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Introduction

Modalities of transnational transcendence

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The rhetorical force of religious moods and motivations in contemporary society and human experience may be as compelling today as at any period in history. In the first half of the 20th century the thoughtful appreciation of religion was still perhaps best summarized in Freud's (1957[1928]) phrase 'the future of an illusion', expressing an anticipation that enlightened rationalism and sober secularism would render religion obsolete. By the second half of the century, the scene on the horizon was already much better captured by Peter Berger's (1969) phrase 'a rumor of angels', anticipating a resurgence of religious sensibility and a revitalized appeal of the transcendent. Indeed, the present global situation calls into question an understanding that the world is undergoing a progressive and irreversible secularization (Asad, 2003) or disenchantment (Gauchet, 1997). The sleeping giant of religion, whose perpetual dream is our collective dream as a species, has never died, and is now in the process of at least rolling over and at most leaping to its feet. Yet in one of the most vital contemporary arenas of scholarly debate in the human sciences, that which deals with world systems, transnationalism, and globalization, the role of religion remains understudied and under-theorized.

Are we in fact witnessing a resacralization or a re-enchantment on a planetary scale? If so, are the consequences for individuals de-alienation or remystification? While de-alienating possibilities may exist in principle, to suggest that contemporary global religious manifestations amount to authentic de-alienation would have the dubious methodological distinction of repeating the claims made by many of those religions themselves. Such religions are distinctive not because of their de-alienating potential, but because they are critical components in the ideological/religious dimension of a global social system. Insofar as religion is a cultural component of any social system, it would be a mistake not to recognize that religious developments must accompany the development of a planetarized social system that includes a global economic order, global communications, and global population movements and diasporas. Specifically, it would appear that the increasing articulation of the world social system generates an ideological impulse toward formulations of universal culture. What requires empirical determination are the conditions under which global religious phenomena have an agentive impetus toward the status of universality – toward becoming world religions in a literal sense – in contrast to conditions in which they are examples of religious ideology as
flickering reflections, reflexes, or epiphenomena of the global social reality. In either case, such religious phenomena constitute a significant part of the consciousness of the post-modern world system, and this can be judged to be a false consciousness in no more or less a sense than was religion in the classic era of industrializing nation-states.

In elaborating this problematic, I want first to remark on the difference between talking about ‘religion and globalization’ and talking about the ‘globalization of religion’. The former phrase implies the relation of religion and globalization as two separate analytic domains, with the sense of globalization being the dominant one of economic globalization. This is a globalization the institutional locus of which is the big four of the World Trade Organization, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development; the ideological engine of which is neo-liberal economic theory; and the technological apparatus of which is the internet. If this is the way the issue is framed, the assumption must be that religion will be considered insofar as it is a reaction to global economics. In its crudest form this would be a return to debates about the priority of the material or the ideal, with the question being prejudiced by the apparent secondary nature of religious developments, once again cast as epiphenomena or mystifications. The alternative is to understand globalization from the outset as a multidimensional process, with religion, popular culture, politics, and economics as necessarily coeval and intimately intertwined, as they are in the lives of actors responsible for bringing about globalization in the first place. At the very least, if it is granted that religion is a given in social reality, with the addition of a new global or planetary layer of social organization, religious activity will seek its own level within that layer on terms not entirely determined by other dimensions of social reality.

If instead of talking about globalization and religion our inquiry is cast in terms of the ‘globalization of religion’ we are at first spared the immediate assumption of a causal vector in favor of what might at least initially be taken for a purely descriptive endeavor. There is caution to be sounded here, too, though, for if this is the way the issue is framed, the assumption can too easily be that the cultural influence of globalization is unidirectional, from globalizing center to passive periphery, with religion a neo-colonial form of cultural imperialism. The empirical problematic in this case would be to determine whether this centrifugal impulse is toward the imposition or re-imposition of religious master narratives on a global scale, and whether such an impulse is bound to fragment like a shattered mirror as it becomes instantiated in local cultural settings. Again there is a viable alternative, which recognizes that once global channels are open, the flow of religious phenomena – symbols, ideas, practices, moods, motivations – is at least bidirectional, more likely multidirectional. We can think of this either in a kind of world-as-neural-network image in which religious manifestations can issue from any node and proceed in any direction, or in a kind of postmodern free-floating-signifier image in which religious impulses are decentered and float like dandelion seeds in the breeze of the cultural imaginary.

Particularly in a situation in which the globalization of religion has barely begun to be examined within the human sciences, the empirical determination of its conditions is a necessary first step. An initial question in this respect is to identify ‘what travels well’ across geographical and cultural space. This issue has to do with characteristics of religions and raises the question of what should count under the category of religion.
Certainly we must hold in mind the critique by Asad (1993) to the effect that the category of religion has its own history and can be given a universalized definition only at some intellectual risk. Such a critique does not require abandonment of the category, only that it be used wisely and reflectively. For my part I prefer a minimal understanding of religion as phenomenologically predicated on and culturally elaborated from a primordial sense of alterity or otherness which, insofar as it is an elementary structure of embodied existence, renders ‘religion’ an inevitable, perhaps even necessary, dimension of human experience (Csordas, 2004). Without commitment to this premise or any single definition of religion or religious experience, the contributors to this issue have no difficulty in identifying the phenomena they examine as religious.

This being said, we can propose two aspects of religions that must be attended to in determining whether or not they travel well, what I will call portable practice and transposable message. By portable practice I mean rites that can be easily learned, require relatively little esoteric knowledge or paraphernalia, are not held as proprietary or necessarily linked to a specific cultural context, and can be performed without commitment to an elaborate ideological or institutional apparatus. The many forms of yoga are perhaps the archetypal instances of portable practice, explicit bodily practices accompanied by more or less spiritual elaboration, and which may or may not form the basis for communal commitments or transformation of everyday life (Strauss, 2005). Chinese feng shui is another recently globalizing portable practice that, although it requires expertise in its performance, can be applied in any cultural setting in which the felicitous orientation of energy in space can be construed as appealing (Bruun, 2003). Among Native American peoples, consider the contrast between the Lakota and the Navajo. The Lakota sacred pipe ceremony is relatively more portable than any Navajo ceremony both because of its simplicity and because some individuals are willing to share it with other tribes and non-Indians, sometimes even traveling with it on the New Age circuit. Most Navajo ceremonies not only tend to require considerably more symbolic elaboration and complex paraphernalia, but tend to be regarded as relatively more distinctive to Navajo life within the territory defined by four sacred mountains, and sacred in the sense that they contain elements that must be kept secret and protected. It is thus likely that in contemporary society Lakota religion has greater potential to travel well than does Navajo religion.

By transposable message I mean that the basis of appeal contained in religious tenets, premises, or promises can find footing across a diversity of linguistic and cultural settings. I prefer the notion of transposability to those of transmissibility, transferability, or even translatability in part because its definition encompasses several of these ideas, and also in part because it includes the connotations of being susceptible to being transformed or reordered without being denatured, and the valuable musical metaphor of being performable in a different key. Whether a religious message is transposable and in what degree depends on either its plasticity (transformability) or generalizability (universality). In their emphasis on acquisition of material goods through spiritual means, Melanesian cargo cults and the contemporary Christian ‘prosperity gospel’ would appear to have much in common. Yet cargo cults had a clear limit of both geographical expansion and temporal viability, whereas the prosperity gospel has found a foothold in many corners of the contemporary world. Joel Robbins (2004a) has described a situation among the Urapmin of New Guinea in which the Christian notion of sin and moral
culpability was transposed in such a way as to transform the entire culture even in the absence of overt missionary activity from outside.

Beyond the characteristics of religions that determine whether they might travel well lies the question of the means by which they traverse geographical and cultural space. Perhaps foremost among these is missionization. The missionary enterprise can be said to have different qualities corresponding to the epochs of the initial spread of world religions, the colonial period, and the current postcolonial world (Keane, 2007). For example, as Keane notes, in postcolonial Christianity missionary activity often originates in non-western sources or occurs in revival movements among Christians (2007: 45). A second means through which the globalization of religion takes place is migration. Transnational population movements such as the forced transatlantic dislocation of sub-Saharan Africans in the colonial slave trade have powerful contemporary consequences (Matory, 2005), as do contemporary migrations of Muslim populations to Europe. To be distinguished both from overt missionization and the migration of populations is the mobility of individuals in the contemporary globalizing world. Travel between Brazil and the Netherlands resulted in expansion of the Santo Daime church to Europe, the mobility of Korean shamans creates a global reach for their activities, and the ability of American yoga practitioners to relocate in India results in a return globalization of Hindu practices from their instantiation abroad. Finally, mediatization is a critical means through which religions are globalized. Beyond television, radio, and print media, cassette tapes have been a powerful form for the spread of religious ideas in New Age, Christian, and Islamic circles. Such cassettes are the subject of a recent monograph by Hirschkind (2006) that deals with what we have called re-globalization of world religions through the formation of contemporary Islamic ‘counterpublics’. Potentially even more far-reaching, the internet is increasingly influential in globalizing religion. It has become the site of new social forms such as online Christian churches and communities and a network of followers of Yoruba deities, as well as virtual pilgrimages such as a version of the hajj and a trip to holy places in India (Hadden and Cowan, 2000; Campbell, 2001, 2005; Dawson and Cowan, 2004; Kalinock, 2006).

Given this preliminary outline of characteristics of religions that may or may not travel well and the means by which they travel, I would like to sketch four cultural modalities in which the globalization of religion is taking place, each of which suggests a somewhat different problematic for research. The first is that in which the local religious imagination takes up the encroachments of global economy and technology. Perhaps the classic image in this modality is ‘The Gods Must Be Crazy’ scenario from the film in which a Coca-Cola bottle littered from an airplane becomes an object of religious speculation for the Kalahari bushmen who pick it up. I’d like to suggest that an even more compelling image of this kind of reflexive response is Skylab, the American satellite that was in the process of falling back to earth in 1979–80. As its orbit decomposed there was no clear way to predict exactly where on the globe it would come down. The re-entry of Skylab became a truly global media event, signifying the global scope and the global threat of US technological domination. What came through only faintly and sporadically in media reports was that Skylab was also a global religious event. Thus in one part of the world Skylab became understood as an avenging angel of doom; in another as an evil spirit by which individuals could be possessed, and which could be used as a vile epithet in condemning enemies; in yet another Skylab was a bogeyman for
children, in the genre of ‘Skylab will fall on you if you don’t behave’. For a moment, Skylab thus embodied that awesome, powerful, and dangerous Other that Rudolf Otto identified as central to the idea of the holy – the alterity of globalization.

This kind of engagement of the religious imagination becomes ever more complex as global culture develops. To remain with the theme of objects from the sky, let me use as an example a Navajo scenario of local religious reasoning in dialogue with cosmopolitan current events. To understand the scenario we must first grasp two ethnographic facts. The first is that among Navajo, acquisition of sacred knowledge requires an exchange, a kind of honorific payment in which the apprentice acknowledges the value of the knowledge bestowed. If the knowledge is of an evil nature, for example knowledge that allows one to perform witchcraft, one must pay with the life of a loved one. A sacrifice must be made in which a relative will fall ill and die in consequence of the exchange of knowledge. The second ethnographic fact is that Navajos are highly skeptical of space travel, on the grounds both that humans were created to dwell on the earth’s surface and hence it is unnatural for us to venture beyond, and that the blackness of space is a realm of evil, in fact the realm to which evil is often dispatched by ceremonial means. Given this background, recall that during the summer of 1999 an event occurred which had an impact on the US national psyche in a way from which Navajos were hardly immune: the death in a plane crash of John Kennedy, Jr. For Navajos the question of why such an event occurred is not an idle rhetorical one, and among some of my acquaintances the answer was readily at hand, as I discovered one evening while watching the news on television with some Navajos, at home on their reservation. The report was of an historic launching of a NASA space shuttle captained for the first time by a woman. As we discussed this event it became clear that it was no coincidence that the shuttle mission was taking place within a week of the Kennedy death. The equation was elegant: if one must pay for evil knowledge with the death of a loved one, then a nation must pay for unnatural knowledge from an evil realm with the death of someone loved by the entire nation. Kennedy was sacrificed by the nation for knowledge from space – such is the Navajo philosophy of balance and harmony in nature.

A second modality of religious development in the context of globalization and global culture is one that we could call pan-indigenous. It results in some surprising juxtapositions – but surprising perhaps only because they take place at the initiative of those erstwhile people without history (Wolf, 1982) whose agency and ability to give voice the dominant society is still reluctant to acknowledge. Thus we are presented with the existence of a Hopi reggae society in which the residents of the ancient mesas embrace a kindred Rastafarian spirituality. In one concert under their auspices held in the late 1980s in Hopiland I was able to witness at the same moment the lithe swaying of Jamaican musicians on stage, the deep concentration of a Hopi audience standing impassively with arms folded, and the blissful rapture of white hippies whirling with abandon on the open gym floor of the Hopi Civic Center. From another direction, the Dalai Lama had visited Hopiland with the implicit message that the shared origin in a high mountain homeland had predisposed Tibetans and Hopis to a kindred spirituality. Meanwhile, a segment of the neighboring Navajos has since the 1980s supplemented their highly liturgical indigenous religion by regularly inviting Lakota medicine men to lead and train them in the Dionysian practice of the Plains Sun Dance. A final example is the appearance of an Aztec dancer in the style popular in the North American Chicano
cultural movement at the annual festival of the patron saint in the small Chiapas village of San Juan de Chamula, his feverish half-naked body dancing wildly in front of the church among the modestly clothed and distinctly local-minded peasants.

Of course, the transcendence of local boundaries by indigenous religious traditions is not limited to contacts among Third and Fourth World peoples. The current context of globalization includes the increasing likelihood of religious influence extending in a ‘reverse’ direction, from the margins to the metropole. The global spread of Yoruba religion is the prime example of this third modality of religious globalization (Matory, 1999; Cohen, 2002; Mahler, 2005). A highly elaborated, if decentralized, system of practices centered on a pantheon of morally ambiguous deities called orixas, its original expansion was a result of slavery and part of an earlier period of colonial globalization. Today it is neither confined by locality nor, strictly speaking, restricted to a ‘black Atlantic’ cultural zone, but has made inroads throughout the western hemisphere as far as the suburban living rooms of North America. From the heart of the Amazon and crossing the Atlantic from the opposite direction is another religion embodied in new churches such as the Uniao do Vegetal and the Santo Daime. This religion has incorporated the hallucinogenic ayahuasca as a sacrament in its rites, and has recently moved from its origin in Brazil to the cosmopolitan centers of Europe (Groisman, 2000). No more explicit examples can be given of the tenet that religious globalization is not a one-way street from center to periphery.

Fourth, we come to the so-called world religions and their trajectories within the cultural space of globalization. The question is of the ‘newness’ of globalization: certainly there is nothing special in talking about the globalization of a Catholicism, Buddhism, or Islam when these are religions that have been globalized for many centuries. Yet surely there is a profound difference between these premodern globalizations of religion and the postmodern globalization we are studying today. Consider the situation: in December 1997 the diplomatic supplement of the newspaper Le Monde published an article on the increasing popularity of Buddhism in France, citing a total of two and a half million adherents of Zen and Tibetan variants of the religion (Renon, 1997; cf. Etienne and Liogier, 1997). More than two thirds of this number were constituted by south-east Asian refugees from Vietnam and Cambodia, and these were augmented by an increasingly large number of indigenous French from all social classes and walks of life. Nearly 90 percent of the latter come from a Christian background, and appear to be in search of a more vibrant and living spirituality than they feel is offered by established churches, one that they claim allows them to enter into an authentic self-awareness or self-realization. On the other side of the spiritual coin, the 15 June 1998 edition of the New York Times published an article on the resident exorcist at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, noting the increasing demand for his services (Simons, 1998). Moreover, it notes that there is a formally appointed exorcist in each French diocese, and that there are five times more exorcists today than 20 years ago. Those who have recourse to exorcism include immigrants from Africa and the Caribbean as well as indigenous French. The author notes that priests attribute the increased demand to ‘social and cultural dislocation, the erosion of traditional religion, and the rise of sects and cults dealing in spiritism’, (p. ?) but also recognizes the influence of the Charismatic movement which since the end of the 1960s has popularized prayer for deliverance from evil spirits outside formally controlled ecclesiastical channels.
Perhaps what we are becoming able to see is not so much a resurgence of religion, a re-enchantment, or a resacralization. Perhaps we are instead simply beginning to recognize the same age-old waters of religion as they fill the newly constructed channels that flow between the local and global. Recall Appadurai’s invocation of ‘transnational irony’ in his anecdote of the long journey with his family back to India, only to learn upon arriving at the Meenaski Temple in Madurai that the priest with whom his wife had worked in previous years was currently in Houston (1996: 56–7). Barely 10 years old, this anecdote already appears quaint. For my part, having sketched the outlines of four cultural modalities of religion in global context – that of the Skylab engagement of local religious imagination with the encroachment of global culture, that of pan-indigenous interaction and crosstalk among indigenous religions and either ecumenical or conflictual encounter among world religions, that of ‘reverse’ religious influence from margin to metropole, and that of the re-globalization of world religions – there is one more aspect of the situation that we might entertain. In this sense our key phrase would have to be neither ‘globalization and religion’ nor ‘globalization of religion’ but ‘globalization as religion’.

There are both strong and weak senses in which we could elaborate this idea. The weak sense is an analogical one, in which we play with the notion that globalization is ‘like’ a religion or religious movement. Thus we might conceptualize an institution like the WTO or IMF as a global church or ecclesium, neo-liberal economics as a kind of canon law, world beat as a liturgical music of global culture, cyberspace as a privileged site of ritually altered global consciousness. But there is a stronger sense in which we can ask if globalization is in a fundamental sense itself a religious phenomenon, or at the very least if globalization necessarily has a religious dimension. Does it possess a mythic structure, an eschatological promise, a soteriological message, a magical spontaneity, a moral imperative, a dogmatic inevitability, a demonic urge, an inquisitional universality, a structure of alterity or Otherness that is at some level inescapably religious? Perhaps Skylab was not just a technological phenomenon but a religious one, and the religious glosses on its trajectory were not epiphenomenal sidelights but captured something deeper about its human meaning. There was indeed some awe-inspiring alterity about the fact that this technological artifact – the epitome, as it were, of human capability to achieve the orbital plane of existence – suddenly transcended the human capacity for control, losing its status as a product of human culture to become an object of unpredictable, and wholly Other, nature.

Formulated in this way the problematic lends a new sense, even a new urgency, to the question of whether global culture is to be considered as universal culture – might this mean universal in the sense of being dominated by a single master narrative, or universal in the sense that any element can be transposed onto or transported into any other cultural setting? Are we witnessing in these planetary religious phenomena the emergence of a ‘sanctified’ global culture in the process of generating its own mythos, or perhaps a re-enchanted world characterized by spiritual Balkanization and the eclipse of Enlightenment? Or as I suggested before, are we merely beginning to recognize the same age-old waters of religion as they seek their own level in the channels that flow between the local and global (maybe old wine in new skins is the appropriate metaphor). Perhaps in its religious dimension the edifice of globalization is a new Babel; if so, let us hope that the analyses we produce will indeed be global, and not garbled.
The time has most certainly arrived for serious theorization of religion and globalization, and the globalization of religion. Retracing our trajectory over 30 years since the advent of world systems theory, the sonority of religion that for much of this period remained a languid whisper has in the last decade become an insistent crescendo. The early literature on world systems theory, and later literature on globalization, typically touches only incidentally on religion and the sacred (Wallerstein, 1974, 1983, 1990; Meyer and Hannan, 1979; Bergeson, 1980, 1990; Chirot and Hall, 1982; Hannerz, 1989, 1992; Featherstone, 1990, 1991; Luhmann, 1990; King, 1991). Sustained attempts to identify the religious dimension of the global social system were relatively rare until the 1990s (Wuthnow, 1980; Douglas, 1982; Robertson and Chirico, 1985; Robertson, 1989, 1992; Robertson and Garrett, 1991; Csordas, 1992).

By the mid 1990s, three factors contributed to a virtual explosion of interest in religion and global culture. First was the sheer momentum of studies on globalization and transnationalism that often begged the question of, and thus eventually made it impossible to avoid, their religious dimension (Bhabha, 1994; Friedman, 1994; Griswold, 1994; Appadurai, 1996, 2004; Melucci, 1996; Ong, 1999; Mintz, 1998; Tomlinson, 1999; Tsing, 2000, 2005; Trouillot, 2001; Berger and Huntington, 2003; Pieterse, 2003). The second factor was the appearance of the first monograph-length theorization of the relation between religion and globalization (Beyer, 1994). The third was the seemingly sudden collective awareness among social scientists of the implications of Pentecostalism as a global social movement (Poewe, 1994; Csordas, 1995, 1997; Meyer, 1999; Coleman, 2000; Corten and Marshall-Fratani, 2001; Robbins, 2001, 2003, 2004a, 2004b). Since then the concern with religion and globalization has begun to be recognized as a central concern for the social sciences and anthropology in particular (van der Veer, 1996; Oro and Steil, 1997; Rudolph and Piscatori, 1997; Hefner, 1998; Meyer and Geschiere, 1999; Casanova, 2001; Hopkins et al., 2001; Wolfe, 2002; Juergensmeyer, 2003a, 2003b, 2006; Vasquez and Marquardt, 2003; Coleman and Collins, 2004; Beyer, 2006).

The articles collected here together issue a call for further development of a theory of religion in relation to globalization from the standpoint of anthropology, and hopefully constitute a step toward that theory. The phrase ‘transnational transcendence’ in our title is intended to point to the existence of modalities of religious intersubjectivity that transcend cultural borders and boundaries while forging new ones. Transnational religion is inherently compelling to its adherents, we would argue, insofar as traversing boundaries is an aspiration to the universal and simultaneously insofar as the intersubjective compact forged is an aspiration to the sacred. They are explicitly religious, but insofar as they are immersed in the political and economic, social and cultural, institutional and ideological they partake of and contribute to an emergent global social imaginary that may amount to the re-enchantment of the world. Here the distinction between transcendence and immanence breaks down, or reveals itself as artificial, in that we are forced to confront the immanence of alterity itself as the phenomenological kernel of religious consciousness and subjectivity (Csordas, 2004). Whether understood as an element of human nature or as an element of embodied existence, this alterity is the basis for the global religious resurgence.

The contribution by Otávio Velho engages the notion of missionization as developed within Christianity, clearly a globalizing practice in both the colonial and post-colonial
eras. Velho examines the theological notion of inculturation, and poses the question of the sense in which a paganized, non-artificial Christianity can be considered conservative. In doing so he introduces a notion of ‘productive anachronism’ that reciprocally allows us to see the emergence of colonial missionization in terms of contemporary globalization, and post-colonial globalization in terms of missionization. This methodology of anachronism does not rely on precedent and repetition in linear time, but requires a temporality characterized by folds and abductive connections, further problematizing the already vexed relation between tradition and modernity. Within this temporal perspective, the notion of a ‘paganized Christianity’ simultaneously engages the modality of reverse flow of religious influence and the re-globalization of world religions as I outlined previously. Velho touches on the case of Brazil to show that country’s status as a post-colonial source of globalizing spiritual practices surrounding the drug ayahuasca, the martial art capoeira, and the democratization of apparitions (particularly of the Virgin Mary) within Catholicism.

My own contribution updates an ongoing attempt to follow the transnational expansion of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal movement as a case in which cultural dynamics are played out between center and periphery, global and local, tradition and modernity, universal culture and postmodern cultural fragmentation. The focus of this article is a comparison of the movement’s instantiations in Brazil, India, and Nigeria. Here we encounter portable practice such as speaking in tongues and faith healing, along with a transposable message, in conjunction with missionization, mediatization and the mobility of individual religious adherents, in an instance of a reglobalizing world religion. In posing the question of whether the Charismatic Renewal is an instance of re-enchantment and resacralization, the discussion adds further specificity to some of Velho’s reflections on productive anachronism. Insofar as the Catholic Church was history’s first global religious institution, how can we understand a global religious movement that is taking place within this institution? Is the Church a kind of pre-existing global trellis upon which the movement grows vine-like, does it reproduce patterns first established by the Church’s early spread, or does it reflect entirely contemporary processes? What are relative advantages of understanding the international expansion of the Charismatic renewal in terms of missionization or in terms of the spread of a religious movement? Certainly the Charismatic Renewal exhibits elements of Velho’s paganized Christianity, as in the events I describe surrounding the Zambian Archbishop Emanuel Milingo. In the case of Brazil, which is also discussed by Velho, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal both occupies some of the same spiritual frontier as the Protestant Pentecostal churches and revitalizes traditional Catholic devotion to the Virgin Mary.

Peter van der Veer takes up the issue of globalizing Asian spiritual/somatic practices, specifically Indian yoga and Chinese qi gong. With respect to the elements of religious globalization outlined above, this discussion both identifies a distinct type of portable practice and exemplifies the reglobalization of world religions, Indian and Chinese. From a historical perspective as well as with respect to the contemporary scene, van der Veer uses the bodily disciplines as touchstones for comparing different versions of encounter between spiritual nationalism and imperial modernity. He demonstrates how the practices partake of both religion and politics, and are not only spiritual practices but commercial products. In this respect the argument does not focus on what we have called the globalization of religion, but offers an intriguing perspective on the relation between
religion and globalization. This relation can be seen in terms of implicit polarities between spirituality and rationality, devotion and marketing, health and political identity. For van der Veer it is also evident in an explicit alignment of yoga with the development of global capital, and more generally in the freeing of spiritual movements to organize civil society by the liberalization of the Indian and Chinese economies through the influence of global capitalism. Insofar as these practices are genuinely widespread and can take on the structure of marketable commodities, they can be seen as elements of an incipient universal culture as discussed above, in contrast to Pentecostalism’s requisite of an explicit life commitment, Marian devotion’s presupposition of Catholic cultural background, and as will be seen in our final contribution, trans-Mediterranean migration’s embeddedness in an Islamic lifeworld.

Stefania Pandolfo discusses an aspect of the global re-enchantment of the world reflected in the lives of Moroccan street youth in Casablanca and Rabat. For Pandolfo, the youths’ pragmatic and imaginal struggle to transcend stifling material, emotional, and spiritual conditions by transnational flight from Morocco to Europe is encapsulated in the metaphor of l-harg, ‘the burning’. Passing through a series of key terms in the discourse of these youth – death, suicide, jihad, despair, being crushed, being touched by the jinn, nerves, awareness – Pandolfo shows that Islamic theology is not only a pursuit of bearded scholars, but has a street life as an idiom of suffering and as the means for clinging tenuously to a life surrounded by death. She engages the work of Arab psychoanalysts, already a transnational pursuit, and the philosophy of al-Ghazali to discuss subjectivity and alterity among these youths in the wake of the bombings of 16 May 2003 in Casablanca. She demonstrates that the transcendence of national boundaries through migration is undergirded by a theological debate over whether migration attempts are a heroic transcendence toward freedom or dark transcendence of suicide. Migration is thus as much an act fraught with spiritual preconditions and consequences as one determined by the economic exigencies of postcolonial economics or global capitalism.

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