

pluralism that circulate nationally and even globally – stands alone in the absence of a meaningful treatment of the same in Newfoundland (or anglophone Canada generally). In sum, despite these lacunae, *Beyond Accommodation* offers a useful contrast to the more politically oriented approach of reasonable accommodation. It shows the potential for ethnographic research to highlight the local particularities of secular political discourses and frameworks and, in doing so, to productively critique representations of secular neutrality claims that tend to reproduce a kind of ‘view from nowhere’.

Lemons, Katherine. *Divorcing Traditions: Islamic Marriage Law and the Making of Indian Secularism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019, 232 pages.

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Divorcing Traditions: Islamic Marriage Law and the Making of Indian Secularism is a masterful ethnographic voyage into multiple sites of law that impact divorcing minority Muslims in Delhi, India. Katherine Lemons’s ethnography includes two Hanafi-based *dar ul-qazas* (non-state Islamic legal institutions), a women’s council, a fatwa-granting office and a Sufi healing practice. Divorce serves as a generative site to consider the secular Indian state’s interaction with personal and Islamic law and gender politics. As Lemons demonstrates, divorce represents a major economic and financial rupture for women, their kin, their community and the state. *Talaq ul-ba’in* (unilateral divorce by men, also known as triple *talaq*) raises particular anxieties.

Before turning to the specifics of Lemons’s ethnography, I note *Divorcing Traditions*’ significant contributions to secularism studies. First, Lemons focuses on contemporary India, a context that has received insufficient attention in the English-language literature. Second, Lemons shows the centrality of kinship to secular governance, particularly in how the secular government renders marriage (and divorce) as familial, private and religious. Third, Lemons argues that “Indian secularism brings into question the assumed centrality of the state to secularism” (26). At first glance, *qazis* (judges) and *muftis* (jurists) appear as religious actors and therefore separate from the state, but they too engage in articulating secularism. Finally, Lemons contends that Indian secularism relies on the minority status of Muslims. Religious divorce for Indian Muslim minorities thus renders their religiosity as “the mark of inassimilable difference and an instrument for securing the ostensibly private family as the source of financial support and care” (64). This entrenchment of minority difference means that interreligious solidarity in India is impeded.

The book’s first section, focused on the state, introduces how family disputes among Indian Muslims in Delhi most often involve consultation with a religious legal scholar rather than state court or the registration of complaints with police. In addition to their religious authority – judgments are presented as binding in the eyes of God – *dar ul-qazas* (Islamic law courts) are local and often offer free consultation with fewer intermediaries. Again, while imagined as separate from state legal

adjudication and jurisprudence, Lemons shows how *dar ul-qazas* are entangled with the state. The second chapter examines divorce through the lens of a *mahila panchayat*, an NGO-run women’s council that offers mediation for couples. This space is not part of the state’s formal legal apparatus but draws on legislation on domestic violence as it draws up contracts. Lemons beautifully captures the tension laden in the advice granted by the council, insofar as it typically offers a “pragmatic response to conditions of poverty [for women following divorce] on the one hand, and on the other, the importance of living out one’s desires” (52).

The second section turns to Lemons’s observations of hearings and case files at two *shari’a* courts in two predominantly Muslim neighbourhoods in Delhi. These courts are especially effective in rendering the family as private and as best governed by religious norms. Because of the patriarchal *talaq*, women typically bring forward cases seeking divorce. Lemons offers a feminist analysis in considering how the *qazis* do not spend much time on allegations of violence and notes that the broader tone encourages litigants to reconcile. Ultimately, the “family values” undergirding the cases she examines “privilege a view of women as wives to be protected by marriage [within an] affinal family” (91). Similarly, she notes how the financial and custody arrangements of divorce are addressed in fatwas only if explicitly raised in the request. Around since Independence and protected by laws promoting the freedom of religion, alternate dispute resolution is a key part of the “ideological fiction” of the Indian secular state (101), which Chapter 4 highlights. In actively situating kinship as religiously based, the *dar ul-qazas* reinforce the notion that problems of property and finances are outside state jurisdiction.

The third section describes muftis who grant fatwas and offer spiritual healing, including treatments with amulets and other ritual prescriptions. These services are of interest to the state precisely because they are carried out extrajudicially, but remain authoritative as sources of moral guidance and ethical self-making. Chapter 5 is the heart of this book. It focuses on how muftis respond to different questions posed regarding *talaq ul-ba’in* through fatwas. Lemons analyses 60 fatwas related to divorce copied for her by the mufti. She shares several translated evocative *istiftas* (requests) and the notably short fatwas issued in response. Lemons undertakes fascinating discursive analysis of these questions and judgments’ language (a mixture of Farsi and Arabic) and tone, drawing on speech act theory. She also considers the secularism of these fatwas, an argument she makes with reference to work by Hussein Ali Agrama (2012) on fatwas in Cairo. Here, Lemons brilliantly shows that, in part because fatwa councils cannot be separated from political work, previous scholarship’s assumption of the “secular premise that divorce and reconciliation are private matters that can be separate from the state’s interest in the family” (151) is too simplistic. In contrast, Lemons contends that fatwas in India invoke the secular. Religious law therefore constitutes both religion and law and is part of the practical labour of the secular.

The last chapter introduces the reader to a Sufi healer, Mufti Ahmed. Here, Lemons’s analysis of speech acts takes a captivatingly different turn: she situates the mufti’s metaphor-based speech acts as producing “the relations (*ta’al-luqat*) through which God’s power travels” (171) and that more broadly address not only humans but also *jinn*, the evil eye

and non-humans. Lemons describes how individuals seek to ingest the mufti's holy words through the *ta'wiz* (small rectangular pieces of paper inscribed with holy words) through their bodies, whether through food, drink, breath or other forms of contact. Lemons draws on Shoshana Felman's (*The Scandal of the Speaking Body: Don Juan with J.L. Austin, or Seduction in Two Languages*, 2nd ed., 2002) and Veena Das's (*Life and Words: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*, 2007) work to show how language haunts the body in both semantic and talismanic ways (188). Despite the obvious differences between fatwa-granting and healing practices in their form and reception, Lemons argues for their structural similarity related to kinship.

The impressive diversity of locales in this ethnography effectively maps the plurality of traditions of divorce adjudication for Muslims in India, which Lemons views as expressions of Indian secularism. By situating Islamic law as decidedly Indian and not as an aberration, Lemons situates Muslim personal law (which itself is plural and vast) as part of the Indian legal system and not, as it often appears, as a "red herring" (195). In particular, she shows how Muslim women's "inequality is taken as a sign of the pathology of Muslim kinship," which becomes evidence "of the community's failure to be fully modern and fully Indian" (37).

This book is dense and based on detailed research. Yet, there would have been space to include more about how Lemons negotiated access to these spaces. How, for example, did she negotiate the copying of case records? How did her positionality shape her results? Who were the muftis? How did they live? What was their training? How did they respond to Lemons and her project?

Divorcing Traditions will appeal to many readers, whether they are interested in contemporary Indian politics and daily life, the politics of law and gender, fatwa and divorce, or the practical matrices of secularism. The book offers testament to the perpetuation of gender inequality (here expressed through marriage and divorce) as a hallmark of the secular. Most significantly, it makes clear that kinship can no longer be ignored in any serious account of the workings of secularism, in India or elsewhere.

Reference

Agrama, Hussein Ali. 2012. *Questioning Secularism: Islam, Sovereignty, and the Rule of Law in Modern Egypt*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Charles Stépanoff, *Voyager dans l'invisible. Techniques chamaniques de l'imagination*. Paris, La Découverte, 2019, 464 pages.

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Spécialiste du chamanisme sibérien, Charles Stépanoff est maître de conférence à l'École pratique des hautes études à Paris. Ayant réalisé une thèse de doctorat auprès de Roberte Hamayon, Stépanoff s'est d'abord intéressé à la pragmatique rituelle des chamanes Touva de Sibérie du Sud en adoptant une

perspective cognitive. Cet aspect de son travail a fait l'objet d'une monographie publiée en 2014. Son plus récent ouvrage *Voyager dans l'invisible. Techniques chamaniques de l'imagination* est une enquête beaucoup plus ambitieuse puisqu'elle propose une analyse qui fait la synthèse des pratiques chamaniques de Sibérie. Cet examen est basé sur les enquêtes ethnographiques de l'auteur, mais aussi et surtout sur une revue de la littérature ethnographique classique, majoritairement produite en russe, et sur un travail d'analyse d'artefacts trouvés dans différents musées. Le travail de synthèse de Stépanoff l'amène à s'intéresser plus particulièrement à ce qu'il nomme les « techniques de l'imagination » des chamanes (c'est-à-dire le rêve, les hallucinogènes, les rituels, les costumes, les tambours, etc.) pour diviser le chamanisme sibérien en deux grandes tendances : le chamanisme hétérarchique et le chamanisme hiérarchique.

Sur le plan de la théorie, Charles Stépanoff aborde l'imaginaire comme un outil pour accéder à la perspective de l'autre, humain ou non humain. Pour l'auteur, l'imaginaire n'est pas opposable au réel et doit être compris comme une forme d'interaction avec le monde, réalisée sur le mode mental et souvent exécutée de façon prospective. Dans le contexte de la chasse, l'imagination se dresse au fondement des rapports aux animaux et agit « comme un organe sensoriel supplémentaire nous permettant de nous relier aux mondes non humains » (47). Pour analyser les phénomènes reliés à l'imaginaire, Stépanoff propose une typologie organisée autour de deux critères : la richesse de l'amorce et la capacité d'action du sujet (54). Lorsque les amorces sont riches, l'auteur parle d'imagination guidée (voir un film, écouter une histoire, etc.) et, au contraire, lorsqu'elles sont pauvres, il propose de parler d'imagination exploratoire (faire des projets, inventer une histoire, etc.). Quant à l'implication du sujet, elle se décline en deux autres formes d'imagination : l'imagination contemplative (lorsque le sujet est passif, comme lors de la lecture d'un roman) et l'imagination agentive (lorsque le sujet est actif, comme lorsqu'on joue à un jeu vidéo). Les deux critères se croisent et une activité imaginative peut être décrite, par exemple, comme étant guidée et contemplative. Ce système de classification des pratiques reliées à l'imaginaire est proposé par Stépanoff dans le but d'aborder les écologies de l'imagination associées aux différentes traditions culturelles, un peu à la manière de l'écologie des relations proposée par Philippe Descola (2005).

L'apport majeur de ce livre est la distinction qu'il propose entre chamanisme hiérarchique et chamanisme hétérarchique. Pour l'auteur, cette distinction représente deux écologies de l'imagination distinctes dont la différence fondamentale se situe au niveau de la délégation des pratiques imaginatives. En effet, dans le chamanisme hiérarchique, le chamane a la posture d'un spécialiste autorisé par la collectivité : il prend en charge les pratiques reliées à l'imaginaire chamanique au nom de sa communauté. Dans le chamanisme hétérarchique, la prise en charge de ces pratiques est beaucoup plus diffuse : il s'agit d'un « monde où il existe un continuum de compétences entre spécialistes et non-spécialistes et où les positions sont réversibles » (154). Ces deux types de chamanisme s'opposent également par des pratiques et des institutions différentes. Le chamanisme hétérarchique est caractérisé par des absences (pas de transmission héréditaire du statut de chamane, pas de rituel d'investiture, pas de costume rituel, le tambour n'est pas réservé