

restricted to the ‘mechanics’ of offering and receiving treatment, but more crucially to the ways in which clinicians and infertile couples make sense of the cultural context” (p. 241), this would be true for the long journey towards conception.

I agree with the author that this insightful work is a milestone in the study of infertility in India, and I invite further research, discussion, and contributions to deepen understanding of the cultural meanings of infertility and reproductive technologies. Only a few works have attempted to comprehensively unravel the complex dimensions of infertility in India, and thus, *Conceptions: Infertility and Procreative Technologies in India* will be of interest not only to scholars who focus on India, but also to medical anthropologists, science and technology studies (STS), and gender studies specialists.

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Charismatic Monks of Lanna Buddhism

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This volume, *Charismatic Monks of Lanna Buddhism*, edited by Paul T. Cohen, brings together contributions of scholars articulating the contours of Northern Thai Buddhism (rooted in the Lanna traditions of Chiang Mai) beginning in the nineteenth century and extending until the present. The contributions in this volume, when taken together, offer the reader a set of sophisticated portraits detailing how religious movements, emergent in modern(izing) Northern Thailand, have coalesced around the leadership of charismatic monks. These movements are often constituted by ethnic minority groups, which have struggled to develop a cohesive identity within the context of the modern nation-state system in Southeast Asia. Each chapter of this volume contributes to a more comprehensive conception of the spiritual practices and material development by which these holy men (*ton bun*) and their followers reshaped conceptions of religious community and cultural identity both in Northern Thailand and contiguous regions of Myanmar.

At the outset, Cohen notes the presence of several issues/themes, which recur throughout the volume. These include 1) the qualities which define the charismatic monk, 2) adaptations of classical Buddhist cosmologies to the modern Lanna context, 3) the close relationship between spiritual practice and material development, 4) the centrality of non-Tai minorities among the constituencies of charismatic monks, and 5) the intimate relationship between modernity and charismatic religiosity.

The first two chapters lay out the historical context against which the charismatic leadership of the *khruha* (“venerated teacher”) typology developed (p. 7). In the first chapter, Katherine Bowie sets the stage for the rest of the volume with her detailed study of the figure of Khruba Siwichai (1878–1938) in the context of the northern *sangha* (“Buddhist monastic order”). According to Bowie, Khruba Siwichai was regarded by his contemporaries in Chiang Mai as a holy man because of his resistance to attempts by the Thai state to bring the northern *sangha* under the control of the Buddhist authorities in Bangkok. His reputation as a defender of the northern *sangha* was further solidified by the “restoration or construction of over 100 northern temples ...” (p. 27). And, according to Bowie, his status as a defender

¹Marcia Inhorn, *Quest for Conception: Gender, Infertility and Egyptian Medical Traditions* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), and *Infertility and Patriarchy: The Cultural Politics of Gender and Family Life in Egypt* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996).

of Lanna against the encroachment of the centralized state, and as builder of northern holy sites, was consistent with the long-held identity of the northern *sangha* as a cohesive and independent body.

In the second chapter, Cohen builds upon Bowie's portrait of Siwichai, by means of a contrast between the template for *ton bun* charismatic monks and the *kammathan* ("meditative") tradition. While both the *kammathan* and *ton bun* traditions prized ascetic discipline, the former disliked building projects and development work, while the latter embraced them as part of their movement identity. Anthony Irwin, in the third chapter of the book, focuses on Lanna charisma as instantiated in the building projects of the twentieth-century *ton bun* successors to Siwichai, Khruba Kham La, and Khruba Intha. The charisma (Thai *barami*) of these monastic holy men was predicated on their ability to gather resources for the construction and reconstruction of Buddhist holy sites. And it was the joint participation of these two monks in the building and rebuilding of Buddhist sites that came to define their relationship to one another and to the modern *ton bun* tradition, writ large.

In the fourth chapter, Mikael Gravers carefully examines how what he calls the "Buddhist cosmological imaginary" (p. 118) is adapted to fit the contemporary context of a revivalist and millenarian indigenous community called Huai Tom. Built from scratch as a sacred urban space in northern Thailand, "Huai Tom was constructed after the mandala principle, the classical design for a city-state (*muang*), with four gates and straight streets and a center in the form of a *lak muang* temple (that is, a city pillar dedicated to King Indra, who will cleanse the world of sin before the arrival of Ariya Metteya)" (p. 129). This city was built in 1970 by the charismatic monk Khruba Wong and is inhabited primarily by his followers, displaced and socio-economically disadvantaged members of the Karen ethnic minority. Meditation, among other practices for residents, operates as "ritual enforcement of the cosmological imaginary and an enhancement of morality, individually and collectively" (p. 136). Gravers's essay is particularly valuable to the reader as a hermeneutical guidepost, as he exemplifies how one might best anchor theoretical conceptualizations from anthropology, religious studies, and political science to the concrete circumstances of a given community. His insight, drawing upon the work of Comaroff,¹ that charismatic leadership allows for "traditional cosmology and rituals" in the midst of modernity (p. 120), in many respects, sets the tone for the subsequent studies in the volume.

The remaining chapters in the book negotiate themes that fall roughly under category of "indigenous modernity" Gravers alludes to in his piece. Referencing the work of David McMahan,² Gravers understands "indigenous modernity" in the context of northern Thai religiosity as a "hybrid form combining traditional Buddhist cosmology, modern spirituality, 'development,' and material means, in a conscious self-reflection on how to cope with rapid social changes and globalization" (p. 116). Kwanchewan Buadaeng articulates these themes of indigenous modernity with respect to the religious movement headed by the Khruba, U Thuzana. In her piece, Kwanchewan employs the Deleuzian concept of "assemblage" (p. 149) in order to provide an account of how U Thuzana's movement functions cohesively despite the fact that it is constituted by a variety of constituencies often separated by both transnational boundaries and yawning socio-economic differences.

Sean Ashley focuses on how the themes of indigenous modernity play out in the case of the Dara'ang ethnic minority. In this piece, Ashley considers not only the agency of the charismatic monks in their role as contributors to the sacred architecture embraced by their supporters, but also the social roles applied to the Khruba by their Dara'ang followers. Here, Ashley incorporates into his analysis the key insight that followers are not merely passive receivers of a given set of narratives about their holy man, but agents who continually remake the symbolic function of the charismatic monk. Amporn Jirattikorn takes on that omnipresent hermeneutical lens invoked in discussions of religious modernity, the discourse of the nation-state. Amporn challenges the centrality

¹Jean Comaroff, "Defying Disenchantment. Reflections on Ritual Power and History," in *Asian Visions of Authority. Religion and Modern States of East and Southeast Asia*, eds. Charles F. Keyes, E. L. Kendell, and H. Hardacre (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997), pp. 301–14.

²David McMahan, "Modernity and the Early Discourse of Scientific Buddhism," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 72:4 (2004), pp. 897–933.

of state in thinking through the structure of the charismatic community of the monk Khruba Bunchum. Drawing upon the theorist Appadurai, and echoing the themes of Kwanchewan's piece, Amporn understands Khruba Bunchum's community as a "de-territorialized sacred realm" (p. 214). By "de-territorialized," Amporn means that the Karen ethnic believers are mobile and follow migratory patterns that show little regard for political borders. Sacrality in this movement is not derived from state-sanctioned religious bodies, but emerges as part of a new complex of media being circulated about Khruba Bunchum.

The final piece in the volume, by Tatsuki Kataoka, examines the role played by Khruba Bunchum among the Lahu ethnic minority. Kataoka provides a sophisticated reading of the ideological framework by which Khruba Bunchum came to be worshipped among the Lahu. Echoing the sophisticated hermeneutical approach of Ashley, Kataoka demonstrates that it was the historically grounded cultural framework of the Lahu that made them receptive to the charisma of Khruba Bunchum. Kataoka is careful to point out that the Lahu accepted the charismatic monk as a reincarnation of their own creator god and not as the holy man Siwichai, as many other groups along the Thai-Myanmar border had. While Kataoka certainly succeeds in further reinforcing in the reader the propaedeutic value of the concept of "indigenous modernity" across the range of ethnic minorities in the Lanna religious context, his contribution is unique in that he delves into the premodern roots informing contemporary worship of the charismatic monk.

While much of the scholarship in this book has been compiled using anthropological methods and will serve anthropologists and historians of contemporary Southeast Asian societies well, Buddhologists and scholars of religion, more generally, will also benefit from Cohen's volume. In recent years, scholars of premodern religious contexts have begun to see anthropological studies as an indispensable point of comparison with textual sources. Although the contributions in this volume are deeply informed by circumstances specific to modernity, scholars working on premodern religion will find much to reflect upon in this admirable collection of essays.

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Broken Voices: Postcolonial Entanglements and the Preservation of Korea's Central Folksong Traditions

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Korea is a country in which "tradition" is dealt with dynamically within its postcolonial historical experience. In Korean society, tradition is maintained or utilized in a unique way, which is clearly reflected in Korea's cultural policy. After liberation, in 1964 Korea promulgated the Cultural Properties Preservation Law (CPPL) and has implemented this for various political-cultural motives. Accordingly, various issues regarding the CPPL have arisen in the field of Korean and Asian studies and ethnomusicology. These issues range from the CPPL's background to how it is currently applied to the local scene, and how top-down and bottom-up approaches conflict and compromise.¹

¹Regarding the tense relationship in Korean intangible music properties between preservation and promotion, see Keith Howard, *Preserving Korean Music: Intangible Cultural Properties as Icons of Identity* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).