for ecclesial engagement. One of the more striking features of VOTF demographics is the small number of Post-Vatican II Catholics who are members. It will be interesting to see if a new generation of sociologists of religion will find these questions compelling enough to continue to track VOTF movement activity as well as how it is affecting institutional practices in local, regional, and international contexts.

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RELIGION, MORALITY, AND COMMUNITY IN POST-SOVIET SOCIETIES. Edited by Mark D. Steinberg and Catherine Wanner. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2008. xii + 350 pp. \$65.00 cloth, \$24.95 paper.

Taught a form of absolute morality in their schools, Soviet citizens found themselves swimming in a sea of ambiguity after the fall of the USSR. Some people clung to communist values; others embraced indigenous religious traditions or openly proclaimed previously hidden spirituality; many sought safe harbor in democratic or authoritarian philosophies. A good number even discovered that criminal pursuits kept them afloat. Mark D. Steinberg and Katherine Wanner's edited volume of nine essays surveys this moral and religious ocean with its many cross-currents, hidden dangers, and brackish mixing of ideas.

Contributors employ a range of methodology, including archival research, ethnography, interviews, and policy analysis. The most successful analyze specific situations to ex-

plore larger phenomena. Scott M. Kenworthy and Irina Papkova's chapters, for example, show how unresolved issues from the early 20th century continue to circumscribe the Russian Orthodox Church. Kenworthy analyzes pre-Revolutionary public debate on the role of monasticism. Should the church have retained its "otherworldly" focus, or should it have developed a Russian social gospel? Papkova describes how debates over the role of women, language, and calendar all became taboo topics after the Revolution, in part because they had never been decided authoritatively by the Council. To make matters worse, the discredited Renovatianist movement introduced some of these reforms, tainting them ever afterward.

Jarrett Zigon follows with a chapter on moral narratives of a communist-educated woman who later finds solace in Orthodox Christianity. This piece, one of the strongest in the volume, illustrates the many layers of meaning in the lives of post-Soviet Russians. We learn how people negotiate between moral systems to find a way that makes sense to them. This is also an excellent segue from the historical methods in the earlier chapters to the more anthropological approach in the book's middle.

Douglas Rogers expertly explains how a reorganized state farm and a changing local religious culture created a new set of moral norms for a rural Old Believer community. Changes in social, religious, and economic leadership marked the breakdown of spiritual authority held by lay Old Believer women and the growth in power by nonlocal Old Believer priests, aided by farm authorities. Scholars from Moscow were a wildcard in the system, hoping to keep older lines of moral authority intact, since they mourned the loss of a system they had studied and came to love. By focusing on power arrangements, though, Rogers misses an opportunity to integrate pertinent religious issues. Did the rural Old Believers know that communities across Russia, Latvia, Australia, and America had recently followed similar routes from priestless to priestly Old Belief? What religious arguments bolstered or undermined changes? Finally, I wish Rogers would have cited sources for his argument that

outside scholars uniformly disagreed with new structures. Was the scholarly community really that monolithic?

Sascha Goluboff's study of mountain Jews in Azerbaijan considerably widens the volume's geographic and confessional focus. She describes change in laments for the dead. Like other fine pieces in this volume, issues of identity, lived religious experience, new forms of communication, and social structure all become clearer as you read about funeral laments. Still, like Rogers's, Goluboff's chapter raises several questions that never get answered. Some village men had been murdered. At least one died of a drug overdose. Had they been involved in illegal activities? How did funeral laments deal with these unpleasant facts? Did that change as laments added an Internet layer to the oral tradition?

A study of Buriat shamans by Katherin Metzo further investigates the intersection of tradition and modernity at the edges of post-Soviet society. Outsiders have often described Buriat shamans (like Old Believers and mountain Jews) as unchanging remnants of folk life. To the contrary, Metzo shows how Buriat shamans have developed moral codes and ritual practices depending on their role in society, their closeness to urban life, and their relationship with anthropologists. Added to the two preceding chapters, Metzo's work offers readers a deep appreciation for difference, variation, and change in Russian society.

This volume grows from a conference sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson Center in Washington, DC. The Center seeks to link scholarly investigation to public policy. To that end, a number of articles make assumptions and conclusions clearly related to U.S. foreign relations with the former USSR. The authors often use American ideals of politics and religious culture as the norm. Papkova exemplifies this when stating that "any discussion of Church-state relations in Russia boil [sic] down to the fundamental question of whether or not the Russian Orthodox Church as an institution stands in the way of democratic development" (p. 76). Why? I can imagine saying that the discussion of church-state relations "ultimately boils down to" reparations for earlier state persecution, or maybe the development of

Russian governmental policies based on Orthodox moral teaching.

Melissa Caldwell explores the nexus of religion, government, and foreign affairs in her fine study of a soup kitchen ministry run by the ecumenical (and foreign) Christian Church of Moscow. By investigating the nuanced personal, theological, legal, and social forces at play, Caldwell successfully discusses their implications for "debates about religious pluralism, social justice, and the relationship between the religious and the secular in Russia today" (p. 183). Through her study of the soup kitchen, she can investigate religious toleration, identity, and even race relations in contemporary Moscow.

Russell Zanca and Zoe Knox have written chapters more overtly related to foreign policy. Unfortunately, they succeed far less completely than the rest of the authors. Zanca describes the Uzbek government's "Fearing Islam" in a bid to retain power. For example, Zanca excoriates the George W. Bush administration's relationship with Uzbekistan, which has "set out on a prosecutorial course" of its enemies "that lies somewhere between the Salem witch trials and Stalin's purges" (p. 265). After 250 pages of finely shaded analysis, statements like this sound more sophomoric than pithy. Even worse, Zanca feels the need to tell us that "religion animates life in meaningful ways and creates a moral framework that guides the lives of many" (p. 262), and that "religion gives hope to people and makes them feel that they are worth more than an animalistic existence." These lines surprised me and in the end the simplistic and gratuitous nature of these statements ultimately serve to undermine Zanca's argument.

Zoe Knox's work on religious freedom seems to assume that pluralism, independence of church and state, and governmental nonintervention are the standard for religious freedom. I tend to agree, but worry that Knox's lack of contextualization undermines her case that religious freedom eroded in the Putin years. The Russian Orthodox Church was both persecuted by and complicit with the Soviet government at different times. Without this background, we cannot really understand the church's present relationship to the state. This comes to bear in

Knox's choice of three case studies that raise concerns about "human rights and democracy in post-Soviet Russia" (p. 287). Knox describes the outcry against an art exhibition called "Caution, Religion!" She also delves into the precarious position of Roman Catholicism in Russia, and ends with the description of a legal case undermining the Jehovah's Witnesses. All three illustrate real worries for people who believe in the desirability of religious pluralism and *laissez faire* government policies regarding religion. However, the lack of historical context led me to muse on a similar potential article. What if she wrote about the Piss Christ exhibition of 1987, the siege of Waco Branch Davidians in 1993, and the breakup of families from the Fundamentalist Church of the Latter-day Saints in 2008? Would we conclude that human rights and religious freedom were under attack in the United States?

Steinberg and Wanner deserve our praise and thanks for conceiving and producing this volume. It is especially well edited in that they ensure the collection of chapters results in fostering a conversation among many scholars. This kind of dialogue offers a stable platform for American policy even as it acknowledges the ebb, flow, and unplumbed depths of Russia's religious and moral sea.

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DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN MULTICULTURAL SOCIETIES. Edited by Matthias Koenig and Paul de Guchteneire. Burlington, VT: Aldershot, Ashgate UNESCO Publishing. xi + 308 pp. 37.00 Euros paper.

Democracy and Human Rights in Multicultural Societies is a volume edited by Professor Matthias Koenig from the University of Göttingen, Germany, and Paul de Guchteneire, Head of the Program on International Migration and Multicultural Policies at UNESCO. Altogether 16 scholars have contributed to the volume, which draws together discussions of ethnocultural movements, linguistic diversity,

and religious pluralism. The motivation to bring such diverse fields of interest together lies in the fact that they all challenge existing state orders to recognize difference in new ways.

The volume starts with an introduction by Koenig and de Guchteneire, where they portray a globalizing world, in which new social movements are vying for recognition of "their particularistic identities in the public sphere" (p. 3). These identities receive their driving force from "the intensified flow of capital, post-Fordist modes of production and the global spread of Western consumer culture" (p. 3). Among others, this has led to "decoupling of statehood and national identity" (p. 5). The authors argue that the classical nation-state is challenged by ethnonational, linguistic, and religious groups, and undergoing a transformation pressured by the internationalization of human rights regimes. Therefore, and in this intensified global context, new modes of the political governance of cultural diversity are emerging. In addition, such international players as the European Union (EU), Council of Europe (CoE), and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) are increasingly important.

The introduction is followed by presentation of ethnonational movements (Juan Díez Medrano), linguistic diversity (Fernand de Varennes), religious diversity (Shmuel N. Eisenstadt), and case studies in these respective fields. With the exception of one article on language rights in South Africa by Kristin Henrard, the other texts mostly focus on European examples.

Shmuel N. Eisenstein discusses the resurgence of religious movements due to globalization and criticizes Samuel Huntington's thesis of the clash of civilizations. The main differences between earlier and modern times is that religion "has become transposed into the public political and cultural arenas, thereby becoming a central, autonomous component in the constitution of collective identities" (p. 241). According to Eisenstein, globalization creates a new type of tension between particularistic and authentic identities and cosmopolitanism that creates a state of ambivalence. For him, it is a question of emerging multiple

modernities that question the dominance of the European, Enlightenment-based model of modernity.

Ole Riis provides a useful account of various conceptualizations and modes of *religious pluralism* in the global era. According to him, the concept of pluralism used “to signify a doctrine about the plenitude of possible world-views combined with the invitation to adopt the universal viewpoint of a world-citizen” (p. 252). From there it evolved to an understanding that there are legitimately different ways of viewing the world. Moreover, pluralism can also denote “a precondition for individual choice” (p. 252) that is characteristic for late modern societies. Riis also makes the point that pluralism is different at the macro-, meso-, and microlevel. At the macrolevel, it is about the state’s recognition of religious plurality, at the mesolevel about the acceptance of the existence of several religious organizations, and at the microlevel about individuals’ freedom to choose. At the end, Riis points out to the emergence a new, collectivist trend among representatives of minority religions to bargain for collective rights that is fiercely opposed by the mainstream elite.

James Beckford, contra Ole Riis, prefers the term *diversity* in his analysis of prison chaplaincy in England and Wales. The Anglican Church of England had traditionally taken care of the spiritual needs of inmates. The gradual increase of religious diversity in British society and the overrepresentation of ethnic, religious, and racial minorities in prison has, however, made the prisons multifaith institutions. Muslims constitute the largest non-Christian faith. In this context, the mainly Anglican chaplains have functioned as brokers and also taken care of non-Christian inmates’ spiritual welfare. This worked rather well for a time, but due to increasing numbers of non-Christian inmates and new legislation in the 2000s—mainly because of the implementation of certain EU directives—requests for minority faiths’ own chaplaincy grew stronger. New rules were adopted, but the general leadership remained in the control of the Church of England. This is just one example of how national history still affects state-religion relations.

Kathy Rousselet’s chapter provides a detailed discussion of changes in post-Soviet developments of religious pluralism in Russia. Right after the fall of the Soviet Union, religious freedom boomed and a huge number of Western religious movements started their activity in the country. With the rise of Russian self-confidence and an overtly nationalistic and protectionist cultural agenda since the late 1990s, legal rights for all but “traditional religions” were severely reduced. Rousselet underlines the large regional differences in Russia, and shows how the Russian Orthodox Church has gained a new prominence in state structure, where it aims to protect the nation’s cultural legacy. Unfortunately, Rousselet does not discuss the role of international organizations and how they have critiqued the Russian state for these policies, as the same theme is so central in other parts of the book.

With regard to contemporary religious diversity, the role of international organizations has been previously overlooked. However, this is changing. EU-based legislation is already putting pressure in many of the EU-27 to provide better protection for various minorities. It calls into question some of the benefits that previously prioritized majority ethnic, linguistic, and religious institutions have had. In this context, the chapters on ethnonational movements and linguistic diversity are revealing. The OSCE has been an important contributor in protecting the rights of traditional linguistic minorities in many countries and the EU has drastically improved the possibilities, for instance, of Kurdish ethnic expression in Turkey as the country has been aiming for EU candidate status.

The reasons religion stayed out of the limelight was because cultural and religious affairs were traditionally seen as internal matters, and the EU was portrayed as an economic project. Furthermore, such important institutions as the European Court of Human Rights of the CoE have given its 47 member states much freedom in how they organize their state-religion issues. Nevertheless, the European unification process is increasingly coming closer to social affairs in general and, not least, because of the wishes and needs to harmonize the internal market. A growing threat of a future labor shortage,

social cleavages among minority populations, and the challenges they pose to social cohesion have created a whole industry of funding instruments, legislative projects, and pressure groups (think tanks, NGOs, intergovernmental efforts, etc.) that jointly lead to—often in the name of human rights—small and large changes in minority governance structures and practices.

In sum, *Democracy and Human Rights* is an uneven, but highly interesting compilation that furthers our understanding on how various strands of “difference” come together and challenge existing state orders and modes of governance. Pressure on accepting diversity in its various forms is an increasingly inter- and transnational affair, where international organizations, transnational NGOs, the European Union, nation states, and ethnonational, linguistic, and religious interest groups come together. This book is a good addition to bookshelves of scholars who are willing to go beyond methodological nationalism and see how complex forces are changing the world in which we live, including religion.

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HOLY MAVERICKS: EVANGELICAL INNOVATORS AND THE SPIRITUAL MARKETPLACE. By Shayne Lee and Phillip Luke Sinitiere. New York: New York University Press, 2009. viii + 200 pp. \$65.00 cloth, \$20.00 paper.

To those who would desire to succeed in the American religious marketplace: learn to surf spiritual waves or risk toiling in obscurity forever. In *Holy Mavericks* Shayne Lee and Phillip Luke Sinitiere set out to describe and explain the success of a handful of American evangelical leaders who are surfing these waves. Firmly anchored in the religious economies theoretical approach, *Holy Mavericks* offers an archetype of a successful religious innovator in the present day. Lee and Sinitiere build their case for the essential traits of this archetype using case studies of five leaders within the evangelical subculture.

Joel Osteen, T. D. Jakes, Brian McLaren, Paula White, and Rick Warren all exhibit the ability to address the religious needs and cultural tastes of their contemporaries to expand their share of the religious market. The authors suggest that growth or decline of a religious group hinges on whether its leaders and the group as a whole can recalibrate their message to suit more potential consumers than their competitors. The open market dynamics of the religious economies perspective creates the social space needed for this type of innovation to be effective.

This is an engaging set of case studies that draws on the personal history and style of each innovator as well as the niche he or she fills within the religious market in America. Regrettably, the authors were unable to personally interview each leader. This is an apparent weakness in the methodology but one that is largely overcome due to the “open book” nature of the lives of these particular religious leaders. Confession, accountability, and transparency are all part of the product each innovator is selling and so observing each leader from the same viewpoint as a majority of the religious marketplace is appropriate considering the goals of the book. Further, the authors collect and utilize qualitative data that include interviews with ministry associates, participant observation of the leaders in action, and content analyses of the innovators’ books and other publications. The authors also rely on the abundance of easily accessible secondary data on each leader, which range from magazine articles to television interviews.

As a whole, *Holy Mavericks* departs from past explanations of the growth or decline of religious groups. The authors believe, for example, that that strictness, sacred canopies, or subcultural identities do not fully explain how some religious suppliers achieve their privileged places within American evangelicalism and the wider culture. Instead they argue that thriving in a competitive religious marketplace requires suppliers to be adept at reacting to changing conditions. These producers are savvy, flexible, quick, and decisive—which allows them to market their ministries in ways that resonate with the needs and tastes of religious consumers. The most successful

innovators, then, are skilled at sensing where the unreached niches in the religious market are and formatting their product to tap into those niches. Unfortunately, not much space is devoted to discussing the implications of this "innovation thesis" and its apparent contradictions with past explanations of religious vitality. The authors note how their thesis directly challenges strictness theory in the second-to-last paragraph of the epilogue, but a little more elaboration on this issue would have enhanced the contribution this book makes to the literature. Skepticism toward strictness and the notion that successful religious leaders actually design their message to satisfy the needs of the public does have some precedent. For instance, R. Stephen Warner voiced similar qualms concerning the explanatory power of strictness while also citing the importance of religious providers meeting the existential needs of the masses to ensure vitality (Warner 1997:93).

No doubt due to the different specialties of the authors, one a sociologist (Lee) and the other a historian (Sinitiere), *Holy Mavericks* occupies a comfortable middle ground between the often oppositional stances taken by general theorists and historians in regard to religion and its place in modern culture. Lee and Sinitiere offer a common explanation of the success of the religious innovators but refrain from entirely glossing over their important differences. Similarly, the authors bring light to the different contextual factors influencing each leader and their varied success without becoming too focused on contingencies and losing their wider viewpoint of the subject matter. The authors believe that more studies should cross disciplinary lines and I tend to agree.

Holy Mavericks is a clearly written and accessible book. It raises theoretical issues and offers colorful and descriptive analysis of each leader without getting lost in the minutiae. It is not a strong theoretical treatise, but it does not set out to be one. I find their explanation for the success of these evangelical innovators convincing and especially applicable to the present state of American culture and evangelicalism specifically. *Holy Mavericks* makes a descriptive contribution to the supply-side/religious economies perspective on the success of re-

ligion in America. I believe this book would be useful in an undergraduate sociology of religion course. It introduces the religious economy (supply-side) perspective and uses case studies to put flesh on those ideas. Many students would have at least some prior familiarity with the subject matter due to the celebrity status of the evangelical innovators covered in the book.

In sum *Holy Mavericks* sets out to contend with an important question in the sociology of religion: Why do some religious bodies grow and others decline? Lee and Sinitiere submit that it is the leaders who can ride the most current wave of religious demand that allows their groups to grow almost exponentially. Those who refuse to transform their methods and accommodate the shifting tastes of the religious marketplace will fall by the wayside.

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BEYOND THE ORDINARY: 10 STRENGTHS OF U.S. CONGREGATIONS. By Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004. ix + 146 pp. \$16.95 paper.

PLACES OF PROMISE: FINDING STRENGTH IN YOUR CONGREGATION'S LOCATION. By Cynthia Woolever and Deborah Bruce. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008. viii + 130 pp. \$19.95 paper.

Woolever and Bruce, of the Presbyterian Church USA Research Services, are the Principal Investigators of the 2001 U.S. Congregational Life Survey (USCLS), a national study of more than 300,000 worshipers in more than 2,000 congregations, from dozens of denomi-

nations and faith groups. Questionnaires were administered to congregational leaders and to adults who were present in services on a Sunday in April 2001. These two books disseminate some of their findings.

A trend in congregational studies marks a change from evaluating congregations' problems and weaknesses to assessing their strengths. Based on the USCLS data, in *Beyond the Ordinary: 10 Strengths of U.S. Congregations*, Woolever and Bruce argue that all congregations are strong in some way, and all can become stronger by identifying strengths and learning to use them effectively.

Strength indicators were chosen from a pool of questions in the survey. A factor analysis identified 10 strengths: *growing spiritually, meaningful worship, participating in the congregation, sense of belonging, caring for young people, focusing on the community, sharing faith, welcoming new worshipers, empowering leadership, and looking to the future*. Averages of the item scores were combined into strength indices, which congregations can use to compare themselves against others on the same strengths.

Although these measures will prove useful for congregational leaders making plans for future ministries, they may not be as useful to researchers, as some measures have validity issues. For example, a congregation's strength at providing spiritual growth is measured by how often worshipers participate in the church's various activities, but it could be measuring how often they attend potlucks and other social events. Some questions ask worshipers to identify "one of the 3 most valued aspects of their congregation," but many worshipers probably have no idea what their congregations really value. Several questions ask about participating in the community at large (including voting in a presidential election)—which doesn't measure what the congregation does. Finally, to measure how well a congregation *welcomes new worshipers*, they had only one indicator: whether the worshiper had been attending for five years or more. I wish they would have included some measure of what congregations actually *do* to attract and keep newcomers, which would be much more informative.

Places of Promise: Finding Strength in Your Congregation's Location explores many contexts in which congregations are located. The authors allow that a congregation's location can present a unique challenge, but challenge the myth that it determines a congregation's success. They argue that no matter where a congregation is located, if it understands its unique strengths, and discerns what God is calling it to be and do in its present location, it can thrive.

The most important predictor of vitality is a congregation's denomination or faith family. The second most important predictor is whether the percentage of 18- to 44-year-olds in the congregation mirrors the community's proportion of people in this age group. If a congregation has attracted this age group, it has found a way to be relevant to the generations that will soon be leaders. The third most important predictor is whether a congregation is growing in average attendance: growing congregations are also more likely to be strong congregations—and vice versa: strength predicts growth.

The study also examines congregations' locations within communities. The authors identify five types of communities, and then show strengths that congregations typically have in each community type. For example, focusing on the community seems to be more of a challenge for congregations in rural areas than for those in growing suburbs.

Many of the findings echo what researchers already know. For example, strong congregations are most likely found among conservative Protestant denominations in the South, particularly in the Bible Belt. Interestingly, Bible Belt churches attract more switchers than those outside the Bible Belt, who attract more first-timers and transfers. Since we know that Protestant Bible-Belt congregations tend to be more evangelical, I find this intriguing and would have appreciated further discussion.

In the analysis of congregational strengths that correlate with numerical growth, they suggest that *welcoming new people* is one strength that correlates highly with growth. This is no surprise, since their measure of *welcoming new people* is a direct measure of growth. Being in the same location for many years is

correlated with growth, but not vitality; and a match between community and congregation in percentage of 18- to 44-year-olds is a predictor of vitality, but *not* a predictor of growth. Finally, a congregation's faith family is *not* related to growth or decline; but *is* related to vitality.

The following factors were *not* related to growth: size (average attendance), being conservative, looking to the future, being located in a growing suburb, or having an 18- to 44-year-old congregation-to-community match. Factors related to a *lack* of growth include: sharing faith, growing spiritually, focusing on the community, location in a rural area, having a large percentage of older worshipers, and having a large percentage of college-educated worshipers.

Sprinkled throughout the book are boxes that point out "myth traps" about congregations that are dispelled by this study. These are interesting and useful, and most include a discussion question for congregational self-study. Church leaders in changing communities can take advantage of this book to build vision in their congregations. It does not provide a "how-to" approach, but it does supply the rationale for developing a location-specific ministry plan.

These books are written in a style that nonacademics can appreciate, with very little scientific jargon. And, when jargon is used, it is explained clearly. Together, both volumes are valuable for use in congregational self-studies. Many of the measures provided in the USCLS are also valuable to academic researchers who have successfully used the items provided in the data sets for congregational-level exploration and analysis (see, e.g., Reimer 2007).

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SUPERSENSE: WHY WE BELIEVE IN THE UNBELIEVABLE. By Bruce M. Hood. New

York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2009. xvii + 302 pp. \$25.99 cloth.

Bruce Hood's new book *Supersense* is remarkable not because of the way that it views religion in naturalistic terms or in how it points to childhood development for answers to riddles in adulthood. No, the most interesting thing about *Supersense* may be its capacity to extend the scope of the study of religion. Hood moves from dogmatic religious beliefs, which he spends almost no time on, to a much broader view of the supernatural that includes at its boundaries essentialist thinking and distinction formation. The compelling shift that Hood attempts is to view these two functions not as shadowy outliers of our conscious, but instead as being at the very core of humankind's formation of the supernatural. Moving these two items to the forefront helps him establish an interesting concept; it allows him to suggest that supernatural thinking is completely universal, varying only in degree. The universal mental structures that he points to also contribute to his claim that supernatural beliefs stem from intuitions that are unlearned, that is, innate in all humans. He takes these claims to their seemingly logical conclusions to suggest that, at their core, supernatural ideas are beneficial to humanity. While these ideas may not be particularly original, Hood's desire to focus on broader explanations for supernatural phenomenon is both refreshing and productive. The end result is a highly accessible, cohesive formulation on the brain's predisposition to supernatural forms of thought.

Hood's favorite example used to demonstrate the propriety for irrationality in us all is the "killer's cardigan." He often asks whether you would wear a killer's cardigan or will muse about studies conducted to explain our hesitance to wear such a piece of clothing. His perhaps feigned incredulity over people's negative responses aside, the question that he's asking is an interesting one. From where (or what) do items derive qualities that we impose on them? What brain functions lead us to do this? The fact that we do intuitively feel in certain ways that many times contradicts rationality leads Hood to his keystone term, "supersense." What *Supersense* does best is describe this "inclination

or sense” that he calls supersense as something that is valuable as a developmental and evolutionary tool.

The habit of forming categories and making distinctions is directly tied into Hood’s main catalyst for supernatural thinking, essentialism. When he describes a child’s thoughts as essentialist, he means that the child is attributing some immutable quality to whatever object he or she may be thinking of. He argues that children develop this ability at a very early age and that it is something they do innately. It starts in a similar way as distinctive thinking, lending a platonic quality to categories. For example, children can recognize that a baby goat will grow into an older goat, before they reach school age (p. 145). This attributive mindset then starts to spin out to larger notions, for instance, giving qualities to a favorite stuffed bear or blanket. Hood tests this in children by first convincing them that he has a copy machine that can make exact replicas of just about anything. He then asks them to place their favorite toy or blanket within the machine and (with some conveniently drilled holes and the help of a compatriot) sees how the children react to a copy of their cherished items. He finds that children almost never accepted a perceived copy and concludes that this shows their essentialist thinking (pp. 211–13). Obviously, this is not something that people grow out of fully, as Hood points out again with his example of the killer’s cardigan. His point is that people give to this piece of clothing some quality that it can rationally never attain, but perhaps emotionally is a different story.

In what may be one of the strongest arguments in *Supersense*, Hood wants to establish childhood essentialist thinking as one of the keystones for supernatural belief held by adults. His arguments here are convincing not only because of their fluidity but also because Hood is probably on the surest ground scientifically. The data and studies he presents in these, the later sections of the book, are among the best thought out and explained. He uses numerous examples but seems to rely much more on his own experimental research. He even sounds more confident as he lays out his overarching argument. “As we grow older, we increasingly apply our developing intuitive essentialism to significant objects and living things in the world. I think this psychological essentialism is one of the main foundations of the universal supernatural belief that there is something more to reality” (p. 208). His ability to successfully argue this point is fortunate because the reader is then led to a murkier area of the book, in which Hood tries to suppose that these ideas, although wrought with possible error, are on the whole beneficial for humans.

Regardless of the qualitative properties of supernatural thought, Hood does well in presenting their formation in *Supersense*. It is accessible to both scholars of religion and interested parties no matter their specialties. Commendable not only for the way it’s recounted, Hood’s theory on the formation of the supernatural also deserves high praise.

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