

COSMOPOLITANISM, RELIGION AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Edited by

Maria Rovisco & Sebastian Kim (Eds)

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This volume treats cosmopolitanism as both a descriptive social category and a normative concept that grapples with matters of global justice. It demonstrates the ways that religion is both a source and catalyst for cosmopolitanism and global citizenship by exploring how faith and secular groups interact to create hybrid, intertwining religious ethics and beliefs through a lived cosmopolitanism that is expressed ‘in the micro-scale of everyday life interactions’ (p.2).

Religion has conventionally been considered oppositional to cosmopolitanism, the former often bound to parochialism, tradition, and intolerance, and the latter with secularism and worldliness (pp.2, 50). With such an unlikely partnership, the authors in this collection seek to extricate the concept of cosmopolitanism from its historical rooting in elitism, the Enlightenment, Eurocentrism, and its contemporary entanglement with neoliberal capitalism. The volume attempts to overturn Habermas’ endorsement of the religious/secular divide and concept of the ‘public sphere’ by demonstrating that the one underscores, and is intertwined with, the other. For example, the authors agree that tenets of cosmopolitanism include a commitment to humanitarian purposes, an engaged stance, openness, solidarity, tolerance, diversity, and freedom. Every world religion has an ethic of care demonstrating openness, empathy and human respect for individuals and the community (pp.48–50). Neuman argues that Christianity’s cosmopolitan roots go back to Galatians 3:28 when the Apostle Paul laid out a doctrine of inclusivity for the Early Church. Similarly, the concept of *ummah* in the Qur’an, referring to both the global Muslim community and humankind generally, is a form of Islamic cosmopolitanism (p.175).

The volume is divided into two sections, Contexts and Discussions. The first section deals with grounded cosmopolitanism in various political and ethical dilemmas and case studies. The second section involves emerging theoretical debates between cosmopolitanism and religion from a variety of perspectives and disciplinary lenses (p.5). In Contexts, Huang discusses the Buddhist activist Tzu Chi Foundation (founded in 1966 and based in Hualien, Taiwan), and their cosmopolitan concept of Great Love, which emphasizes humanitarianism and social service, rather than religion as a primary goal. She argues that Tzu Chi represents the increasing global influence of religious groups and movements (p.15). Kollontai furthers this argument with her discussion of the work of three Abrahamic religious humanitarian groups, and the aid they provided during the 1992–95 war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Kim writes about the 2005 controversy in Switzerland, when an Islamic group applied to have a minaret erected on their building. The politically controversial and highly charged outcomes resulted in legislation banning minarets on purpose-built mosques. Yet other faith groups who supported their request on the grounds of opposing religious discrimination failed to raise a critical voice in the fray. Kim argues that enacting legislation can actually subvert the cosmopolitan trait of community dialogue and understanding of one another. For the sake of the common good, there is need for engagement in the public sphere (p.43). Rovisco writes about the cosmopolitan traits of self-reflexivity and transformation through the making of ‘multiple attachments’ (p.85). Her study of young Portuguese Catholic missionaries in Africa asks whether they can engage the ‘Other’ in an ethos of openness, like the ‘New Evangelization’ their practice requires, and how that may impact their religious identity. Her results showed that they could engage openly, but were often unwilling to transcend their own religious loyalties. Rovisco cautions against making the Other an object of care, and to instead acknowledge their personhood and full agency (p.96).

In the Discussions section, Mitchell provides a counterpoint and discusses the outright failures of cosmopolitanism through her study of tribunal transcripts and court documents of the war crimes committed by the founders and producers of *Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines* (RTLM). They broadcast messages of genocide for a year leading up to and during the 100 days of killing in Rwanda in 1994. Kinnvall and Nesbitt-Larking offer three heuristic models contrasting the ethics of engagement with that of the politics of retreatism and essentialism in building cosmopolitical identities. De Villiers critiques the writings of Martha Nussbaum concerning the relationship between Christian and cosmopolitan ethics on pledging citizenship to the world versus to the Church, and universalism’s and Christianity’s polarity on what constitutes the moral good. Still, he finds that cosmopolitan and Christian ethics both align with val-

ues of justice (p.169). In his chapter about the cosmopolitan tenets of Salman Rushdie's works, *Shalimar the Clown* (2005) and *The Enchantress of Florence* (2008), Neuman explores agonistic dialogues between religion and secularism by unpacking the concept of 'enchantment' as a literary mode. Neuman discusses Rushdie's assertion of having a 'god-shaped hole' as a secular atheist that he has attempted to fill with literature (pp.177–179). He demonstrates how religion and secularism are at odds in Rushdie's works, and concludes that a 'religiously inflected cosmopolitanism' would bring necessary repair (p.191). Writing the final chapter, Mohamed-Saleem calls for dialogue from the platforms which are available in all cultures to address the intersection of religious pluralism, identity politics, and international religious freedom (p.199). Dialogue and ethics are important themes intertwined throughout the volume and authors seem to agree that the overarching solution is dialogue.

While this volume does what it says it will do – critically engages the possibilities and limitations of cosmopolitanism as an analytical lens to explore and understand religion's changing landscape (p.1) – one is left with the impression that it is an intellectual tool in its most elitist sense. For instance, in the chapters that were built on ethnographic case studies, one wonders if participants themselves would claim the description or tenets of cosmopolitanism as a reflection of their lifeworld. Most chapters are engagingly written in ways that are accessible to postgraduate students and academics alike. However, as often occurs in an edited collection, there are one or two chapters that are not nearly so accessible, and these would have benefited from further editing for language clarity. On the positive side, however, the book's subject matter is relevant and unusual.

GLOBAL MOVEMENTS: DANCE, PLACE AND HYBRIDITY

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Global Movements is an interdisciplinary collection exploring the place(s) of dance in our globalising world. The book continues a series focusing on 'the negotiation of identity through place and dance' and holds interest for students and researchers in dance education, dance anthropology, and human geogra-

phy (Kuhlke and Pine, ix). In this volume, contributors investigate the dynamic relationships between dance and place, asking what is at stake when dance forms travel across the world. Seven chapters examine how various dance forms are borrowed, translated, revitalized, and commodified around the globe. Using specific dance styles or events, contributors contextualise topical themes, including: hybridity (cultural hybridity in the genealogy of a dance, and hybrid qualities of spaces or bodies where dance unfolds), identity formation (individual/collective), cultural tourism, authenticity, and cosmopolitanism.

The opening chapters examine socio-economic forces shaping dance production and consumption in a transnational world. Yuko Aoyama explores the hybrid roots of flamenco, tracing it back to the gypsy communities of Andalucía, Spain. She addresses the paradox inherent in the Spanish state's staging of authenticity to maintain a 'pure' form of flamenco for the tourist market. While tourists seek the authentic, they actually co-produce the flamenco art form through consumption practices, effectuating its 'relocalization' in Andalucía (18). Kristin Harris Walsh also gives an example of 'artpreneurship' in Chapter 2, focusing on the establishment of Irish step dance in Newfoundland, Canada. She reveals how historical changes to Newfoundland's political structures alongside the narrative of Irish immigration and 'tradition', contribute to a continuing legitimization of socio-economic and political ties between Newfoundland and Ireland today.

In Chapter 3, Olaf Kuhlke theorizes how representational and non-representational aspects of dancing bodies in the pre-2007 Berlin Love Parades disrupt and re-inscribe nationally symbolic, public spaces and monuments (like Berlin's Kurfürstendamm and Gedächtniskirche) with new expressions of identity. A sense of ambivalence/carnival is sustained by revellers embodying *both* qualities of oppositional pairings like 'high/low', 'us/them' (47). Kuhlke also considers the sensing body's role in creating a collective sense of unity (48). He argues that constructing national identity relies as much on citizens participating in 'emotional communities of playful embodiment' as on textual or discursive narratives of nationhood (72).

This attention to embodiment and phenomenology continues in the next three chapters, but shifting from the collective to individual and interpersonal levels. In Chapter 4, Mary Lynn Babcock and Lynnette Young Overby use an embodiment framework to analyse the choreographic process behind the US-based, contemporary dance performance, *Human Kind*. Reflecting on the diverse dancers' experiences of collaboration, they found they experienced a complex merging of internal and external landscapes, 'a new habitus' (82), and a shifting

of identity as they created a temporary 'community of dance' (104). Such observations are encouraging for those investigating potential benefits of reflexive, cross-cultural dance education for a cosmopolitan project.

Chapters 5 and 6 explore the relevance of dancers' phenomenological experiences for pedagogy. Studying tango in Finland, France Joyal found that tango partners became absorbed 'in a conversation of the senses', creating a shared dynamic or 'co-poiesis' (109). She argues that this co-created state of being holds interdisciplinary potential as a 'pedagogy of intersubjectivity'; exercises based on the intuitive co-operation skills of tango dancers can help attune psychology students to the power dynamics and processes of mutual knowledge construction that occur in therapy sessions (119). Adam Pine's Chapter 6 also explores the dancers' personal experiences, this time in recreational salsa classes in Minnesota. The mostly non-Latino individuals find the dance empowering; improving body confidence, self-esteem and interaction skills. However, by making salsa more accessible, cultural knowledge embedded in the movement, postures and music is 'glossed over' (134). This raises questions around teaching dance cross-culturally without acknowledging the dance's genealogy. Pine then draws his findings into conversation with theories of cosmopolitanism.

In brief, participants did not attempt to teach or understand the 'multicultural hybridity' in salsa's roots, nor the political implications behind its global consumption. They did not acknowledge the contradiction in claiming their practice as 'cosmopolitan' while excluding particular citizens; the classes Pine observed were heteronormative, required able-bodies and a certain income level. However, Pine argues a different cosmopolitanism applies; through learning how to partner dance, experiencing shared vulnerability, and strengthening somatic knowledge of their bodies, students 'learn a new way of being' (139). This change in physicality and reception towards others' movements expands participants' cultural horizons; salsa dancers strengthen capacities for empathetic embodiment by gaining 'expanded contact with others', allowing them to '...understand the rituals that give meanings to others' (138).

A final contribution by Carla Walter and Steve Smith explores the implications of combining dance theory with shifting understandings of 'place' in social science, reflecting on the changing contexts in which dance is now dispersed – from the stage and street, to 'cyberity' (142). Pine and Kuhlke's conclusion follows, identifying four running themes: how meanings are created in dance, dance and pedagogy, globalisation and inequality, and 'the connections between nationalism, place, authenticity and hybridity' (163). While the conclu-

sion links the chapters well, structural cohesiveness is somewhat lessened by variability in chapter length, level of theoretical engagement and grammatical errors.

Overall, *Global Movements* offers fruitful examples of the how dance is connected to the politics of place in a globalized world. While Pine and Aoyama are the only authors to closely engage with cosmopolitanism, multiple contributors lend weight to Werbner's (2008) discussion of vernacular cosmopolitanism in anthropology as emerging 'from cosmopolitan *practice* to cosmopolitan consciousness or *conviction*' (Werbner 2008, 5; original emphasis). Dance scholarship has much to offer theories of place, space, and cosmopolitanism through centralizing the felt or corporeal: bodily, kinaesthetic knowledge and reception towards 'other' ways of being embodied in the world. Instead of overemphasising consciousness or principles, a dancerly orientation towards theorizing cosmopolitanism would complement a vernacular/rooted lens by considering consciousness and body together.

When discussing hybridity in relation to dance there is a risk of creating a false dichotomy between notions of 'traditional' (pure) and 'contemporary' (hybrid) dance (see Kaeppler 2004). By and large, the contributors successfully problematize this, critiquing ideas of authenticity as it relates to 'pure' or 'traditional' forms of dance so sought after by cultural tourism (Aoyama; this edition). Indeed, Pine and Kuhlke argue that dance's hybrid nature allows 'constant reinvention and inscription' making it easy for governing bodies to use dance for their own agendas (167). They thus call for innovative thinking surrounding the role of dance pedagogy in today's increasingly interconnected world. I would add to this the need for scholarship to highlight case-studies where the role and meanings of particular dance forms are contested, especially within postcolonial nation-states. More explorations of how communities or collectivities utilise the 'hybrid nature' of dance and globally-dispersed audiences for every-day or one-off political acts of resistance, vis-à-vis some of the inequalities mentioned in this book, would be welcome.

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