



The Palgrave Handbook of Anthropological Ritual Studies

Edited by
Pamela J. Stewart
Andrew J. Strathern

palgrave
macmillan

The Palgrave Handbook of Anthropological Ritual
Studies

Pamela J. Stewart · Andrew J. Strathern
Editors

The Palgrave
Handbook
of Anthropological
Ritual Studies

palgrave
macmillan

Editors

Pamela J. Stewart
Department of Anthropology
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA, USA

Andrew J. Strathern
Department of Anthropology
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA, USA

ISBN 978-3-030-76824-9 ISBN 978-3-030-76825-6 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-76825-6>

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2021

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, expressed or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Cover illustration: lifeispixels, Getty Images

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

CONTENTS

1	Ritual Studies: Whence and Where to?	1
	Andrew J. Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart	
Part I New Perspectives, Established Themes		
2	Ritual Dream Sharing and Charismatic Church Routinization	17
	Roger Ivar Lohmann	
3	Sacrifices in the Ancient World: Research on Complex Rituals	45
	Günther Schörner	
4	Economic Thought, Ritual, and Religion	77
	Thomas Widlok	
5	Thanks for Your Visit But You Can Go Now: <i>Cortesia</i>, Hospitality, and Rites of Distinction in Angola	95
	Ruy Llera Blanes	
6	Formulas of Home: On the Religious Performance of Personal Rituals	107
	Nigel Rapport	
7	Contesting Masculinity and Ritual Embodiment in Youth Baseball	129
	John W. Traphagan	
8	Ritual, Performance, and Cognition	147
	Andrew J. Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart	

Part II Sickness and Healing

- 9 Grave-Visiting Rituals in Northwestern Europe** 161
Anne Kjærsgaard and Eric Venbrux
- 10 The Device of the Spirit Medium for Connecting Humans to the Supernatural: A Case Study of Shamanic Healing in the Qorčïn Region of China's Inner Mongolia** 177
Saijirahu Buyanchugla
- 11 Empathy and Ritual Practices** 205
Anne Sigfrid Grønseth

Part III Cultural Intimacy and Innovation

- 12 Ritual, Place, and Experience in Hindu Home-Temple Visitation** 229
Sanjoy Mazumdar and Shampa Mazumdar
- 13 Designing Enchanted Rituals for Modern Man** 255
Anne-Christine Hornborg
- 14 Mo(nu)ments of Vulnerability: The Centrality of Ritual Creativity in Pilgrimages to Catholic Shrines in France and Portugal** 275
Anna Fedele

Part IV Comparative Studies

- 15 Rituals Surrounding Sorcery and Witchcraft in Traditional Societies: Issues for Researchers** 299
G. W. Trompf
- 16 On the Partiality of Pentecostal Ritual** 323
Simon Coleman
- 17 Infrastructures of Interrituality and the Aesthetics of Saint Veneration Rituals Among Orthodox Christians and Arab Alawites in Hatay** 345
Jens Kreinath
- 18 *Moka* (Ceremonial Exchange) with Death** 373
Pamela J. Stewart and Andrew J. Strathern
- 19 Epilogue: Covid-19 Tales and Tolls** 383
Andrew J. Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart

- Index** 391

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Ruy Llera Blanes is a Social Anthropologist and Associate Professor at the School of Global Studies of the University of Gothenburg. He has conducted research in Angola, where he is working on the topics of religion, politics, social movements, environment, and landscape. He is the author of *A Prophetic Trajectory* (2014) and also coeditor of *The Social Life of Spirits* (2013).

Saijirahu Buyanchugla (財吉拉胡) is Professor of the College of Mongolian Medicine and Pharmacy, Inner Mongolia University for Nationalities. He graduated from Minzu University of China in 1988. In 2009, he received his Ph.D. from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies on the subject of “Shamanism and Folk Medicine in Inner Mongolia” in the field of Medical Anthropology, and in 2013, he also received his another Ph.D. from the University of Tokyo on the subject of “Japanese Imperialism’s Medical and Hygienic Enterprise in Inner Mongolia, 1900–1945” in the field of Medical History. He had worked for the China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences and the Sun Yat-Sen University in China. He is author of two books and co-author of others, in total 7 books and over 30 publications. His research papers have been published in Mongolian, Chinese, Japanese, and English.

Simon Coleman is a Chancellor Jackman Professor at the Department for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto, and coeditor of the journal *Religion and Society*. He has conducted fieldwork in Nigeria, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Books include *Pilgrimage Past and Present in the World Religions* (1995, with John Elsner), *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity* (2000), and *Powers of Pilgrimage: Religion in a World of Motion* (2021).

Anna Fedele is currently working as an independent Anthropological Counselor and as a part-time Lecturer (docente a contratto) at the Free University of Bolzano. She is an associated researcher of the Center for Research in Anthropology at the Lisbon University Institute and has been doing research

on ritual creativity and pilgrimage since the beginning of her anthropological career. Anna is the author of the award-winning monograph *Looking for Mary Magdalene: Alternative Pilgrimage and Ritual Creativity at Catholic Shrines in France* (2013). She is the co-founder and editor of the Routledge book series *Gendering the Study of Religion in the Social Sciences* and has recently co-edited with Kim Knibbe *Secular Societies, Spiritual Selves? The Gendered Triangle of Religion, Secularity and Spirituality* (2020).

Anne Sigfrid Grønseth is Professor of Anthropology at Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Lillehammer and head of Unite of Migration and Diversity. She has held position as Senior Researcher at Norwegian Centre for Minority Health Research. Selected publications are *Lost Selves and Lonely Persons: Experiences of Illness and Well-Being Among Tamil Refugees in Norway* (2010), *Mutuality and Empathy: Self and Other in the Ethnographic Encounter* (eds.) (2010), *Being Human, Being Migrant: Senses of Self and Well-Being* (ed.) (2013), *The Ethics of Knowledge Creation: Transactions, Relations and Persons* (eds.) (2017), and *Mobilities of Wellbeing: Migration, the State, and Medical Knowledge* (eds.) (2021).

Anne-Christine Hornborg is Professor Emerita in History of Religions, Centre for Theology and Religious Studies, Lund University, Sweden. Hornborg has published several articles about indigenous cosmologies, animism, ecology and religion, ritual practices and new spirituality. She has also worked within the interdisciplinary field of Ritual Studies and in recent years studied new ritual contexts in late modern Sweden.

Anne Kjærsgaard is a postdoctoral researcher working on the project “Death, Memory and Religion” at the School of Society and Culture, Aarhus University, Denmark. Her research interests concern lived religion and material culture in relation to mortuary practices. She is the author of *Funerary Culture and the Limits of Secularization in Denmark* (2017) and several book contributions and journal articles in the field of death studies. She is one of the editors of the Danish journal for churchyard culture, Kirkegårdskultur.

Jens Kreinath is Associate Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology at Wichita State University, USA. His fields of expertise include the semiotics of ritual, aesthetics of religion, visual anthropology, and history of anthropological concept formation, with a specific interest in material culture and historical discourse analysis. At Wichita State University, he primarily teaches anthropological theory, religion, linguistic and visual anthropology and is the director of its Visual Anthropology Lab. His ethnographic research focuses on the coexistence of religious minorities and the dynamics of inter-religious relations. Since 2010, he has conducted ethnographic and historical research on shared pilgrimage sites and Christian-Muslim relations in Hatay—historical *Antioch*, the southernmost province of Turkey. He published his ethnographic findings on Hatay in journals like the *Anthropology of the Contemporary Middle East and Central Eurasia* (2014), *Religions* (2018), *Journal of Ritual Studies*

(2019), and *Anthropological Theory* (2020). His research also appeared in *The Seductions of Pilgrimage: Sacred Journeys Afar and Astray in the Western Religious Tradition* (edited by Michael A. Di Giovine and David Picard), *Aesthetics of Religion* (edited by Alexandra Grieser and Jay Johnston; 2017), *Sensations and Figurations of the Invisible* (edited by Birgit Meyer and Terje Stordalen; 2019), *Bloomsbury Handbook of Cultural and Cognitive Aesthetics of Religion* (edited by Anne Koch and Katharina Wilkens; 2019), and *Levantine Entanglements Local Dynamics of Globalization in a Contested Region* (edited by Terje Stordalen and Øystein S. LaBianca).

Roger Ivar Lohmann is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Trent University, Canada. He holds B.A., M.A., and Ph.D. degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has served as Editor-in-Chief of *Reviews in Anthropology*, Chair of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania, and President of the Green Party of Ontario.

Sanjoy Mazumdar (B.Arch. [Honours] IIT, Kharagpur, M.Arch.A.S., M.C.P., Ph.D., MIT) is Professor emeritus of Urban Planning and Public Policy, Religious Studies, and Asian American Studies, University of California, Irvine. He researches, with the objective of obtaining deep understanding, cultural groups, physical and sentient environments, traditional designs, local wisdom, environmental cultural linguistics, disaster responses. His research has focused on religious groups (Buddhists, Hindus, Zoroastrians, Muslims), ethnic groups (Vietnamese Americans, Indian Americans, Iranians), design and planning professionals. His publications have appeared in 24 journals and in many books and proceedings. He was elected Fellow (Design Research Society), awarded Career Award (Environmental Design Research Association), Invitation Fellowship (Japan Society for the Promotion of Science), Outstanding Planning Achievement Academic Award (American Planning Association California), and several journal editorial boards.

Shampa Mazumdar (B.A. [Honours] in History, Calcutta University; M.A., Ph.D. in Sociology, Northeastern University) is a Lecturer in the Department of Sociology, University of California, Irvine. Her research interests are in the sociology of religion, sacred space, immigrant religion (Vietnamese American Buddhists, Indian Hindus, Muslims), women, home environments, and aging. Her publications appear in many journals, e.g., *Journal of Ritual Studies*, *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research*, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, *Environment and Behavior*, *Environments*, *Journal of Interior Design*, *Landscape and Urban Planning*, *Journal of Management*, *Spirituality*, and *Religion*, *Annual Review of Women in World Religions*, and in several books and proceedings. She has previously taught at Northeastern University, Boston.

Nigel Rapport, M.A. (Cambridge) Ph.D. (Manchester), is Professor Emeritus of Anthropological and Philosophical Studies at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland. He is also Founding Director of the St Andrews Centre

for Cosmopolitan Studies. He has held the Canada Research Chair in Globalization, Citizenship and Justice at Concordia University of Montreal. He has been elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (FRSE), also of the Learned Society of Wales (FLSW). His research interests include social theory, phenomenology, identity and individuality, community, conversation analysis, and links between anthropology and literature and philosophy. His recent books include *Anyone, the Cosmopolitan Subject of Anthropology* (2012); *Distortion and Love: An Anthropological Reading of the Life and Art of Stanley Spencer* (2016); and *Cosmopolitan Love: Ethical Engagement Beyond Culture* (2019).

Günther Schörner studied Classical Archaeology, Ancient History, Prehistory, Early Christian Archaeology, and Art History at Erlangen (Germany). From 1993 to 2010 he worked at the University of Jena (Germany) at the Institute of Classics. From 2010 to 2011 he was Professor of Classical Archaeology at the University Erlangen-Nürnberg, since 2011 he holds the chair of Classical Archaeology (with focus on Roman Archaeology) at the University of Vienna (Austria). His research interests include religious studies, especially rituals and their visualization in the Roman Empire, material culture studies, and culture contact studies. He is the author and editor of several monographs and numerous articles. He has carried out fieldwork in Austria, Germany, Italy, Jordan, Romania, and Turkey.

Prof. Pamela J. Stewart (Strathern) and **Prof. Andrew J. Strathern** are a wife and husband team working in many geographically, linguistically, and culturally diverse parts of the world, including Europe, Asia, and the Pacific Islands. For many decades they have worked to publish over 50 books, hundreds of articles, and co-edited the *Journal of Ritual Studies* and a series of books on Ritual Studies. Prof. Stewart and Prof. Strathern take the study of ritual as one of their main research foci, and they have collaborated with hundreds of colleagues in this area of scholarship. They have held academic appointments in many countries over several decades.

John W. Traphagan, Ph.D., is Professor and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Fellow in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, where he is also a Professor in the program in Human Dimensions of Organizations. He is the author of numerous articles and books on Japanese culture including *Taming Oblivion: Aging Bodies and the Fear of Senility in Japan* (SUNY Press, 2000) and *The Practice of Concern: Ritual, Well-Being, and Aging in Rural Japan* (Carolina Academic Press, 2004), and his forthcoming book *Cosmopolitan Rurality, Depopulation, and Entrepreneurial Ecosystems in 21st Century Japan* (Cambria Press).

Garry Trompf is an Emeritus Professor in the History of Ideas and Adjunct Professor in Peace and Conflict Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Sydney, Australia. He was formerly Professor of History at the

University of Papua New Guinea. His works include *Melanesian Religion* and *Payback: The Logic of Retribution in Melanesian Religions*.

Eric Venbrux is Professor of Comparative Religion and director of the Centre for Thanatology at Radboud University, the Netherlands. He conducted anthropological fieldwork in Australia, the Netherlands, and Switzerland, and is author of *A Death in the Tiwi Islands: Conflict, Ritual and Social Life in an Australian Aboriginal Community* (1995). He specializes in death studies and has published extensively on mortuary rituals.

Thomas Widlok is a Professor for African anthropology at the University of Cologne, Germany. He holds an M.Sc. and Ph.D. from the London School of Economics and has carried out long-term ethnographic field research with hunter-gatherers, in particular in southern Africa and Australia.

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 2.1	Pastor Roti preaching in Yakob's Baptist church, 1994	27
Fig. 2.2	Pastor Somi (left), Belok (center, drumming), Pastor Wani (right), and congregants (far right) singing and clapping as part of a Sunday service in Yakob's Baptist church	28
Fig. 2.3	The Baptist church in Yakob in 2005	36
Fig. 7.1	Euler diagram showing overlapping relationship between sport, games, and play	135
Fig. 10.1	The first stage of the healing ritual for shamanic illness	195
Fig. 10.2	The second stage of the healing ritual for shamanic illness	196
Fig. 17.1	Map of Hatay with Locations of Shared Sacred Sites created by William Silcott. © Jens Kreinath	347
Fig. 17.2	Şeyh Yusuf el-Hekim Ziyaret in Harbiye. © Jens Kreinath	358
Fig. 17.3	Mar Corcus Kilisesi in Iskenderun. © Jens Kreinath	360
Fig. 17.4	Hazreti Hızır Ziyaret in Samandağ. © Jens Kreinath	361
Fig. 17.5	Infrastructures of Interrituality created by Raine McDonald. © Jens Kreinath	364



Ritual Studies: Whence and Where to?

Andrew J. Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart

Ritual Studies as a category of scholarly interest and specialization arose primarily from the fascination of ritual activities in the lives of peoples around the world. This fascination remains a primary or primordial wellspring for the continuing vibrancy of such studies today (Stewart and Strathern 2016 [2010]). Rituals stand out from the merely repetitious rounds of social action in communities, yet they themselves also instantiate the importance of repetitive actions as vehicles for the expression of values and goals within communities or else by and for individuals as agents in their own right by virtue of being shamans, priests, or otherwise authorized performers in a scripted ritual process.

It is important to recognize overall that the concept of ritual encapsulates two apparently opposed features, those of continuity vis a vis those of creativity. Rituals may appear to be unchanging, and their enactors may even stress this as a requisite, yet in practice we find that the field of ritual is dynamic, encompassing change and generating creativity. Ritual as a category of action has over time been liberated from a nineteenth-century attitude toward it that stemmed from the then prevailing paradigm of evolution and

A. J. Strathern · P. J. Stewart (✉)
Department of Anthropology, 3302 WWPH,
University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA, USA
e-mail: pamjan@pitt.edu

A. J. Strathern
e-mail: strather@pitt.edu

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature
Switzerland AG 2021

P. J. Stewart and A. J. Strathern (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook
of Anthropological Ritual Studies*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-76825-6_1

progress from primitive to modern phases. A prime advocate of that viewpoint was Sir James George Frazer (1958 [1922]), who was of Scots origins and adopted the postures of some rationalist Enlightenment philosophers, including some of his fellow Scots, equating ‘modernity’ with science and opposing science to religion in general, even more to those vestiges of folk religion found in popular rituals rooted in the past (cf. Stewart and Strathern 2014: 15, 2021: 129–140). A whole sheaf of ways to present history flowed from assumptions of this kind, and it is these assumptions that we continually need to sweep away in order to find a more operational set of principles as a foundation for ritual studies going forward. Frazer’s enduring contribution, however, lies in his massive compilation of materials on folk rituals and customs from all around the world and from Greek and Latin sources, which he marshalled under major thematic rubrics such as calendrical rites, seasonal festivals, ‘the dying god’, fire festivals, the worship of trees, and the like, a grand synthesis of ritual modalities.

Frazer’s work belonged to a set of traditions of study that constituted a nineteenth-century paradigm of investigations into the putative origins of institutions of society. Darwin’s theory of evolution formed a background to these studies, juxtaposing change against ‘survivals’ left over from a past time. Along the way, certain themes emerged, such as Frazer’s classification of magic into contagious and sympathetic types. Sir Edward Burnet Tylor bequeathed to posterity his theory of animism and the definition of religion as belief in spirits (Tylor 1970 [1871]). Kinship theory emerged out of Lewis Henry Morgan’s attempt to enumerate types of kin terminologies and to reconstruct their early forms (Morgan 1871). Expeditions were sent out to remote areas to document living systems, for example the Cambridge Expeditions to the Torres Straits, thereby paving the way for intensive first-hand fieldwork which found fruition in the work by Bronislaw Malinowski as a result in part of his enforced long stay among the Trobriands people in Papua during the First World War (Malinowski 1922). The focus of study then switched from comparison and generalization to participant observation of custom in practice and the flow of life. A parallel process, *mutatis mutandis*, emerged early on in North America with the work of Franz Boas among the Kwakiutl people of the North-West coast (Boas 1966). Boas carried out very detailed studies on language, customs, and rituals of these people, and in addition, he advocated for a four-field approach, with language and culture and also archeology and physical anthropology all involved. Radcliffe-Brown in Oxford and Malinowski in London at the London School of Economics proceeded to develop two versions of functionalist theory as explanations of customs. Malinowski’s theory relied on a basic notion that actions arose to meet fundamental needs of people, while Radcliffe-Brown came to emphasize the maintenance of social structure. Such approaches naturally influenced research on rituals and their value to society (Radcliffe-Brown 1965 [1952]). Radcliffe-Brown, for instance, examined the value of rituals in creating and maintaining respect, using examples from his fieldwork in the Andaman Islands

on practices of weeping for the loss of kin. Meanwhile in France Emile Durkheim developed his theory of ‘elementary forms’ of religious life, based largely on reports coming out from Australian Aborigine societies but aiming at general theory, while the Belgian scholar Arnold van Gennep developed his general model of ‘rites of passage’ such as initiation rituals (Gennep 1960 [1908]). Both of these scholars have exercised through their writings an enduring influence on the study of rituals, extending beyond the ‘field-work revolution’ to realms of generalization. Another enduring influence was subsequently exercised by Victor and Edith Turner, with seminal works on the study of ritual processes, conflict mediation, relations of ‘*communitas*’ and ‘liminality’ emergent from van Gennep’s model of rites of passage, and pilgrimage (V. Turner 1969; E. Turner 2006). Edith Turner adopted a bold ontological/interpretivist turn by embracing the emic idea of the reality of spirits.

The blend of ideas known as ‘structural functionalism’ flourished during the mid-twentieth century, but it came to be replaced by a variety of approaches. In France a new kind of structuralism arose from the influence of Claude Levi-Strauss, who dissected the themes in mythologies from South America, breaking them into binary categories to reveal their communicative structures, an approach inspired by models taken from linguistic theory (Levi-Strauss 1978). The method worked best with narrative genres rather than ritual genres. The fields of ideas called ‘ritual criticism’ and more generally ‘the craft of ritual studies’ were developed by Ronald Grimes and followed by number of scholars in Europe (Grimes 1996, 2014). Grimes showed ways of examining the logic of ritual practices that made room for understanding how they worked or did not work, thus ushering in the arena of potential failures of rituals (see, e.g., Hüsken 2007; McClymond 2016). Concomitantly this went with a shift toward the incorporation of individuals, choice, and variation in practices in social life generally including in ritual. The trend was then formalized into a perspective labeled as ‘transactionalism’, relating all processes to the strategy of exchanges between individuals. A further, and deservedly very influential, trend was inaugurated by the Religious Studies scholar Catherine Bell with her concept of ‘ritualization’, the process by which actions turn into a ritual form. This idea opened up the field notably, allowing for the entry of history and variability, process, and contingency into ritual studies. Bell’s work helped to give rise to the present-day interest in creativity and agency in ritual studies (see, Bell 2007). This kind of approach has prevailed against two further, diametrically opposed, trends emanating from sources in Europe: Post-Modernism and Marxism, both prominent in the 1970s. The former disavowed any tendencies to determinism or causes, the latter introduced a rigid schema of determinism based on the Marxist notions of infrastructure, structure, and superstructure. Insights come from both trends, but not as totalizing systems. The same can be said for the broad label ‘post-structuralist’, referring to studies that loosen up the tenets of Levi-Straussian Structuralism, but still look for elements of structured configurations in cultural contexts,

especially where the forms of classification are markedly binary, such as in the Female Spirit ritual complex in the Mount Hagen area in Papua New Guinea (Strathern and Stewart 1999). An important vehicle of thought was provided by Clifford Geertz in his works on the emotional power of symbols in religion and on the effects of social change on ritual forms (Geertz 2017 [1973]).

The outcome of all these different approaches to theory is that they provide possible arenas of analyses of ritual to a range of ethnographic environments. The contributors to the present volume have drawn on this reserve of theoretical concepts as appropriate to their materials. Overall, the category of ritual has been liberated from an earlier idea that ritual practices are fixed and unchanging. Instead, there is an emphasis on change, and along with this a concern for exploring arenas of creativity, adaptability, and cross-contextual influences among rituals. This in turn allows for, indeed requires, attention to historical process, bringing together anthropology and history as disciplines, and learning to see culture as history rather than as fixed forms. This is not to deny that participants in a ritual may choose to lay stress on its historical depth, but equally, they may acknowledge that it is recent and an innovation. Frequently, innovation may be disguised under a claim of continuity, or continuity disguised under a claim of change, as we have noted in an earlier publication on religious change in Taiwanese and Papua New Guinea contexts (Stewart and Strathern 2009). This volume centered on contexts of historical change and religious conversion to Christianity constituting a rich complex of data for unpacking narratives of change in groups eager to grasp benefits of change, but concerned to combine this with some retention or adaptation of their indigenous culture.

One condition of contests over change is that some customs have to be abandoned, modified, or concealed. Among the Duna people of Papua New Guinea (see Stewart and Strathern 2002; Strathern and Stewart 2004), when missionaries brought Christianity, they tabooed the practices of secondary burial after the exposure of the body on a funeral platform. The Duna adapted to this taboo by building the equivalent of a platform in the underground gravesite, with a hole in the coffin to allow the deceased's body juices to drip into the earth as tradition required. When the time came for them to remove the bones of their dead kin and place them high in the mountains in secluded rock shelters, they excused themselves to the resident church workers by saying that they were holding 'a little party in the bush', without telling the details. Paul Post and Martin Hoondert have edited a book on related topics of ritual changes, with the title of 'Absent Ritual'. Their approach is comprehensive. They argue that the category of absent ritual is akin to a wider set of rituals, including the sharing of rituals, rituals that fail in their purposes or effects, and rituals that are contested, postponed, or have to be negotiated (Post and Hoondert 2019: 4–5). Absent rituals draw attention to themselves through not being celebrated, so that a sense of absence blends awkwardly with the presence of what is celebrated, creating an ambivalence that enters into the dynamics of the ritual process. This awkwardness is inscribed, for example,

in the history of relations between the Catholic Church and Protestantism in Europe. It appears also in the lack of overt ritual in divorce proceedings in the Netherlands, in the decommissioning of abandoned church buildings or their transformation with the transition between styles and ideologies of worship, or ritual secrecy and concealment, in which concealment becomes a marker of belonging as a way of expressing power or its suppression and a marker of in-group and out-group identities. Absence for some persons means presence for others. Debates ensue about the televising of sacred services in which participants may not be ritually qualified to be 'present'. These debates all have their parallels in struggles over the secrecy of rituals directed toward spirit forces thought to be immanent in stones or other vehicles of ritual power, struggles that were triggered by the introduction of mission Christianity in colonial circumstances in Papua New Guinea and elsewhere and configured around objects of power in material culture forms, as we have pointed out in our Series Editors' Preface to the Post and Hoondert volume (Strathern and Stewart 2019: xiii).

The discussion of secrecy leads us into another arena, that of ritual efficacy, notably developed by William Sax and collaborators. Efficacy as a term encompasses both actors' intentions and the results of ritual acts as observed or inferred by the actors or other observers (Sax et al. 2010a, b). Efficacy merges with performativity as a yardstick of the effects of performance. It also represents a transformation of functionalist theorization, without its totalizing imperative, and returns us both to a Durkheimian context of performance and potentially to domains of psychology and the emotions as these affect individual and collective experience. We may recall here the proverbial putative comment on the efficacy of rain-making ceremonies among Native Americans: Well, it didn't bring rain, but it was one hell of a Ceremony!

We continue here with a discussion of ritual as a general category. The first principle of ritual studies today is that ritual is a universal category. Rituals are found everywhere; they do not signify 'the primitive' but are versions of 'the universal'. The second principle is that rituals are bound up with other processes in society, and are therefore always meta-commentaries on these processes, as well as contributing directly to them. Rituals may appear to be 'set apart' from other aspects of society, as the French sociologist Emile Durkheim argued in his monumental study of the 'elementary forms' of religion (Durkheim 1965 [1915]), dealing with the separation of sacred from profane realms; but their significance lies precisely in their connections with overriding practical concerns. And the third principle is one that derives from the work of anthropologists interested in the real-world effects of ritual and its functions in ecosystems, whether in accordance with or operating differently from, patterns of incorporation into the explicit world-views of the ritual performer themselves. Here we find the locus of the famous distinction made by Roy Rappaport between the 'cognized model' of the actors and the 'operational model' of the anthropologists studying them (Rappaport 1968). The cognized model includes spirits, whereas the operational model includes

labor inputs and garden yields. Yet both are in a sense ‘cognized models’ corresponding to the perceptions of actor and analyst, and spirits have to be accepted as a given category for the Maring people studied by Rappaport. Ritual and cognition therefore belong together.

Throughout his exposition, Rappaport treated the question of spirit agencies through the lenses of perceptions of the Maring, thus de facto granting them an existence (see Strathern and Stewart 2001). Indeed, for him to have argued that spirits did not exist would have had no relevance for the fieldwork, surrounded as he was by a group of people whose actions, ambitions, and senses of honor were all geared to the processes of the interaction with spirits in the *kaiko* rituals, orchestrated by shamans who were said to gain access to the spirits of the mountain through the mediation of the ‘smoke woman’, a powerful female spirit. Rituals can be conducted without such mediation in some other cultures, and for the Maring, it is also not a matter of belief versus unbelief, since Maring rituals are posited on taken for granted realities woven into the fabrics of their life and not singled out for attention as mere ‘beliefs’. A contemporary approach to ritual must therefore avoid being entrapped into some arguments about ‘the truth’. The only relevant truths that we have to deal with lie in what is considered evident by those whom we are studying. Separately, if we feel so moved, we can discuss questions of truth, but the results may not be conclusive.

Since the pioneering work of Rappaport in the field of human ecology, it has been accepted that rituals do have environmental effects. As we turn in any direction, this becomes evident when we see the material components of ritual practices, notably in the building of temples and/or in feasting practices in honor of spirits or a single deity. Historically, the mainstream Christian churches have ritual calendars of observances, all involving material outlays, just as does the *kaiko* among the Maring. Huge resources may go into the building of new churches and cathedrals, as they did on the construction of places of ritual worship in spirit cult sites. This expenditure of resources is perhaps the most objective way to measure what some anthropologists have called the ‘sincerity’ of religious behavior, and this is recognized in the innumerable plaques and records of contributions made since a church was first established.

The ritual acts we have so far mentioned have tended to be material acts. Another arena of prime importance is the use of language in rituals. To avoid semantic confusion, we can agree at the outset here that codified ritual acts themselves constitute a kind of communicative meaning, whether executed in words or other kinds of action (gesture, sound, rules, clothing, ordered sequences, see Tambiah 1968). Often, however, this communicative code is supplemented by explicit linguistic means. Equally often, there may be sequences in which the meanings are communicated in actions that do not require words. This may be because of an intention to leave some things mysterious or a resolve to explain the meanings of a symbol at whatever point

as a part of an emerging drama. Or the meaning may be given by a shaman only to those central to the ritual performance.

The language sequences found in ritual acts may have various functions. They may be the pronouncements and orders of ritual experts. They may be a means whereby the intended power and legitimacy of the ritual are underlined. They may constitute acts of praise or requests for assistance from spirit entities. They may provide an aesthetic elaboration of codified actions that occur outside of language, or they may build on such language sequences. Often, the words are further encoded in music and/or dance (Genep 1960 [1908]). In almost all contexts, words and other actions go together, they make up a unity. Spirits are considered to be able to understand language, and the language practices used to contact them may be charged with power and may contain arcane and exotic constructions and terms that associate them with the ancestral domain and the power that goes with it. In general, we can say that language enhances the power of ritual. Here we suggest that language is well suited to this function because in oral usage words are not seen but only heard and then in a sense vanish. Yet where they are intended to reach the spirits, they do so by asking the spirits to hear them and keep the words in their memories. Language, then, is the gateway to memory and communicable knowledge and this gives it a powerful suitability for deployment in rituals.

The above observations apply to the special language used in rituals, such as prayers or hymns in the Christian traditions, invocations to spirits, addresses to ancestors, or magical spells in which the arcane or formal language characteristics themselves convey the special or arcane context of their meanings. However, as Catherine Bell (1997) perceptively observed, rituals also arise out of everyday practices that lead to their ritualization as signifiers of social meanings connected with life processes and with history.

RITUALIZATION

Rituals are important in people's lives for many reasons. Here we want to stress one of the features of ritual that quietly contributes to this importance while going also unnoticed. At the heart of ritual processes is the fact that they constitute routines that provide rhythm and continuity, scheduling activities in time and space. In the taken for granted flow of such ritualized activities, people do not necessarily recognize the significance of routines as such, partly because they become tokens for the naturalized structure of life itself. Where, however, we see clearly their importance is when, in a situation of crisis, they become subject to alteration or are no longer available. Then we discover that having patterns of routines that can be reliably enacted is important and that cognitive dissonance results from the loss of such patterns.

Such dissonance may come from a shift in employment, in the downsizing of belongings that have historical and experiential meanings for people, or from the shutting down of a set of University offices and the barring of academics while the shut-down continues. Embodiment theory tells us that

people need emplacements of themselves, and when an office with a long history of use is locked down, there is an entrapment of experiences that goes with the office space and cannot be realized without that space. The Covid-19 virus has caused this situation without any intentional agency of its own. Human agency is posed against the blind ineluctable life process of the virus. The virus establishes its own routines by destroying the routine of its human hosts. Ritual studies operate in between imposition and freedom, dialectically embracing both order and creativity. Naming practices in different parts of the world reflect this endless dialectic. Among Wiru speakers in the Southern Highlands Province of Papua New Guinea, when a leading member of a local community died, there was a practice of naming children born around this time after some event or object that manifested itself in the environment within the locality (Strathern 1970). The names tied these children to the memory of the dead leader and also placed them within his orbit as a new ancestor. In one case a child was named Bilati, after a decorative flower found growing on the grave of the dead man as a mark of his transformed vitality. The children and the names were new, but they also conveyed the ongoing significance and power of the one who had died. Memorialization and innovation were brought together.

RITUAL: HANDSOME IS AS HANDSOME DOES

A perspective on ritual that is largely shared among our contributors is that rituals emerge and persist because people are using them to do things, and that the ritual form itself is what gives them their efficacy (cf. Stewart and Strathern 2014).

These papers also tell a further story, which is to show the diversity and creative plasticity of ritual practices. Our contributors have gone to both nearby and out of the way places, in each case finding that closer-knit ethno-figurative approaches can always tease out something unexpected and enlightening in the data, which feed into the production of more robust interpretive ways of understanding ritualization processes around the world, over time and space.

We therefore characterize the prevailing tone of most of the analyses in this volume as exploratory forms of reaching out to the edges of our knowledge, supporting the exploration with fine-grained ethnography. All of these papers show a concern with details as well as larger patterns. Classic analytical themes appear, for example with healing and empathy in Groenseth's chapter, in which she builds on her long-standing interest and contributions to studies on empathy and healing in a poignant account of the plight of transplanted refugees in Norway, covering how they can find some solace in trying to help one another. Another classic theme, on shamanic practices and how practitioners achieve leadership by ritual means, is found in Buyancugla's in-depth first-hand ethnography on Inner Mongolia. Garry Trompf, dealing with sorcery and witchcraft, adds a dimension of comparison-making and an

overall survey of materials beyond singular ethnographic contexts, and he adds a perceptive venture into questions of historical change in practices. Trompf's kind of survey approach shows some affinities with the work of earlier scholars such as Frazer, but he brings us up to date and gives a valuable perspective on what is happening in particular cases today, showing a remarkable breadth and depth of knowledge. Ritual studies can learn much from such an exposition of similarities and differences across a region. Guenther Schoerner also includes a wide range of materials in his examination of 'sacrifice' in Ancient Greece and Rome, with a side look at studies of sacrifice in social anthropological work such as that of Evans-Pritchard on the Nuer. Schoerner points out, following Kathryn McClymond (2008), that animal sacrifice is only one type of sacrifice and vegetable offerings can be important. He also provides a wide set of references, from Classical Archaeology, on the evidence on historically practiced forms of sacrifice.

One of the most ambitious papers in the volume is provided by Jens Kreinath, who develops the concept of inter-rituality in relation to devotions at the shrines of saints from different religious traditions. The ritual codes characteristic of particular ritual traditions are, he says, operatively compatible with one another, making it possible for translations of meanings in productive ways, and thus the peaceful co-use of sites feasible. Another important part of Kreinath's argument lies in his highlighting of the sequential temporality of the rituals he studies. Here he is touching on the fact that rituals are scheduled and often follow a calendrical pathway. The scheduling makes shared use of the sacred sites feasible. Calendrical rituals are often used to play a prominent role in religious traditions. Here the concept is pulled creatively back into play in the context of an extension into inter-rituality. Kreinath further buttresses his argument by referring to a range of supporting concepts and findings based on his extensive fieldwork in Turkey. He stresses the importance of the material infrastructure of objects and their placement in rituals of worship. He highlights the role of aesthetic sensory experience in enabling ritual crossings to take place in shared sites, thus creating inter-rituality. He also points to the wider range of imputed agencies in ritual sequences directed to powerful saints, whose power to bless transfers into material objects.

Each of the papers makes its mark with a striking contribution to its theme, usually with some surprising twist, analytical or ethnographic or both. Ruy Blanes, for example, shows us how rituals are sometimes used not simply to express hospitality but resistance to demands for hospitality, thus creating an intentional ambiguity in host-guest relationships. This kind of pattern is also found in the context of exchange relations among allies and ex-enemies in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea, deriving largely from a switch from pre-contact times becoming meshed with colonial and post-colonial circumstances. Anne Kgoersgaard and Eric Venbrux show us how rituals centering on grave sites in Northern Europe manage the complex transitions from life to death. They provide a fresh perspective on the study of mortuary practices and how they are designed to help the living cope with the loss of kin. Thomas Widlok

persuasively argues for the importance of generalized sharing in ritual practices rather than themes of more balanced exchange that are prominent in Pacific Island cultures. We note here that sharing is also an important part of these Pacific cultures, in conjunction with and counterpoint to contexts of balanced or agonistic exchange. Sanjoy and Shampa Mazumdar reveal an aspect of ritual studies centered on a local Hindu temple in California that they have investigated. Their study highlights a feature that is actually widespread in these chapters, that is, the sense of ‘cultural intimacy’ which they persuasively exemplify. Here we are adopting Michael Herzfeld’s concept of cultural intimacy which he applied to the inner workings of cultural processes as opposed to their external manifestations (Herzfeld 1997). The special knowledge that is characteristic of participant observation is involved here. The Mazumdars bring out well the continuity of values and senses of identity in the temple practices, as well as their creative adjustment to the context.

The studies here work accordingly from inside the phenomena discussed. They emerge from the inner working of the topics rather than the imposition of an external framework. We may recognize this as an example of the long-term ‘interpretive shift’ in anthropology generally. Anne-Christine Hornborg’s chapter on designing rituals for modelling the self can be seen as signaling this tradition of work, with its focus on the inner self rather than on external social roles. John Traphagan pursues a similar theme but with more emphasis on the social dimensions of rituals for building up masculinity. Nigel Rapport takes the perspective in a different direction, focusing on the religious performance of personal rituals that express inner selves and deepening our understanding of the meaning of terms such as ‘home’, defined as where individuals feel most comfortable. Rapport teases out a range of important insights from the quotidian rituals he discusses. Simon Coleman, in an innovative discussion emergent from his long-term fieldwork in Sweden, extensively teases out the co-existence of holistic and partial strands of allegiance and affiliation among Pentecostalist ‘believers’. While Pentecostalism might imply a commitment to exclusive forms of belief and ritual, Coleman finds that a more intimate knowledge reveals that individuals combine elements from other traditions quietly built into the broader fabrics of their lives. This observation can be applied further to elucidate how Pentecostalists in Highlands Papua New Guinea unobtrusively incorporate powerful elements from indigenous cultural practices into Christian ways, such that they both publicly proclaim their separation from old indigenous life-worlds and privately re-enter these worlds via the telling and discussion of dreams involving their deceased kinsfolk. Coleman’s exposition neatly brings together a re-examination of many salient themes in the analysis of complexities in the structuring of Pentecostalist identities, arranged under the rubric of partiality. Anna Fedele’s chapter on Magdalene pilgrimages in Portugal adds to the extensive literature on this topic by stressing a whole range of themes emergent from her long-term fieldwork, dealing with creative ritual activities which she aptly calls ‘ritual crafting’, operative both in contexts where a freedom of ritual expression is encouraged and

ones in which it is constrained. Fedele also explores the underlying expression of Goddess spirituality in the appropriation by Magdalene pilgrims of rituals at Catholic sites. At the most general level, she finds that pilgrims are seeking to deal with issues of vulnerability and suffering in their life experiences, like Anne Groeneth's refugees, who also have made a life-changing movement between locations

Our own two pieces in the volume pursue further themes. One has to do with ritual and cognition, arguing that rituals do inevitably entail special types of cognition, and that the inner movement of rituals can best be seen when we unpack them as kinds of performances, persuasive and appealing sequences like those in a dance or theater play. Victor Turner's notions of the ludic and of dramas in general click in here (Turner 1982). We introduce also two concepts that assist in understanding how holistic meanings are built up through embodied practice: the concepts of abduction developed by Charles Peirce, and prehension developed by Roy Ellen. The other theme has to do with studies on cases of transformations in exchange practices and death rituals in the Hagen area of Highlands Papua New Guinea, combining expositions of change and continuity in a single tableau of ethnographic histories centered on the building of elaborate tombs as new markers of social status and political relations, 'frozen' versions of claims and disputes among land-based groups. Old and new forms and values are pressed together into a new shape in these material structures mimicking Christian 'Western' forms.

The idea of ritual as performance further ties in with the point that rituals function as a kind of 'cultural bias', expressed intentionally as signs of events. Rituals try to tell us how to view the world and react to it, and they exercise their persuasion through intimate performances that draw their spectators and performers in, redefining self and world by this means.

Roger Lohmann, in his intricate history of charismatic Christian practices among the Asabano of Duranmin in Papua New Guinea, convincingly shows how charismatic bursts of energy are incorporated over time into stable patterns of religious activity, partly through the institutional sharing of dream experiences that draw on images of angels and the Holy Spirit to give shape to people's understandings and aspirations. Lohmann remarkably combines synchronic and diachronic themes to show how charisma is created and reproduced over time in Asabano Christianity. He provides a time depth from his fieldwork that transcends the 'snapshot' effects of Joel Robbins' early work among the Urapmin (Robbins 2004).

We recommend these studies, then, as a means of recognizing a contemporary trend in analysis that combines objective and subjective modes of expression, with an emphasis on the subjective and interpretive side, bringing us first back to Clifford Geertz and then to 'cultural intimacy' (Herzfeld 1997). Throughout, our approach is akin to that which we developed in our co-authored book on theory in anthropology: whatever grand theory we choose to espouse or oppose, the modality in which we do this needs to be 'mindful'; that is to say, thoughtful with regard to the linkage of our thoughts

with the worlds the people studied live in (Stewart and Strathern 2017: 92). Those worlds are always changing, and this is instantiated in the life of rituals. The *Journal of Ritual Studies* has carried many articles pertaining to this observation over the quarter century in which we have maintained it under our editorship. We select just two of these as examples.

The first is by Sabina Magliocco, guest-edited in a Special Issue edited by Anna Fedele and herself (Magliocco 2014: 1–8), with the title ‘Ritual Creativity, Emotions and the Body’. Magliocco notes that with the growing secularization of society a sense of a ritual gap has arisen, and new rituals are being crafted to repair this gap, especially she suggests by women who are experiencing disempowerment over their lives through medicalization and neoliberal globalization. New rituals are developed in response to this situation. It is remarkable to think that today in 2021 a much more immediate threat to sociality in general and to specific forms of ritualization has emerged from the Coronavirus pandemic.

The second article is by Santi Rozario, in *Journal of Ritual Studies* 30 (1) 2016: 89–99, guest-edited by Geoffrey Samuel, Ann R. David and herself, with the title ‘Transformation of the Cult of St. Anthony in Padua in a Popular Centre of Pilgrimage in Rural Bangladesh’. The cult was brought to Bangladesh in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries CE by Portuguese Catholic missionaries. Over time it has grown in popularity, and has incorporated Bangladeshi followers who are not Catholics, while still differentiating these followers from Muslims. The process is inflected by the Catholic Church’s policy of encouraging ‘inculturation’ of Christianity with indigenous cultural themes, in this case also respecting the Muslim-Hindu divide while expanding the Catholic rituals at the site, resulting in ever greater numbers of devotees and pilgrims. The transformation in scale is connected with historical changes in the wider ethnic politics of the region.

We can juxtapose these two articles with a very thoughtful review by Ton Otto of arguments about tradition and agency in Pacific societies (Otto 2017: 36–57). In the course of reviewing well-traversed debates about tradition, ideology, custom, and agency, he notes that tradition is often emphasized when people are actually strongly involved in processes of change; so tradition, the supposed locus of continuity, is itself a part of the dynamics of change and its ritual concomitants. We come back here to what Paul Post calls ritual dynamics, incorporating continuity and change together in a single complex of actions and processes.

REFERENCES

- Bell, Catherine. 1997. *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Bell, Catherine. 2007. *Teaching Ritual*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Boas, Franz. 1966. *Kwakiutl Ethnography*, edited by Helen Codere. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

- Durkheim, Emile. 1965 [1915]. *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, translated by J. W. Swain. New York: The Free press.
- Frazer, Sir James G. 1958 [1922]. *The Golden Bough*, abridged edition in one volume. New York: The Macmillan Company, sixth printing.
- Geertz, Clifford. 2017 [1973]. *The Interpretation of Cultures*, 3rd ed. New York: Basic Books.
- Gennep, Arnold van. 1960 [1908]. *The Rites of Passage*, translated by Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee, with an Introduction by Solon T. Kimball. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Grimes, Ronald L. 1996. "Ritual Criticism and Infelicitous Performance." In *Readings in Ritual Studies*, edited by R. Grimes, 279–292. Hoboken, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc.
- Grimes, Ronald L. 2014. *The Craft of Ritual Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Herzfeld, Michael. 1997. *Cultural Intimacy: Social Poetics in the Nation-State*. New York: Routledge.
- Hüsken, Ute (ed.). (2007). *When Rituals Go Wrong. Mistakes, Failure, and the Dynamics of Ritual*. Leiden: Brill.
- Journal of Ritual Studies*, Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew J. Strathern Co-Editors. Available from JSTOR and ATLASerials.
- Levi-Strauss, Claude. 1978. *Myth and Meaning*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Magliocco, Sabina. 2014. "Introduction: Creativity, Emotions and the Body." *Journal of Ritual Studies* 28 (2): 1–8.
- Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1922. *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.
- McClymond, Kathryn. 2008. *Beyond Sacred Violence. A Comparative Study of Sacrifice*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- McClymond, Kathryn T. 2016. *Ritual Gone Wrong: What We Learn from Ritual Disruption*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Morgan, Lewis Henry. 1871. *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Otto, Ton. 2017. "Rethinking Tradition: Invention, Cultural Continuity and Agency." In *Experiencing New Worlds*, edited by Jürg Wassmann and Katharine Stockhaus, 36–57. Oxford: BerghahnBooks.
- Post, Paul, and Martin Hoondert (eds.). 2019. *Absent Ritual. Exploring the Ambivalence and Dynamics of Ritual*. Durham, North Carolina: Carolina Academic Press.
- Radcliffe-Brown. 1965 [1952]. *Structure and Function in Primitive Society*. New York: The Free Press.
- Rappaport, Roy A. 1968. *Pigs for the Ancestors: Ritual in the Ecology of a New Guinea People*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Ritual Studies Series*, Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew J. Strathern Co-Editors, Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.
- Robbins, Joel. 2004. *Becoming Sinners: Christianity and Moral Torment in a Papua New Guinea Society*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Rozario, Santi. 2016. "Transformation of the Cult of St Anthony of Padua in a Popular Centre of Pilgrimage in Rural Bangladesh." *Journal of Ritual Studies* 30 (1): 89–99.
- Sax, William et al. 2010a. "Special Issues, Part 1 and Part 2, 'The Efficacy of Rituals'." *Journal of Ritual Studies* 24 (1) and 24 (2).

- Sax, William et al. 2010b. *The Problem of Ritual Efficacy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stewart, Pamela J., and Andrew Strathern. 2002. *Remaking the World: Myth, Mining and Ritual Change among the Duna of Papua New Guinea*. For, Smithsonian Series in Ethnographic Inquiry, Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press.
- Stewart, Pamela J., and Andrew Strathern (eds.). 2009. *Religious and Ritual Change: Cosmologies and Histories*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.
- Stewart, Pamela J., and Andrew Strathern. 2014. *Ritual: Key Concepts in Religion*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Stewart, Pamela J., and Andrew Strathern (eds.). (2016, originally published 2010). *Ritual* (The International Library of Essays in Anthropology). London: Routledge Publishing.
- Stewart, Pamela J., and Andrew Strathern. 2017. *Breaking the Frames: Anthropological Conundrums*. New York: Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Stewart, Pamela J., and Andrew Strathern. 2021. "Eco-Cosmologies: Renewable Energy." In *Dealing with Disaster: Perspectives from Eco-Cosmologies*, edited by Diana Riboli, Pamela J. Stewart, Andrew J. Strathern, and Davide Torri, 129–140. Palgrave Studies in Disaster Anthropology, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Strathern, Andrew. 1970. "Wiru penthonyms." *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 126 (1): 59–74.
- Strathern, Andrew, and Pamela J. Stewart. 1999. *The Spirit is Coming. A Photographic-Textual Exposition of the Female Sprit Cult Performance in Mt. Hagen*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh.
- Strathern, Andrew, and Pamela J. Stewart. 2001. "Rappaport's Maring: The Challenge of Ethnology." In *Ecology and the Sacred: Engaging the Anthropology of Roy Rappaport*, edited by Ellen Messner and Michael Lambek, 277–290. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Strathern, Andrew, and Pamela J. Stewart. 2004. *Empowering the Past, Confronting the Future, The Duna People of Papua New Guinea*. For, Contemporary Anthropology of Religion Series, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Strathern, Andrew, and Pamela J. Stewart. 2019. "When is Absence Indicative of Presence? Reflections on Ritual Intricacies". In *Absent Ritual: Exploring the Ambivalence and Dynamics of Ritual*, edited by Paul Post and Martin Hoondert, xi–xviii. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press.
- Tambiah, Stanley Jeyaraja. 1968. "The Magical Power of Words." *Man* 3 (2): 175–208.
- Turner, Edith L. B. 2006. *Among the Healers: Stories of Spiritual and Ritual Healing around the World*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishing.
- Turner, Victor. 1969. *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*. New York: Routledge Publishing.
- Turner, Victor. 1982. *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: PAJ Publications.
- Tylor, Sir Edward Burnett. 1970 [1871]. *Religion in Primitive Culture*. Introduction by Paul Radin. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith (reprint of *Primitive Culture*, 1958, vol. 2, originally published 1871, London: John Murray).

Part I

New Perspectives, Established Themes



Ritual Dream Sharing and Charismatic Church Routinization

Roger Ivar Lohmann

INTRODUCTION

A ritual regime can operate indefinitely if it provides periodic energetic bursts for motive power *and* stable social structures to direct that excitement toward repetition. If energetic bursts are too frequent, erratic, or powerful, the institutional framework that contains them is damaged. If the institutional structures are too constraining, bursts that could re-energize are squelched. In balance, each keeps the other going. Church services, like other ritual regimes, are social mechanisms for repeatedly expressing and re-encoding cultural scripts. As Schoenherr (1987) argues, a continuing stream of new and personal religious experiences prevent bureaucratic religion from becoming stolid and irrelevant. To be socially sustainable, the excitement of such novelties and the stability of traditions must both be present in mutually supporting proportions.

Charismatic churches are particularly open to the excitement of frequent, apparently divine manifestations in ordinary congregants during services. For charismatic Christians, charisma—compelling, personal display of apparently miraculous power—is supposed to be a continuing *part* of the routine, not a threat to it. Through public spirit possession, speaking in tongues, faith healing, and prophesy, charismatic church services appeal by continually

R. I. Lohmann (✉)
Trent University, Oshawa, ON, Canada
e-mail: rogerlohmann@trentu.ca

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature
Switzerland AG 2021

P. J. Stewart and A. J. Strathern (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook
of Anthropological Ritual Studies*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-76825-6_2

displaying exciting novelties. Furthermore, they characteristically democratize charismatic displays. Not just founders or current leaders, but *everyone* is supposed to display charismatic “gifts” from supernatural beings such as the Holy Spirit (Cox 1995: 81–83; Hunt et al. 1997a; Poewe 1994a). Leaders distribute the charisma to all members, allowing all to retain a sense of personal involvement and thrill. For example, Poloma found that charismatic excitement was maintained among Toronto Blessing charismatics by purposefully de-emphasizing leaders’ accomplishments (1997: 259). Indeed, the concentration of quasi-divine power in leaders of utopian communes has been linked to inhibited group survival (Brumann 2000).

While strong charismatic Christian church leaders are certainly common, they do not claim sole access to the supernatural. Rather, all members experience what they take for direct, experiential access to their god. Among the explanations offered for the popularity of these churches in different parts of the world, Stoll (1990) sees Latin American charismatic churches as a response to political oppression while Martin (1990, 1994) points to their role in giving strength to cope with problems of modernity. Chesnut (1997: 6) sees their apparent power over disease in faith healing to be the major draw. The pattern in these examples is that charismatic churches offer personal access to the supernatural, to provide power over life’s challenges. All members share this perceived power and base their group identity on a participatory consensus that contrasts with other hierarchical sodalities.

Lanternari (1973: 226) observes that in spiritual churches, “prayer-healing or faith-healing, as much as dreams and visions, operate as charismatic signifi-cants. Common followers as well as leaders can share both kinds of gifts.” For example, the East African Legio Maria movement provided all members with perceived religious power as converts found themselves actually able to see and communicate with Christian spirits via spirit possession (Schwartz 1994: 141). Likewise, the African Apostles, an international church in central Africa, arose from a charismatic leader’s promises of “visionary power and redemption” for all members in which religious ecstasies “occur throughout the worship ceremonies and are coordinated with intensive singing and preaching” (Jules-Rosette 1980: 3). The leader instituted communal trancing at appropriate points in the services and appointed official trancers who “examine each member and give visionary messages” (1980: 3).

According to Percy (1997: 206), a third of all Christians are charismatics. This boom followed the rise of Protestant Pentecostalism at the turn of the twentieth century (Mullins 1994: 99). Anderson (2013) identifies Pentecostalism as the world’s most rapidly expanding religious movement (see also Coleman and Hackett 2015). The term *charismatic* has been applied since the mid-twentieth century to churches that focus on public contact with the Holy Spirit, including Pentecostalists, regardless of denomination (Rubenstein 1996: 423). There are both Protestant and Catholic charismatics. The term refers to “all Christianity, from its beginning in the first century, that emphasized religious or spiritual experiences and the activities of the Holy

Spirit” (Poewe 1994b: 2). As Chesnut (1997: 176) explains, charismatics base their practice “on an event in the book of Acts in which the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles in tongues of fire, causing them to preach in languages previously unknown to them.”

Poloma (1997: 257) observes that charismatic Christianity “may be characterized as a social movement struggling against the forces of institutionalization.” As Hunt et al. (1997b: 12) note, excitement is the great strength of charismatic churches, yet this advantage can become a liability as they age. By making energetic outbursts so frequent in ritual, charismatic churches seem to continually expose their traditions to two sorts of challenges. First, loose cannons could fire on church canon. By assigning prophetic authority willy nilly, the potential increases for members to subvert church structure and dogma. If any automatic speaking or visions are equally likely to be accepted as divine revelations regardless of form or content, for example, their subversive potential overwhelms their potential for affirming excitement. Schmitt (1999: 275) observes how shared dream revelations can challenge religious institutions. “Dreams,” he writes, “as a medium providing immediate access to hidden forces and knowledge, tend to bypass mediation or even to deny its value. Dreams thus reveal the basic limits of ecclesiastical power, showing it incapable of controlling all the arcana of individual religious experience.” This danger has led some churches to decry the religious potential of dreams altogether, as Edgar (2015: 73) points out: “A longstanding Christian tradition dating in part to the 4th century CE viewed dreams as superstition, perhaps to prevent charismatic dreamers challenging the institution of the church.” Nevertheless, many Christian churches accept and promote religious dream sharing by members. Its potential threat can be neutralized by enculturated conventions that restrict the form and content of ritually displayed religious experiences within a range of variation that explores and tantalizes without going so far as to explicitly contradict and rebel against central dogma and liturgy. Pype (2011: 84), writing about dream sharing among Pentecostals in Kinshasa, observes that since “dreams...receive meaning in the narrative act,” the “Pentecostal management of dream interpretation is...part of the larger project of how Christian leaders organise the control of mimesis or of how reality should be represented and interpreted.”

A second sort of challenge that charismatic churches face is that frequent and widespread, high-energy charismatic displays are hard to maintain. Inevitable quiet periods appear boring—or worse—stripped of divine favor and inspiration. Ultimately, a way must be found to maintain the excitement, but at a sustainable level. Charismatic churches succeed when they create a fine, shifting, and interpenetrating balance of unique charisma and routine liturgy.

While some individuals are prone to public glossolalia, prophecy, and quivering, others are disinclined to such displays. Any church hoping to appeal to an entire community must provide a way to retain a full range of personalities, including more staid individuals. Indeed, even those who are prone to speaking in tongues (glossolalia) and public prophesying may find themselves