

art underlaid by myth and dreams and its connection to the therapeutic practices of the shaman, who mediates between the invisible and the visible worlds.

As a final reflection on this beautiful book, we can paraphrase Perrin who writes that objects are not passive; they reflect the beliefs and even the organization of society – they are charged with a sort of life as emissaries of the invisible and hence contribute to the power of the healer.

Eva Jane Neumann Fridman

Pine, Frances, and João de Pina-Cabral (eds.): *On the Margins of Religion*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2008. 286 pp. ISBN 978-1-84545-409-8. Price: \$ 90.00

This volume of thirteen chapters explores the multiple roles played by religion when individuals contest rights to places, knowledge, and properties as well as religion's role in ensuring individual access to scarce resources. Chapters share a common concern: How do issues of "marginality" and "centrality" function with respect to religion? By examining objects, bodies, narratives, and ritual spaces, contributors address the often problematic relationships between science, religion, and processes of globalization and highlight religion's embodiment in landscapes, built spaces, and religious sites. Collectively, these chapters provide ample evidence for religion's importance to individuals as a source of solace, spiritual comfort, and – at times – self-willed submission.

In their thoughtful introduction, Frances Pine (Goldsmiths College, University of London) and João de Pina-Cabral (University of Lisbon) point out that the term "religion" is itself problematic because it is difficult – if not impossible – to define a term that encompasses such an enormous range of beliefs and practices. The editors convincingly argue – contrary to Glazier's 1997 assertion – that religion is not marginal to the field of anthropology, and they cite numerous examples in which – over the past decade – the centrality of religion has dramatically re-imposed itself. Glazier concurs with Pine and Pina-Cabral. The editors also recognize that concepts of marginality and centrality are equally problematic and suggest that these terms, too, must be reexamined and (perhaps) redefined.

This volume is organized into five parts. Part one examines some of the intellectual underpinnings of anthropology of religion. João Vasconcelos's insightful "Homeless Spirits: Modern Spiritualism, Psychical Research, and the Anthropology of Religion in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries" looks at the mutual "exclusiveness" of science and religion and shows how such exclusiveness posed a significant problem for prominent nineteenth- and twentieth-century social scientists like William James (1843–1916) and Edward B. Tylor (1832–1917). Vasconcelos deftly delineates what has been described as the modern abyss between science and religion by offering a brief but informative history of Spiritualism. He centers his discussions on nineteenth-century reactions to the writings

of Allan Kardec. Kardec, who is considered the father of modern Spiritualism, was noted for his attempts to establish rules of evidence for psychic research and for his application of scientific methods to the study of spirits. Vasconcelos also shows how Edward B. Tylor's ideas concerning spirits (as presented in Tylor's 1871 "Primitive Culture") were later critiqued by Émile Durkheim, Sigmund Freud, Alfred Russell Wallace, and Andrew Lang.

Simon Coleman's "The Abominations of Anthropology: Christianity, Ethnographic Taboos, and the Meanings of 'Science'" focuses on religious rhetoric and the various ways conservative Protestant discourse challenges the social sciences. Coleman looks at the anthropological treatment of Protestant Fundamentalists and Evangelicals as portrayed in the ethnographic writings of Ernest Gellner, Sue Harding, Steve Warner, and Vincent Crapanzano. He gives careful attention to the subtleties and the intersections of secular and religious language as utilized by both anthropologists and believers. While acknowledging that conservative Christians are often perceived by social scientists as "peripheral," Coleman astutely argues that conservative Christians constitute an influential religious movement representing millions of believers and exercising considerable political authority – even to the extent of influencing American elections and influencing foreign policy.

Part two addresses marginality and the construction of religious space. Thomas Kirsch's "Religious Logistics: African Christians, Spirituality, and Transportation" explores the "religious logistics" of a prophet-healing cult in southern Zambia. The spread of a religion poses difficult logistical problems like traversing space, determining points of departure, constructing social and technological networks, and securing access to means of transport (61). Kirsch charts the complex relationship between the road construction and evangelism and, in the process, provides a useful counterpoint to the ideas presented in Coleman's chapter. For Pentecostals, Kirsch correctly points out, it is not just a matter of spreading the Word (Holy Scripture) but spreading the *experience* of the Holy Spirit at the same time.

The last two chapters in part two: Ursula Rao's "Contested Spaces: Temple Building and the Re-Creation of Religious Boundaries in Contemporary Urban India," and Cornelia Sorabji's "Bosnian Neighbourhoods Revisited: Tolerance, Commitment, and *komšiluk* in Sarajevo" examine the formulation of religious spaces in ambiguous settings. Rao cogently underscores processes of negotiation in the creation of community boundaries, while Sorabji provides insight into ethno-religious politics and everyday practice in postwar Bosnia. According to Sorabji, the neighborhoods of Sarajevo illustrate how Islamic concepts of moral duty (*komšiluk* = neighborliness) may lay the groundwork for reconciliation and tolerance.

Part three addresses power and issues of relative "centrality." Grant Evans's, "Revival of Buddhist Royal Family Commemorative Ritual in Laos," shows how formulations of centrality are politically challenged and

negotiated, while Stephan Feuchtwang's, "Centres and Margins: The Organisation of Extravagance as Self-Government in China" demonstrates how vulgarity and the pomp of religious festivals in southern Fukien are reconstructed by those who know themselves not to be central.

Part four further examines religion's place in identity claims. Galina Lindquist's "Allies and Subordinates: Religious Practice on the Margins between Buddhism and Shamanism in Southern Siberia" looks at ways emerging political identities intersect with religion in the republic of Tuva. Lindquist illustrates how religious options have deep and abiding implications for identity claims and how ambiguity provides spaces for creative expression. The field of "religion," Lindquist concludes, has many claimants, and its margins are extremely difficult to decipher.

Agnieszka Kościańska's "On Celibate Marriages: Conversion to the Brahma Kumaris in Poland" analyzes how religion functions with respect to gender identity. She examines female converts to a Hindu-inspired New Age movement committed to sexual abstinence. Oddly enough, Kościańska discovered that converts remain committed to abstinence – even though many are/were married and have children. She contrasts new religious identities with the prevailing ideals of Polish motherhood and femininity from which Kumaris beliefs constitute a radical departure.

Part five is devoted to discussions of modernization and the transmission of religious knowledge. Ramon Sarró's "Elders' Cathedrals and Children's Marbles: Dynamics of Religious Transmission among the Baga of Guinea," shows that religious transmission can occur on many fronts. According to Sarró, the Baga see their comparatively recent conversion to Islam (1956–1957) as part of a larger process of modernization. But on closer examination, selected elements of Baga traditional religion remain intact. These traditional elements, Sarró convincingly argues, have been transmitted at the margins of religion. Rubie S. Watson's and James L. Watson's "Geomancy, Politics, and Colonial Encounters in Rural Hong Kong" explores geomancy (*fengshui*) in colonial and postcolonial Hong Kong. Geomancy, the Watsons assert, is closely linked to Chinese ideas concerning communal politics and the social construction of space. But despite strong cultural links, the Watsons predict that the cramped spaces of Hong Kong will eventually lead to a decline of geomantic practices.

Jonathan P. Parry's "The Sacrifices of Modernity in a Soviet-Built Steel Town in Central India" dissects numerous tales of human sacrifice he heard while researching the construction of large steel plant in Central India. I hasten to add that no actual human sacrifices have been verified. But – as Parry astutely points out – skepticism about these stories only serves to buttress faith in them. Sacrifice and talk of sacrifice, Parry contends, allows humans to "accomplish immortal deeds by transcending their mortal limits" (255). He further suggests that marginality can become a potent source of power.

Contributors to this volume stay very close to their data. They do not advance grand theories of religion. Nor do they limit themselves to the usual topics in anthropological studies like doctrine, faith, and ritual. Transcending the Durkheimian perspective (that understood religion in terms of collective rituals and morality), contributors instead focus on religion as a malleable and highly reflexive process. They advocate a "lateral" (see R. Needham, *Circumstantial Deliveries*. Berkeley 1981: 90), broadly comparative approach to the anthropological study of religion. Highly recommended.

Stephen D. Glazier

Pink, Sarah (ed.): *Visual Interventions*. Applied Visual Anthropology. New York: Berghahn Books, 2007. 324 pp. ISBN 978-1-84545-332-9. (Studies in Applied Anthropology, 4) Price £ 45.00

In ihrem Sammelband geht Sarah Pink, die sich bereits mit mehreren Publikationen einen Namen im Bereich der angewandten Visuellen Anthropologie gemacht hat (u. a. *Doing Visual Ethnology*. London 2001; *The Future of Visual Anthropology*. London 2006), unterschiedlichen Themenfeldern und Auffassungen dieser Subdisziplin nach. Dabei dreht sich die Debatte um die alte Frage, ob die angewandte visuelle Forschung bloß das Stiefkind einer veritablen akademischen Forschung ist, oder ob praxisnahe Forschung die akademische vielmehr zu bereichern oder sogar zu erneuern vermag. Die Debatte speist sich aber auch aus der grundsätzlichen Frage, welchen Erkenntniswert und welche Funktionen Bilder, Fotografien und Filme für die (angewandte) Forschung haben.

Beide Fragenbereiche sind seit Jahrzehnten Gegenstand leidenschaftlicher Auseinandersetzungen. Dies ist für Sarah Pink der Auftakt, sich mit einer Fülle von Beiträgen, welche zum Teil bereits erschienen sind (z. B. *Visual Anthropology Review* 20.2004/1), in die Debatte einzuschalten: in welchen Bereichen und mit welchem Gewinn werden visuelle Methoden in der angewandten Forschung eingesetzt, und welche ethischen und organisatorischen Besonderheiten sind dabei zu beachten? Aber auch mit der epistemologischen Frage nach dem (eigenständigen) Erkenntniswert des Visuellen, dem Konstruktcharakter von Film- und Bilddokumenten sowie der Rolle und Funktion von Ästhetik und narrativen Elementen in visuellen Repräsentationen beschäftigen sich mehrere Beiträge. Beispiele dafür sind etwa Christina Lammers Artikel "Bodywork. Social Somatic Interventions in the Operating Theatres of Invasive Radiology" und An van Dienderens "Performing Urban Collectivity. Ethnography of the Production Process of a Community-Based Film Project in Brussels". Beide Beiträge zeigen, dass audiovisuelle Darstellungsmittel einerseits im Bereich des Qualitätsmanagements einer Wiener Universitätsklinik, andererseits in der Community-Arbeit in Brüssel mehr und vor allem Anderes als textbasierte Methoden zu leisten vermögen. In letzterem Falle erlaubte der Einsatz audiovisueller Darstellungsmittel einer Gruppe von Migrantinnen und