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1 Introduction

This volume resulted from a workshop on "Transnational Religious Spaces", jointly organized in December of 2018 by two research groups within the Leipzig University Collaborative Research Centre (SFB) 1199 "Processes of Spatialization under the Global Condition". As one of the research groups, headed by Adam Jones, focused on Africa, and the other, headed by Philip Clart, on East Asia, in the joint workshop we sought to achieve two aims: first, to investigate transnational religious spaces in a comparative manner by juxtaposing East Asian and African case examples, and second, to examine specific cases where the transnational space in question encompassed both East Asia and Africa. The latter perspective takes centre stage in two contributions, the chapters by Lambertz and Louveau, which examine the development of Japanese new religions in Africa. The remaining ten chapters each focus on one of the two continents and examine transnational flows of religious ideas, actors, and organizations out of, into, or within the given continental space. The volume is opened by Thomas Tweed's systematic reflections on categories for the study of transnationalism; his chapter on "Flows and Dams: Rethinking Categories for the Study of Transnationalism" critically weighs the metaphorical language we use to think, speak, and write about transnational religious spaces and thus functions as a second introduction. Therefore, I will limit myself here to sketching the individual chapters and their contributions to the larger picture, i.e. to our understanding of the ways transnational religious spaces are constructed and function.

While the cases studied in this volume are all located in the present or very recent past, none going further back than the nineteenth century, religion has been part and parcel of long-distance movements of people, ideas, and goods long before the nation state arose as a key structuring element of the global order. In earlier ages, the borders to be crossed were those of cultures, languages, and ethnicities. Middle Eastern and Egyptian mystery cults spread beyond their cultural contexts of origin through the Roman Empire to form networks of groups with an ethnically diverse membership communicating through the *linguae francae* of Latin and Greek. A Jewish sect, persecuted in its homeland, broke with its parent tradition by recruiting Gentiles and eventually developed into the largest religious system on this planet, that of Christianity in its various permutations. Perhaps it is religion's claim to transcendence of worldly limitations that makes it potentially a uniquely mobile and portable part of culture and hence more likely to move beyond its local contexts of origin. Even so, religious ideas do not travel without carriers, and so religions have always employed existing and emerging lines

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of communication, be they the land and sea trade routes followed by Buddhist monks from India and Central Asia to China, or the military infrastructures of Muslim conquerors in Spain, Spanish conquistadores in South and Central America, and British gunboat diplomacy in East Asia.

The chapters in this volume demonstrate religious flows patterned by two overarching global frameworks for the long-distance movement of people, ideas, and goods: colonialism and migration. Both are, of course, interdependent, but stand in a chronological sequence. The book is divided into three parts, dealing respectively with "Transnational Spaces in Colonial Settings" (Part I), "Migration and Transnational Religious Spaces" (Part II), and "Transnational Religious Spaces and Transcultural Interactions" (Part III). The following overview of the individual chapters discursively follows and ties up thematic threads among them, without necessarily adhering to their sequence and position in the book's formal structure.

The colonial age is treated here exclusively with a view towards Africa in the contributions by Burchardt, Jones & Castryck, and Echtler. The former two chapters examine the spatial impact of Christian missions under colonial conditions. Marian Burchardt, in his "From Mission Station to Tent Revival: Material Forms and Spatial Formats in Africa's Missionary Encounter", focuses on the mission station as a key material format employed by Protestant missionaries in organizing space. The mission station was intended to serve as a centre for the resettlement of converts, who were thereby removed from their "heathen" socio-cultural contexts. Thus, the stations became building stones of a parallel society that competed with and undermined traditional structures of social organization and authority and furthered the colonial enterprise by integrating the convert population into colonial infrastructures of trade, logistics, and oversight. At the same time, the stations never became fully immersed in the colonial state, seeing themselves primarily as nodes in networks stretching back to their home churches in Europe and North America rather than as parts of the colonial administration. As an unintended consequence, this perceived spiritual autonomy of Protestant congregations provided the organizational rationale for indigenous churches critical of white domination. Burchardt argues that the recently burgeoning Evangelical and Pentecostal churches in Africa "have adopted the historical Protestant emphasis on map-making not only in their efforts to plant churches, win converts, and save souls in Africa but also in the reverse mission campaigns in Europe". The mission station format can be perceived as historical inspiration behind two examples discussed in the present volume. Magnus Echtler ("Redeeming Zululand: Placing Cultural Resonances in the Nazareth Baptist Church, South Africa") shows how the communal compounds of the Nazareth Baptist Church (NBC), founded by

Isaiah Shembe in 1910, have a structure that echoes Zulu royal kraals and points to the NBC's ambivalent relationship with the traditional Zulu kingdom, whose sins it claims to redeem even while adopting its nomenclature and symbols of authority. Here a colonial-era spatial format has been localized and is actively involved in the reinvention, negotiation, and legitimation of political authority between colonial, apartheid, and post-apartheid state and Zulu royalty.

The East African example of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), studied by Afe Adogame ("From Redemption City to Christian Disneyland: The Unfolding of Transnational Religious Spaces"), carries the mission station logic, through its evangelical permutation in the shape of the megachurch, to quite another scale with its 25-hectare Redemption City on the Lagos-Ibadan expressway, "a transnational religious and social space, a network hub that hosts major religious events, transmits spirituality and religious ideologies, represents 'a home away from home' to global visitors, and a pilgrimage haven for members and non-members alike". Redemption City is the centre of a network of up to 5,000 RCCG churches worldwide, a network that is developed following a masterplan of systematic church development, including smaller-scale Redemption Camps as hubs, and a pattern of spatial distribution defined by set driving or walking distances between individual parishes (five minutes' walking distance in developing countries, five minutes' driving distance in developed countries, and thirty minutes' driving distance in the USA). Carried to its logical (though not necessarily practical) conclusion, this is a vision of mission as the creation of a densely meshed network of spaces of redemption that has an uncanny resemblance to the early missionary phantasies of Ludwig Krapf, who in 1844 dreamed of opening up Africa for the Gospel by stationing missionaries at set distances from each other from the East to the West Coast, thus creating a Christian corridor not so much as a territorial format, but as a logistical chain for further proselytizing work in all directions. As Adam Jones and Geert Castryck show in their chapter ("Mission Spaces in German East Africa: Spatial Imaginations, Implementations, and Incongruities against the Backdrop of an Emerging Colonial Spatial Order"), such a spatial imagination was not viable once Africa was divided up into colonial spheres of influence granted to European nation states in the Berlin Africa Conference of 1884/85. Henceforth, the missionary enterprise had to be adjusted to the needs, expectations, and limitations of the European "motherland", which first of all tried to limit the apportioning of mission fields to missionary societies of a particular national background. In German East Africa, this led to an influx of German-based Protestant and Catholic missionaries, sometimes to the exclusion of their non-German fellow religionists, though this worked more smoothly in the case of generally nationally based Protestant societies than for the

quintessentially transnational Roman Catholic Church. However, the missionary societies and orders were not just willing pawns on the colonial chessboard, but pursued their own spatial formatting, which included mutual exclusions from mission fields, buffer zones between fields, and, as was to expected with such regimes of border management, frequent conflicts about alleged encroachments. No such conflicts could be brought before the secular courts, as the spatial regimes underlying them were not decreed or even supported by the colonial state.

The nation state and its border management loom large in Johara Berriane's chapter on "Transnational Evangelical Spaces in Muslim Urban Settings: The Presence and Place-Making of African Christian Migrants in Morocco". While Adogame prefaces his chapter with an account of an American delegate to the RCCG's 2018 Holy Ghost Congress being refused entry into Nigeria because of lacking visa documents, demonstrating that even global enterprises such as the Redeemed Christian Church of God may find their transnational flows of people and money thwarted by a simple missing stamp in a passport (or its digital equivalent), the migrants studied by Berriane have to deal with a "global condition" in which the vast flows of migration encounter increasingly strict border controls. Morocco used to be a mere transit country, but now finds itself hosting a growing population of migrants, some of whom still wait to cross over into Europe, while others end up settling down, availing themselves of the new legal framework for obtaining Moroccan residency permits. Compared to the practices of the wealthy and strategically-oriented RCCG studied by Adogame, church-planting in Morocco is a less controlled process, with church communities emerging among the backlog of African migrants in front of the gates to Europe to provide both spiritual and social services – places to pray, places to sleep, as well as places to meet the smugglers who promise to put you on a boat to Spain.

Earlier on, these churches were often as transient as their parishioners, and pastors themselves were migrants who eventually would move on and had to be replaced by new leadership personnel from sub-Saharan Africa. However, as more and more migrants settle down, churches move out of private living rooms into more permanent, dedicated quarters. This stabilization of church space goes along with institutional consolidation, as leadership of some groups is assumed by pastors who are no longer on their way to Europe but have migrated to Morocco as the intended endpoint of their journey, there to minister to the growing sub-Saharan Christian population. This development is accompanied by a stabilization of links back to the home churches (in Ivory Coast, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria, etc.), which dispatch pastors to Morocco and thus are beginning to build their own transnational networks.

Berriane focuses on the place-making of African Evangelical churches in a country whose state religion is Islam, which presents a mirror image to Klaus

Hock's study of Muslim enclaves in Western Africa, called *zongo*, which served as settlements for itinerant traders ("Transforming Spatial Formats: Imagined Commonalities, Imaginary Spaces, and Spaces of Imagination"). Another type of transient space is represented by the "pilgrim camps" of Hausa in the Sudan, who have got stuck there on the *hajj* and for four or five generations have been living in supposedly temporary settlements, still claiming to be on their way to Mecca. Here Hock introduces an important distinction between imagined and imaginary spaces, with Mecca, the final goal of the journey, as the imagined space, while "the 'permanent' pilgrims' destination is an imaginary space located 'somewhere beyond', virtually linked to the *shaykh*'s dwelling in settlements holding the status of 'permanent transience'."

Migration as the primary social context for the formation of religious networks is also key to several of the studies on East Asia. A most instructive parallel to Berriane's work is Wei-Yi Cheng's chapter on Buddhist festivals among Vietnamese migrants in Taiwan ("Transitioning the Vietnamese Ullambana Festival to Taiwan"). Cheng conceptualizes Vietnamese Buddhism in Taiwan as a "translocative network", as her case examples do not focus primarily on transnational links (e.g. back to "home temples" in Vietnam), but on the mobile practices, supported by social media, of Vietnamese clerics who are usually registered as students at colleges in Taiwan and who criss-cross the island, performing ritual services for groups of Vietnamese lay Buddhists. Institutional links back to Vietnam are weak, and the composition of the clergy fluctuates greatly, as most students are unable to obtain resident visas and need to return to Vietnam after graduation. Ritual events, such as the Ullambana used by Cheng as her case example, take place in rented or borrowed spaces, including public libraries, community centres, and Chinese Buddhist temples. These locations need to be turned into "sacroscapes", a necessity even when the ritual is held on the premises of a Chinese Buddhist nunnery, which must be converted into a Vietnamese Buddhist space by means of Vietnamese Buddhist objects and ritual styles.

An aspect missing from Taiwanese instantiations of Vietnamese Buddhism is the split between two Buddhist communities and two migrant communities, which is the focus of Janet Alison Hoskins and Nguyen Thi Hien's exploration in their chapter on "Vietnamese Transnational Religions: The Cold War Polarities in 'Little Hanois' and "Little Saigons'". The authors juxtapose Vietnamese communities in the United States, Canada, Australia, and Western Europe, which consist overwhelmingly of refugees from southern Vietnam, with overseas communities in Eastern Europe, which are made up mainly of students and former contract workers who came from northern Vietnam. This split is not merely geographical, as it involves political allegiance to two regimes: the current Socialist Republic of Vietnam, with its capital Hanoi, or the defunct Republic of Vietnam, with what

used to be its capital, Saigon. This split is apparent in sacred spaces marked with the flags of the respective political entities (or in a few cases the attempt to build bridges between the communities by a conscious refusal to allow any national flags on temple premises). The differing political background also has an impact on the degree to which the respective religious networks maintain lines of communication back to Vietnam, with the Little Hanois naturally maintaining much closer links to the homeland, which do not just involve the importation of religious personnel (e.g. Vietnamese Buddhist monks and nuns staffing temples in Europe) but also serve to transport other forms of religious belief and practice, such as spirit-medium cults dedicated to mother goddesses and even to Hồ Chí Minh. Thus, we are dealing here with two quite distinct religious networks, differing significantly in their religious contents and styles and in the directions of their transnational coverage, with only very limited overlap in terms of personnel and participation.

The chapters on culturally Chinese religious organizations also share an emphasis on migration as the key social context but stress that the specific structuring of the networks spun as lines among nodes of diaspora communities shows significant differences. Rongdao Lai's chapter on "Tiantai Transnationalism: Mobility, Identity, and Lineage Networks in Modern Chinese Buddhism" traces the early twentieth-century origins of a new form of religious authorization that enabled a particular form of Chinese Buddhism, the Tiantai school, to spread globally: the decoupling of Dharma transmission from the succession to the abbacy of specific temples. This allowed Tiantai masters to authorize more than one disciple as their successor, and with this authorization the disciples could then go out into the world and found their own temples. The closing of mainland China to such religious entrepreneurship after 1949 and the relocation of masters to Hong Kong led to the formation of a transnational Tiantai network, with "Dharma heirs" establishing themselves in Chinese diasporas across the globe. The key difference to the competing Buddhist organization Fo Guang Shan, studied by Jens Reinke, is the lack of central oversight in the case of Tiantai. As Lai stresses,

> the Tiantai lineage does not have a headquarters. Autonomous temples and monasteries within the lineages are connected through a fluid, flexible, and diffused network of identity and affiliation. [. . .] Rather than being sectarian and exclusive, the modern Tiantai network can be thought of as a complex and extended "Dharma family" that offers its members authority and legitimacy.

The chapters discussed up to now all deal with transnational (and, more generally, translocative) flows – flows that cross national and continental borders, but not necessarily cultural and ethnic borders. Such transcultural crossings are

implied in most of them (e.g. Echtler's example of a reimagined Zulu nation or the multi-ethnic composition of the parishioners of African evangelical churches in Morocco, studied by Berriane), but this is not the core focus of these chapters' analysis. It moves to the centre of attention, however, in the chapters by Louveau and Lambertz as well as those by Broy and Reinke. This pairing of chapters might appear at first sight to be geographically driven (two on Africa and two on East Asia), but the rationale is actually conceptual: the two pairs of studies represent different models of religious organization for outreach beyond their own ethnically or culturally defined primary constituencies. One model follows a "franchising" approach that grants substantial autonomy to the religious organization's local chapters, even while maintaining control of the "brand" by means of periodic supervision or stable feedback channels between the headquarters and the local chapters; the other approach evinces a more hierarchically organized structure with firm control over overseas chapters, and members of the headquarters' ethnic base community in leadership position overseas as well.

The chapters by Louveau and Lambertz illustrate the former approach, using African chapters of Japanese new religions as case examples. Peter Lambertz, in his "Of Ancestors and Others: Cultural Resonance from Japan among Spiritualists in Kinshasa", addresses groups derived from Sekai Kyūseikyō (SKK/Church of World Messianity) in the Democratic Republic of Congo. While these can be envisioned as overseas nodes in a network centred on a Japanese (or in this case, Brazilian) headquarters, what in fact travels long the strings of the network is primarily a cultural resonance in terms of perceived continuities and compatibilities between African and Japanese spiritualities. More concretely, the network strings are channels by which sacred objects are sent from Brazil to Congo, and lists of ancestors to be saved are sent from Congo to Brazil for further ritual processing. The ritual activities in the Congolese SKK chapters themselves are run and controlled by locals and are shown to address very local spiritual concerns about healing, power, magic, and the care for ancestors.

In her study, "Japanese Spiritualities in Africa: From a Transnational Space to the Creation of a Local Lifestyle", Frédérique Louveau directs our attention to the growth in Senegal of Sukyō Mahikari, a Japanese new religion that was brought there by a French expatriate from Paris in 1974. The Senegalese *dōjōs* are subordinate to their "regional delegation", which in turn communicates with the headquarters in Japan. The regional delegation is responsible for providing fittings and training to local *dōjōs*, assuring a fairly high degree of uniformity in religious practice. The membership typically has a middle-class or even higher social background and tends to share similarly elite outlooks across a number of West African nations. As Louveau points out, the members "belong to a deterritorialized transnational spiritual community even though they strongly

territorialize Mahikari's practices", as they define Sukyō Mahikari (among other meanings) as a healing practice providing protection from witchcraft. The *dōjō* also serves as a platform of civic engagement; the power cultivated in Sukyō Mahikari's system of practice is directed towards the purification of society and the environment, for example through participation in reforestation campaigns. Louveau compares the vertically integrated West African network of Sukyō Mahikari with the very loose network of *Reiki* practice groups in the same region, "formed by individual 'masters' and their disciples in accordance with the migrations of these people". Thus, authority in *Reiki* is transmitted in dyadic master/disciple relationships, not unlike the Dharma transmission system described by Rongdao Lai for Tiantai Buddhism. Sukyō Mahikari, by contrast, exerts a higher degree of centralized authority, ensuring homogeneity of practice in all local *dōjōs* by fairly strict oversight; it differs in this regard not only from the loose networks of *Reiki* practitioners, but also from the SKK network in Kinshasa, whose vertical integration with a transnational headquarters is much weaker.

If we take the degree of vertical integration as a criterion for creating a continuum of religious networks, we might begin with *Reiki* as the least vertically integrated network through SKK in Kinshasa to Sukyō Mahikari in Senegal, with its concern for enforcing standard practice. However, the continuum needs to be further extended towards the more highly integrated end if we add the case examples provided by Nikolas Broy ("American Dao and Global Interactions: Transnational Religious Networks in an English-Speaking Yiguandao Congregation in Urban California") and Jens Reinke ("Generating Global Pure Lands: Renjian Buddhist Civic Engagement within and beyond the Chinese Diaspora Communities Worldwide"). Both chapters focus on transcultural practices in particular overseas nodes (in the USA and South Africa) of the two Taiwanese religious organizations in question, Fo Guang Shan and Yiguandao. Both are characterized by strong vertical integration, which extends down to the local chapters, creating a strict standardization not just of practice (as in the case of Sukyō Mahikari in Senegal) but also of personnel. Real leadership in all the local branches examined by Broy and Reinke remains in the hands of either first-generation Taiwanese migrants or religious specialist emissaries dispatched by the Taiwanese headquarters. Both organizations thus rely heavily on Taiwanese (and, secondarily, more loosely defined ethnic Chinese) diaspora populations for building and extending their overseas branches. Both chapters examine endeavours by local branches to reach beyond the diaspora communities in which they are embedded, be it by civic engagement in the case of Fo Guang Shan in the USA and South Africa, or by Yiguandao proselytizing in and beyond the Los Angeles ethnoburbs (by means of social media) to reach an English-speaking audience. While these activities can all point to successes, ultimately the case studies show that,

while symbolically important, they remain marginal to the core operations of the overseas branches, whose bread-and-butter business is still the provision of religious and cultural services to diaspora migrant populations.

These two examples indicate that in the context of global migratory movements, transnational religious flows are not necessarily also transcultural flows, or rather that the two aspects need to be separated analytically. Cultural distance per se does not explain this gap, as Japanese new religions such as Sukyō Mahikari and Sekai Kyūseikyō apparently encounter fewer problems in this regard and develop well in areas far removed from any Japanese diaspora communities, such as Senegal and the Democratic Republic of Congo. What makes Japanese religions more portable than Chinese ones (at least in the cases covered by the chapters in this volume)? This is one of the questions for further study that the chapters bring to our attention, and the production of such new questions arising out of the juxtaposition of research in fields that are not usually in close scholarly conversation should be seen as the primary rationale for cross-regional and interdisciplinary workshops such as the one that produced this volume.