

Scholars familiar with the subject will probably wish, as I did, that the author had pushed harder and more thoroughly woven the theoretical strands into the ethnography. She might also have drawn productively on some of the more recent literature that is not cited, such as Charles Stanish's (2009) article on the selling of fake artifacts on eBay and the consequences of fakes finding their way into scholarly collections—a piece that circulated widely in different versions around that time, online and in print, and would seem directly relevant here. Another exemplary text that explores the relationships among Latin American objects, identities, and memories is Silvia Spitta's *Misplaced Objects* (2009), which deals with a larger variety of kinds of objects, and a longer history, but does so in a clearly developed theoretical framework that is well integrated into the text.

The above may leave readers of this review with the feeling that I consider this a weak book, but that is not my intention. Its ethnographic grounding is strong, and the writing conveys the author's ideas clearly. For these reasons, I imagine that the book would be quite useful in an undergraduate course on the contemporary constructions of identities in heritage sites, for example, and for audiences in art history, cultural studies, and anthropology. If the title were more indicative of, say, an ethnographic exploration of contemporary craft production in Oaxaca, or, perhaps, how contemporary Oaxacan artisans relate their work to local archaeological heritage, that would better reflect the strengths of the work.

References cited

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- Stanish, Charles
2009 Forging Ahead: Or, How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love eBay. *Archaeology* (May–June):18, 58–60, 65–66.

Healing Secular Life: Loss and Devotion in Modern Turkey. *Christopher Dole*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. 299 pp.

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In the decade since the publication of Talal Asad's *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (2003), the anthropology of religion has witnessed a full-tilt theoretical reformation. Drawing on the influential opening of Asad's earlier work, *Formations* provocatively argues that secularity (or "the secular") is the background against which the modern concept and category of "religion" emerges. Rather than the mere absence of religion in the public

sphere (a secular ideology in its own right), Asad contends that secularity is a discursive field in the full Foucauldian sense: a distinctive ensemble of practices and modes of knowledge that produces characteristic assumptions about subjects and the world they inhabit. In the intervening decade, a cottage industry of fine, new anthropologies of secularism has seized on Asad's call to conduct a critical genealogy of the liberal–secular concept of "religion" in the contemporary day. Over roughly the same period, a new generation of anthropologists of contemporary Turkey has focused on the powers and discontents of Turkish state secularism as rich ethnographic objects in their own right. Until recently, however, these two emergent bodies of literature had not directly spoken to each other. But no longer.

Christopher Dole's magisterial new ethnography, *Healing Secular Life: Loss and Devotion in Modern Turkey* constitutes a much-needed, direct engagement of the anthropology of the secular by an ethnographer of Turkish secularism. In this fine book, which will surely attract broad interest among medical anthropologists, and scholars of religion generally, Dole both rearticulates the foundational questions of Asad's critique and, drawing broadly on the work of Jacques Rancière, infuses them with a new emphasis on what he dubs the "secular politics of aesthetics."

The strength and originality of *Healing Secular Life* hinge on its deft synthesis of the theoretical concerns of the anthropology of secularism with a unique ethnographic object: an array of Islamic healing practices that have persisted in the shadows and crevices of contemporary Turkish life, in spite of broad-based, public disdain for them. As Dole traverses the cultural, social, and political geography of the poorer districts (*gecekondular*) of Turkey's capital city, Ankara, he encounters a swath of alternative, often marginal religious healers and practitioners, including saints (*evliya*), preparers of Qur'anic amulets (*muska*), and specialists at expelling malevolent spirits, or jinn (*cinci hocalar*). These various healers and practices defy the expectations and imperatives of both secular Turkish modernity and neo-orthodox forms of Islam. Dole argues that "forms of Islamic practice that have been cast out of orthodoxy and dismissed as corrupted forms of Islam" (p. 16) cast unique light on questions of secularism, secularity, and Islamic modernity more generally. Rancière's theory of the politics of aesthetics forges the link between these disparate therapeutic practices and questions of secularism and state practice generally. As Dole provocatively asserts, "that which is at stake in Turkey's project of secular modernity—to reframe Rancière's observation—is precisely what is at stake in healing: the organization of the sensible, the ordering of social relations, and the building of alternate constellations of past limits and future possibilities" (p. 10).

The opening anecdote of *Healing Secular Life* dramatically stages the aesthetic politics of secular Turkish modernity and the manner in which Islamic healers both inhabit and disorient this aesthetic politics. Dole follows the son-in-law of one of the saints that we meet in the book, a woman known as Zöhre Ana, and his family on an excursion to Anıt Kabir, the massive mausoleum of the founder of the Turkish Republic, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, and a principal site for the ritual production of Turkish secularism and nationalism. The group arrives at Atatürk's tomb complex with a passel of young boys who have just been circumcised, in accordance with the Sunna, the authoritative example of the Prophet Muhammad; Zöhre Ana recommended that the boys seek Atatürk's blessing on the occasion of this key right of passage. After being harassed by the guards at Anıt Kabir, who assert that it "is no place for worship" (p. 4), the group reluctantly withdraws. The tensions and ironies that this anecdote illustrates so vividly animate Dole's entire presentation to come. As he persuasively demonstrates, alternative Islamic healing practices destabilize the rationalizing teleologies and ideologies of corporeality and care that undergird Turkish secularism while simultaneously inhabiting and recasting secularism's distinctive politics of aesthetics in unexpected ways.

The subsequent ethnographic chapters of *Healing Secular Life* offer a wealth of material too diverse and fascinating to summarize properly in this brief context. We come to know the figure of Zöhre Ana particularly well. Over the past quarter-century, Zöhre Ana has attracted a substantial following of devotees who attribute the healing powers of a saint to her, yet she is also consummately "modern" in her appearance—she favors business suits and maintains her hair in a short, no-nonsense cut. Furthermore, she reveres Atatürk as a saint endowed with healing powers in his own right and, thereby, reframes the entire project of Turkish modernization as theological and soteriological. In another chapter, we meet the *cinci hoca*, an object of frequent anathema who is broadly considered to embody "a regressive form of religiosity, as the embodiment of irrationality, as an affront to individual autonomy and freedom of consciousness" (p. 129). And, yet, the *cinci hoca*, too, straddles debates over corporeality, therapeutic care and its commodification, and the proper place of Islam that are central to Turkish secularism and neo-orthodox Islam alike. Turkish studies scholars, in particular, will be fascinated by the tensions and continuities that Dole reveals between Turkey's two major confessional communities, Sunni Muslims and Alevi, who constitute as much as 20 percent of Turkey's population, and who combine Shi'a Islam with distinct ritual practices rooted in Central Asia. Although Dole registers the mutual disdain that often maintains between Sunnis and Alevi, the therapeutic practices he describes span and unravel this politicized division in myriad ways.

More generally, all of the healers and patients that we meet in *Healing Secular Life* necessarily negotiate, inhabit, and reframe the distinctive secular politics of aesthetics that defines contemporary Turkish life. And it is Dole's diligent sensitivity to the ethnographic textures, dilemmas, and reconciliations entailed by this secular politics of aesthetics that endows the book with its unique eloquence. While Dole's ethnography offers ample, urgent lessons to anthropologists of contemporary Turkey and Islam specifically, its intervention is by no means limited to these fields. On a more expansive level, *Healing Secular Life* is a compelling example for all scholars of modernity's constitutive politics of aesthetics and the manner in which it forms and reforms contemporary life.

Reference cited

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Storytelling on the Northern Irish Border: Characters and Community. Ray Cashman. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011. 283 pp.

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In the preface to *Storytelling on the Northern Irish Border: Characters and Community*, Ray Cashman reveals something of what readers should expect from his book when he tells us he has resisted "reactionary calls" (p. xi) among anthropologists to focus their research on Irish urban environments. Instead, he draws us back into the country parlors and small towns of an earlier generation of ethnographic and folkloric analysis in Ireland. So Cashman's book feels slightly anachronistic, and readers may be forgiven for recalling the writings of Henrie Glassie and Conrad Arensberg as the author analyzes the lives of various rural "characters" whom he came to know through extensive ethnographic fieldwork in Aghyaran, a so-called mixed (i.e., blend of Catholic and Protestant residents) border community in Ballymongan townland, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland. Those individuals not met in person he learned about through the many "larger-than-life" anecdotes and stories he heard while attending those most traditional of Irish events: the wake and *ceili* (a traditional social gathering or party). One can virtually taste the porter and feel the heat of burning peat in the cozy, country cottages that were the most common sites of both celebratory and memorial social gathering. In some ways, this is the most appealing feature of Cashman's book—the human dimension that enriches the analysis.