

Future studies of disability in Islam will no doubt only build on the solid achievements of this volume.

*Amos Yong*

*Regent University School of Divinity*

## The Americas: USA

**PILLARS OF FAITH: AMERICAN CONGREGATIONS AND THEIR PARTNERS.** By Nancy Tatom Ammerman. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. Pp. xi + 343. Hardcover, \$55.00; paper, \$21.95.

In this sociological study of 549 congregations, spanning ninety-one different religious traditions and ranging geographically from Hartford to Seattle, Ammerman and her research team found plenty of evidence that organized religion is alive and well in America. Her research approach is sweeping to say the least, but it is a needed survey for “new paradigm” scholars who have often relied on local studies to back their claim that disestablishment has fostered public religious vitality in the United States. Ammerman confirms that religious groups in the United States, whether they are Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, or Hindu, often adapt similar organizational structures modeled after Protestant congregations, a process R. Stephen Warner has described as “de facto congregationalism.” She contends that in many ways, this kind of organizational isomorphism is what makes possible a diversity of religious ideas and practices in the American landscape. Connected to external resources through organizational networks, congregations are well-equipped for their religious work. Although some are better equipped than others, Ammerman finds that most congregations, outside of white mainline Protestant denominations, have been able to maintain a distinct identity and are prepared for the challenges of a rapidly changing religious economy.

*Chad E. Seales*

*University of Texas at Austin*

**THE NEW METAPHYSICALS: SPIRITUALITY AND THE AMERICAN RELIGIOUS IMAGINATION.** By Courtney Bender. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010. Pp. x + 254. Cloth, \$75.00; paper, \$25.00.

One of the most commented books in North American religion in 2010, this well-written volume explores contemporary metaphysical religion in Cambridge, MA. Bender’s exhaustive ethnographic research focuses on a variety of groups and individuals including Swedenborgians, Unity and Spiritualist churches, Vedanta and Theosophical societies, clairvoyant meetings, alternative health practitioners, drummers, yogis, and many other kinds of energy workers. The great contribution that Bender makes grows out of her central theoretical assumption that spirituality cannot be considered profitably unless we recognize that it is always entangled in history, social life, and in the imaginations of both practitioners and academic observers. To demonstrate

this entanglement, Bender deftly weaves ethnographic narratives, her own reactions to her interlocutors, historical research, and startling insights. All is helpfully organized into chapters on metaphysical institutions, language and identity formation, the centrality of the body in metaphysical practice, and two final discussions of time and space. Her provocative chapter on space—while perhaps too quick to equate international concern with imperialism—both opens new lines of inquiry into New Age appropriation of religious traditions and demonstrates how mystical notions of space are intrinsic to American national self-understanding. Bender’s conclusion issues an important methodological challenge: scholars must find ways to research and write about religious people in ways that maintain the entangled integrity of their whole lives. This book is a must-read for all Americanists in religious studies and would be useful for upper-level undergraduate and graduate seminars.

*Brett Hendrickson*

*Lafayette College*

**PURITANISM: A VERY SHORT INTRODUCTION.** By Francis J. Bremer. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. Pp. ix + 122. \$11.95.

In this well-written and accessible survey, Bremer furnishes readers with a thorough introduction to the history of Puritanism, from its beginnings in sixteenth-century England to its indelible mark on contemporary American culture. Although he defines Puritanism in terms of the theological and doctrinal commitments that set Puritans apart from other early modern Protestant factions, Bremer rightfully extends his narrative beyond the scope of intellectual history to include other more material aspects of Puritanism both at home and abroad. For instance, he discusses Puritan participation in leisure, including berry-picking, feasting, and sensible alcohol consumption, as well as Puritan sexuality, which he argues was often enjoyed for the purposes of pleasure only, a stance that ran counter to the medieval Catholic view of intercourse as simply a mechanism for procreation. Indeed, his discussion of Puritan sexuality sheds light on a central theme in his narrative: Puritans were not pleasure-hating killjoys as they are so often portrayed, but instead, were a diverse lot who encouraged moderation more so than prohibition. Bremer’s “very short introduction” offers a balanced and nuanced interpretation of a group who have been marred by extremist language in both scholarly and popular literature. In so doing, he succeeds in echoing an important trend in Puritan studies that began with D. Hall’s 1989 book *Worlds of Wonder, Days of Judgment*: the effort to recover a “real” or “lived” Puritanism that takes seriously not only their formal theological discourse but also the intricacies and even hybridities that characterized their daily lives.

*Jonathan W. Olson*

*Florida State University*

**RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION: RELIGION AND THE POPULIST REVOLUTION.** By Joe Creech. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006. Pp. 264. Cloth, \$60.00; paper, \$25.00.

This splendid book opens with a “renegade group of Populists” in 1894 North Carolina, distributing political fliers with the headline “Look to Jesus!” Citing a range of sources, Creech shows that this “blatant elision of religion and politics” was not an aberrant event but a defining characteristic of populism in the American South. This is breaking news for scholars of southern religion. Though attentive to its political dimensions, historians have generally overlooked the role of religion in the agrarian revolt of the late nineteenth century. But Creech shows in exquisite detail the pervasiveness of evangelicalism among key organizations such as the Farmers’ Alliance and the People’s Party. Populists such as the Alliancefolk “blurred lines of secular and sacred, moral and political.” Creech limits the scope of his study to populism in North Carolina, but it is precisely this attention to local detail that enables him to address broader patterns. *Righteous Indignation* illustrates the diversity of evangelicalism in the South, shows the influence of restorationist theologies on Populism, highlights the role of African American churches in the movement, and details the complex political alliances between black and white populists. The window of opportunity for populists in North Carolina was ultimately closed shut by the disenfranchisement campaign of 1900 and the pervasive success of white supremacist politics. Despite the failure, the movement highlights a powerful prophetic voice latent in American evangelicalism.

*Chad E. Seales*

*University of Texas at Austin*

**INVENTING AMERICA’S “WORST” FAMILY: EUGENICS, ISLAM, AND THE FALL AND RISE OF THE TRIBE OF ISHMAEL.** By Nathaniel Deutsch. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009. Pp. xiv + 253; illustrations. Cloth, \$60.00; paper, \$24.95.

This book examines the curious history of an impoverished white family from the slums of Indianapolis. Deutsch describes how the Ishmaels came to garner the attention of various groups over the course of a century: from Social Gospel proponents in the 1870s and eugenicists in the early twentieth century to revisionists in the 1970s who honored the “Tribe of Ishmael” as a vanguard of the country’s Black Muslim community. What compels this interdisciplinary work is its attempt to trace the connections between race, class, and science that contributed to historical understandings of poverty. Yet, Deutsch is also concerned with how Americans in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries created national myths and identities. Toward this end, the author highlights the role religion played in these developments. Since the focus of Deutsch’s narrative is concerned mainly with historical perceptions of Islam, readers looking for a primer on Muslim Ameri-

cans would do well to turn elsewhere. The book will nonetheless be of interest to religion scholars for its look at American Orientalism, along with the position of liberal Protestants and secularists in this story. Founded on solid historical research and composed in a clear and engaging style, Deutsch’s refreshing study deserves attention from a wide audience.

*Daniel C. Dillard*

*Florida State University*

**THE GOD STRATEGY: HOW RELIGION BECAME A POLITICAL WEAPON IN AMERICA.** By David Domke and Kevin Coe. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. Pp. 256. Paper, \$19.95.

In December 2006, evangelical pastor Rick Warren stood at Saddleback Church with presidential candidates Sam Brownback and Barack Obama and declared, “I’ve got two friends here, a Republican and a Democrat. Why? Because you’ve got to have two wings to fly.” This updated edition cites evidence from the most recent presidential election campaign to further bolster Domke and Coe’s well-documented observation that religion plays an undeniably powerful role in the outcome of modern political campaigns. Using transcripts of public speeches as their primary source, the authors argue that beginning with Reagan’s acceptance speech for the Republican Party’s presidential nomination in 1980 and culminating in Senator Obama’s successful bid for the presidency in 2008, politicians have increasingly adopted a “God strategy,” a “calculated and partisan use of faith,” to win election. As most readers might expect, Republican candidates have most often and most successfully employed this political strategy. But the authors also show how Democratic candidates, particularly Bill Clinton and Obama, also effectively used religious speech to secure office. Asserting that American civil religion is a politically charged public exercise, not just a “benignly symbolic practice,” the authors conclude that today’s candidates, whether Republican or Democrat, must deal with religion if they aim to contend. Accessibly written and compellingly argued, the book should prove an invaluable resource for anyone interested in better understanding the religiously charged rhetoric of American politics.

*Chad E. Seales*

*University of Texas at Austin*

**WRITE THESE LAWS ON YOUR CHILDREN: INSIDE THE WORLD OF CONSERVATIVE CHRISTIAN HOMESCHOOLING.** By Robert Kunzman. Boston: Beacon Press, 2009. Pp. 229. \$27.95.

The National Center for Education Statistics heralds the burgeoning growth of the homeschool movement, “measuring a 74% increase over eight years—*twelve times* the increase of public school students over the same period.” With such a movement afoot, exploring the grassroots efforts of these families is long overdue. Kunzman’s book provides an unprecedented view into the beliefs and actions of those

behind this prolific movement. Though homeschoolers are a very diverse group, Kunzman chose to focus on the largest, most influential subset: conservative Christians. They believe it is their God-given right and responsibility to do more than “parent” their children; they must also educate them. Through shadowing, interviewing, and observing, Kunzman paints six family portraits of homeschoolers from across the United States. While not revealing how these families were selected, he did choose states representing “nearly the full spectrum of regulatory approaches to home-schooling, ranging from essentially nothing (Indiana) to required testing (Oregon) to curriculum approval and/or review (Vermont).” Four central questions drove Kunzman’s ethnography: “What do homeschoolers do, and why do they do it? Do children learn to think for themselves? What do they learn about the relationship between faith and citizenship? And how, if at all, should homeschooling be regulated?” Cautious but honest, both parents and children responded forthrightly to Kunzman’s probing questions, serving as a vital catalyst in shattering the homeschooling stereotype. One theme permeates: protection and preparation of the children—protection from the wiles of the world but preparation to navigate that same world after they leave home.

*Linda D. Grooms*  
*Regent University*

**SETTING DOWN THE SACRED PAST: AFRICAN AMERICAN RACE HISTORIES.** By Laurie F. Maffly-Kipp. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010. Pp. 283. Cloth, \$29.95.

Maffly-Kipp explores how African Americans in the long nineteenth century narrated their experience and envisioned their future. She pulls together many intellectual and experiential strands in a work that moves beyond the established categories of denominational history and black church studies. She shows how “race histories,” or collective narratives both spoken and written, provided spaces in which African Americans reflected on themes of national identity, religious affiliation, and racial lineage. She argues that these texts were intended to bolster racial unity even though they also stand as testaments to the multiple viewpoints within African American Protestantism. The chapters range across the various sources and situations that inspired race histories. African Americans reflected on ancient African history, the Haitian revolution, and early American history. During reconstruction and segregation, collective narratives included a new focus on modern Africa and musings on African American Protestant diversity. From her exploration of the multiple intellectual strains that informed these narratives, Maffly-Kipp makes a provocative assertion: “African Americans did not *always* conceive of race as the most salient feature of their self-understanding.” Some readers will surely disagree. But Maffly-Kipp’s argument demands consideration, especially in light of historian D. Wickberg’s call to understand historic sensibilities, or the

terms of representation, the modes of perception and feeling, and ways that objects have been conceived and represented. Wickberg has asked cultural historians to provide richer treatments of past peoples and how they understood their worlds. Maffly-Kipp has done just that.

*Jennifer Graber*  
*The College of Wooster*

**MELTON’S ENCYCLOPEDIA OF AMERICAN RELIGIONS.** Edited by J. Gordon Melton, James Beverley, Constance Jones, and Pamela S. Nadell. 8th ed. New York: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009. Pp. xxxvi + 1,386. \$320.00.

The eighth edition of this standard work offers a comprehensive resource for the reader seeking knowledge of religious bodies in the United States and Canada. The foreword by Rodney Stark is followed by two historical overviews of religions in America and in Canada. Religions are grouped historically under chapters entitled The Western Liturgical Tradition, The Eastern Liturgical Tradition, The Anglican, Lutheran, Reformed/Presbyterian, Pietist/Methodist, Holiness, Pentecostal, European Free Church, Baptist, Independent/Fundamentalist, Adventist, Liberal, Latter Day Saints, Communal, Western Esoteric (four subdivisions), Middle Eastern (two subdivisions), Eastern (two subdivisions), and Unclassified Christian and Unclassified Religious. Each chapter is alphabetically arranged, and most entries include bibliographies. There is an appendix listing of defunct religious organizations. There are two indexes—the first geographical, listing the addresses of all the institutions covered, and the second, a master index to the contents. This encyclopedia is essential for library reference desks as well as scholars and practitioners of American religions.

*Iain S. Maclean*  
*James Madison University*

**BODIES OF BELIEF: BAPTIST COMMUNITY IN EARLY AMERICA.** By Janet Moore Lindman. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008. Pp. 280; illustrations. \$39.95.

This engaging work considers the embodied faith of Baptists—primarily those in the Delaware Valley—as the church developed from “isolated congregations in the seventeenth century . . . into a mainline denomination by the early nineteenth century.” Lindman’s scholarship fills a significant absence in book length studies of Delaware Valley Baptists (the most recent one being, to the best of this reviewer’s knowledge, N. Maring’s 1964 publication, *Baptists in New Jersey*). Lindman, who previously coedited a volume on the body in early America, is erudite and thorough here. Drawing on the theories of such religious studies staples as J. Butler, J. Z. Smith, C. Bell, and M. Foucault, she sheds new light on corporeality and the “lived experience” of conversion, ritual, and discipline. Lindman’s attention to race, gender, and masculinity is particularly shrewd. For instance, she devotes much of the second half of the book to



investigating the paradoxical phenomenon of Baptists maintaining spiritual equality among all members, while condoning the white, patriarchal control of female and black bodies. To explain this, Lindman makes the compelling argument that Baptists founded their community on “lateral relationship of siblings” but derived their government from “hierarchical relations of husbands and wives, masters and slaves.” Although the book can at times be too dense and theoretical for undergraduate classes, researchers interested in religion, history, and body studies will do well to read it.

*Daniel C. Dillard*  
Florida State University

**THE NEW HOLY WARS: ECONOMIC RELIGION VS. ENVIRONMENTAL RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICA.** By Robert H. Nelson. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010. Pp. xxiv + 388. \$24.95.

In *The New Holy Wars*, Nelson argues that we must think about economics and environmentalism as “secular religions” in order to fully understand the conflicts that have arisen between them. He uses the term “secular religion” to describe ideologies that are not typically characterized as religious but have “comprehensive worldviews and myths that provide human beings with the deepest sense of meaning.” He wants to show that economics and environmentalism can fit this broad definition of religion, and he describes the influence that Christianity had on the development of these ideologies in order to further support his claim that both economists and environmentalists have simply removed the explicitly religious language from what are otherwise theological debates about human nature and progress. Although Nelson’s descriptions of these ideologies fit his definition of “secular religion,” it is important to note that he is discussing extreme perspectives and is attempting to show the danger of maintaining dogmatic positions on these issues. He describes how economic policies that promise “heaven on earth” often fail people in the short term and how environmentalists’ attempts to restore “Eden” can negatively affect entire communities. This having been said, there are certainly many Americans whose economic and environmental positions do not constitute “comprehensive worldviews” and would not fit the author’s definition of “secular religion,” but these perspectives are absent from Nelson’s work.

*Monica C. Reed*  
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**SING THEM OVER AGAIN TO ME: HYMNS AND HYMNBOOKS IN AMERICA.** Edited by Mark A. Noll and Edith L. Blumhofer. Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2006. Pp. xvii + 260. Cloth, \$63.00; paper, \$32.50.

This first-rate collection of essays addresses an important but understudied aspect of lived religion in America, namely the use of music as a measure of religious belief and practice. Taken together, the essays provide a look at the popular history of Protestant hymnody, particularly during

its heyday in the nineteenth century (although with due attention to both the eighteenth and twentieth centuries). They contribute to several specific disciplinary areas: three consider the cultural history of select hymns; four address issues related to the history of the book; and four more focus on the theological usage of hymns. Perhaps the most remarkable note sounded across these essays is the recognition that religious songs have a living, dynamic relationship with the people who sing them. The words, tunes, titles, usage, and popularity of hymns are in a state of constant flux as their function and significance are revisited and negotiated by different communities in different social and generational contexts. It is this phenomenon that helps to reveal the changing beliefs, values, concerns, and experiences of American (Protestant) religion and the important role that songs play in giving expression to those religious aspirations.

*Robert E. Brown*  
James Madison University

**DEATH IN THE NEW WORLD: CROSS-CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS, 1492-1800.** By Erik R. Seeman. Early American Studies. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010. Pp. 372; illustrations. Cloth, \$45.00.

Early Americans did not need as many reminders as they received about their frailty and mortality. Death was all around them. In fact, death and deathways united Indians, Europeans, and Africans together within the early Atlantic world. All of these groups paid homage to the deathways of others even as they criticized each other’s differences. All affirmed an afterlife in which at least the soul or spirit survived the body after death even as they disagreed about the relevant metaphysics. All treated the dead with respect in pious mortuary rites. As Seeman shows us in this deft collection of early modern stories, all of which he has derived from the eastern third of North America and the Caribbean islands, common funerary ways eased the cross-cultural contact of these varied ethnic groups—even as all leveraged one another’s fear of death and respect for the dead in struggles with each other. This excellent monograph contributes a new perspective on death and dying in the early modern period. It also offers new information on the cross-cultural encounters of indigenous, enslaved, and colonizing people and groups living together in a new and ever-changing Atlantic world.

*Douglas A. Sweeney*  
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

**BIBLIA AMERICANA: AMERICA’S FIRST BIBLE COMMENTARY, A SYNOPTIC COMMENTARY ON THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS, VOLUME 1: GENESIS.** Edited by Reiner Smolinski. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010. Pp. xix + 1337; illustrations. Cloth, \$250.00.

This is the first volume in what will be a ten-volume edition of Cotton Mather’s exegetical magnum opus. Drafted over the course of thirty-five years (1693-1728) on 4,583

sheets (double-columned, folio), eventually bound in six volumes, Mather's *Biblia Americana* proved too large, until now, to attract a publisher. Nonetheless, it represents the oldest commentary on all of the Protestant canon in America. Smolinski, who teaches American literature at Georgia State University, has given much of his life to poring over this hidden treasure at the Massachusetts Historical Society. He leads a team of scholar-editors in Germany and the United States committed to realizing Mather's dream of publishing this summa. Volume One, on the book of Genesis, shows Mather's—and Smolinski's—vast historical erudition, revealing that biblical higher criticism began in North America long before the well-known inroads made by modern German scholars. Appearing as it does at a time of renewed historical interest in the Bible in America, this edition will spark new insights into American religious, cultural, and intellectual history.

*Douglas A. Sweeney*

*Trinity Evangelical Divinity School*

**COTTON MATHER AND *BIBLIA AMERICANA*—AMERICA'S FIRST BIBLE COMMENTARY: ESSAYS IN REAPPRAISAL.** Edited by Reiner Smolinski and Jan Stievernann. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck; Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010. Pp. xix + 593. Cloth, \$70.00.

This set of original essays derives from a conference held in Tübingen in October 2008 on Cotton Mather's magnum opus, *Biblia Americana*, a running gloss on the Protestant canon to which he devoted thirty-five years (1693–1728), but failed to publish during his lifetime. It is being published today in ten large, finely edited, and well-produced volumes by Mohr Siebeck (in Europe) and Baker Academic (in the United States). A digitized version will eventually be accessible through the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale Divinity School. The present volume, which has been edited by the leaders of this project, offers an excellent historical companion to Mather's opus. It revises our view of Mather by presenting him as an erudite enlightenment intellectual and theological prodigy, assessing his work in the light of early modern Western history and the ideas available to him through the storied republic of letters (in which Mather participated). Its chapters treat a wide range of Mather's historical contexts, from Anglo-American Puritanism to early modern biblical studies to gender, race, and slavery in Mather's Atlantic world. The authors succeed in depicting him not only as a clergyman who persecuted witches but also as a genuine polymath fully engaged with the thought of his day.

*Douglas A. Sweeney*

*Trinity Evangelical Divinity School*

**RESCUE AND FLIGHT: AMERICAN RELIEF WORKERS WHO DEFIED THE NAZIS.** Susan Elizabeth Subak. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010. Pp. xxxii + 310. \$40.00.

In this well-researched project, Subak crafts a moving story recounting the details of the Unitarian Service Committee (USC) and its relief efforts to refugees in Europe prior to and during World War II (WWII). While human atrocities and ethnic genocide have occurred throughout history in the name of religion, Subak's account of daring humanitarian relief work by the USC provides an alternative picture of the good religious institutions can offer. Subak organizes the book primarily around the lives of eight USC members whose painstaking labor from 1939 to 1945 included both micro-measures to provide basic resources to refugees and macro-level actions involving the US government. This "addictive" work, as one of the members described it, unfortunately took its toll upon the committee and its members, leaving the book with a proud yet tragic ending. The USC was eventually disbanded having come under scrutiny for its leftist leanings in an era of growing McCarthyism, while differences in relief strategy caused irreparable rifts among several of the committee leaders. Certain passages of escape and elusion read like an espionage thriller and help to move chapters along amidst significant amounts of detailed information that are, at times, laborious to track. Despite this critique, Subak delivers well her intent to carve a respectable place for these workers' legacy. It is a must-read for Unitarians and scholars of contemporary religious history and WWII. Professors can also include it in their recommended reading lists.

*Mark Chung Hearn*

*Claremont School of Theology*

**BILL BRIGHT AND CAMPUS CRUSADE FOR CHRIST: THE RENEWAL OF EVANGELICALISM IN POSTWAR AMERICA.** By John G. Turner. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2008. Pp. x + 288. Cloth, \$59.95; paper, \$19.95.

Turner's *Bill Bright and Campus Crusade for Christ* is an excellent analysis of postwar American evangelicalism. Bright was an energetic salesman-turned-evangelist who recruited an army of volunteers to preach the importance of having a personal relationship with Jesus to college students. Their method was simple and direct: activists shared Bright's tract, *The Four Spiritual Laws*, on campuses around the nation and then the globe, building the organization into one of the most influential parachurch ministries in the world. Turner, however, is interested in far more than just Bright and his organization. He uses crusade as a lens into the major issues and controversies surrounding postwar evangelicalism. Through Bright's life and work, Turner analyzes evangelicals' responses to the anticommunist, civil rights, free speech, and feminist movements, the rise of conservatism, and the development of the Religious Right. Although Bright claimed to eschew politics, his ministry was closely linked with conservative causes. Turner also uses crusade to illuminate evangelicals' internal debates over the growing significance of the charismatic movement (especially the practice of speaking in tongues), women's leadership in ministry, and the promises and pitfalls of cooperation

with both theological liberals and Catholics. In sum, this is a well-written, thorough, carefully researched, and engaging book that demonstrates how evangelicalism has adapted to modern American culture at the same time that evangelicals have worked relentlessly to influence that culture.

*Matthew Avery Sutton*

*Washington State University*

**ONWARD CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS? THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT IN AMERICAN POLITICS.** By Clyde Wilcox and Carin Robinson. 4th ed. *Dilemmas in American Politics* Series. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2011. Pp. xiii + 250. \$32.00.

In this update to a volume first published in 1996, the authors provide a cogent and comprehensive depiction of the Religious Right as a social and political movement, noting the movement's paradoxical "success": great influence on elections and party platforms but minimal impact on policy and culture. The volume deals with this volatile topic in even-handed ways, although a more consistent citation style would increase the clarity of attribution throughout. Updates in this edition include information on the role of the Religious Right in the 2008 presidential election—including an analysis of Focus on the Family's *Letter from 2012 in Obama's America*—and recent developments in the Republican party, notably the emergence of the Tea Party movement and how it might impact the prospects for success of the Religious Right's policy agenda. The text concludes with a thoughtful assessment of the prospects for the expansion and success of the Religious Right in the future, addressing the challenges that the movement faces in attracting younger evangelicals who tend to favor a more moderate and wide-ranging political agenda than the Religious Right has traditionally pursued. Ultimately, these authors argue that the success of the movement as a political force might be greatest should pragmatic leaders reach ascendancy, and further that the movement's impact might be greatest if the movement focuses, as C. Thomas and E. Dobson have suggested, on changing culture instead of engaging in partisan political activity.

*Stacey Hunter Hecht*

*Bethel University*

## South Asia

**MEDICINE BETWEEN SCIENCE AND RELIGION: EXPLORATIONS ON TIBETAN GROUNDS.** Edited by Vincanne Adams, Mona Schrempf, and Sienna R. Craig. New York: Berghahn Books, 2011. Pp. xiii + 371. Cloth, \$100.00.

Medical anthropology has advanced markedly in the last two decades, including in its theoretical orientations, leaving behind neocolonialist and postcolonialist stances and focusing more straightforwardly on cross-disciplinary problematics. This volume, containing thirteen articles, including an introduction by the editors and an illuminating conclusion by G. Samuel, is an excellent illustration of this develop-

ment. What it amounts to is an extended multiauthored commentary on intersections, translations, and transitions in the interface between Tibetan medicine and biomedicine. Primary are the seemingly inevitable negotiations within a rapidly changing and increasingly visible and hybridized medical system. Thus, the accounts presented here are consciously and successfully sensitive to issues of linguistic and cultural translation. Examples of issues investigated here are conceptions of disease (e.g., conceptualizing cancer, a category that was not previously within the system), the building of modern institutions (such as the Men-Tsee-Khang, the Tibetan medical institute with branches throughout India, underwritten by the Tibetan government in exile), the unification of a once diverse tradition, and more generally, the boundaries between empiricism and science and power and ethics (Tibetan medicine, reflecting Tibetan Buddhism, is overwhelmingly concerned with the latter). Among the latter concerns are the challenges of standardization and pharmaceuticalization, the often awkward deployment of modern terms to elucidate Tibetan medical concepts (such as oxygen and hemoglobin to explain the Tibetan *zungtrag* or vitalized blood), and the necessity of modernizing obstetrics. Other topics addressed are the notion of efficacy and the very nature of scientific knowledge. Among the most interesting articles are those on the early encounters (pre-1959) of Tibetan medicine and Western biomedicine (A. McKay) and the struggle for legitimacy of Tibetan medicine in Buryatia (M. Saxer). It is significant that the research that went into this important volume was carried out in India, Tibet, China, and even in a hospital in the United States.

*Frederick M. Smith*

*University of Iowa*

**THE MAHĀBHĀRATA PATRILINE: GENDER, CULTURE AND THE ROYAL HEREDITY.** By Simon Pearce Brodbeck. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009. Pp. xiii + 329. \$124.95.

In this challenging and well-researched book, Brodbeck squarely confronts one of the most daunting aspects of the *Mahābhārata*: the vast tangle of characters, their lineage or clan affiliations, and the problem of patrilineal succession when the necessary presence of women as aids in the generation process presents the risk of supersession by matrilineal affiliations. Brodbeck underscores the complexity of this issue by undertaking case studies of many of the important characters in the epic, male and female, including the Pāṇḍavas, Bhīṣma, the many wives and offspring of Arjuna, and the characters centrally involved in the transmission of the epic, Vyāsa, Janamejaya, and Vaiśmpāyana. Brodbeck's task is to try to square the lineages provided in the first book of the epic with how they play out in the remainder of the text. He has purposefully avoided the difficult terrain of historical genealogical analysis by viewing the *Mahābhārata* as fiction. Bypassed, then, are the problems of the epic's many recensions and perforce its internal chronology and multiple authorship. The result, however, is promising, espe-