

congresses and the incorporation of Orishas into Trinidadian carnival (including the tensions it caused within Ifá/Orisha communities) to highlight differences between what Castor calls Yoruba-centric shrines (religious communities that look to Africa for spiritual authority and ritual guidance) and Trinidad-centric shrines (communities rooted in local practices and histories in Trinidad). Chapter 4 explores the growing transnational networks of practitioners by focusing on connections between the Caribbean and Africa, especially through the experiences of many who traveled to Nigeria for participation in the Seventh annual Orisha World Congress in Nigeria in 2001. Here, Castor investigates how people were initiated in Nigeria and what she calls spiritual economies: “the transfer and exchange of value...for spiritual labor” (p. 122). Chapter 5 explores how the first Ifá divinatory lineages were established in Trinidad and how that shifts the religious landscape, especially with regard to older Trinidad-centric Orisha religious communities.

One of the valuable contributions of this book is how Castor grounds the ethnography in her own experiences and interactions as someone initiated in the Ifá/Orisha religion in Trinidad. Starting the book with her own personal calling in Chicago in the 1990s, Castor takes the reader on a journey in which, through her eyes, we experience the transformations in Trinidad Orisha religion, including the incorporation of several Ifá lineages in Trinidad itself, the visits of notable Babalawo and Ifá priests in Trinidad, travels to Ilé Ifè (the ancestral home of all Yorùbá people) in Nigeria, and interactions with various members of local and international communities of practitioners. Castor demonstrates a wonderful willingness to chronicle her own challenges as she experienced growth in knowledge and experience as a scholar-practitioner. In fact, as a reader, I wanted more of this form of writing throughout, as these were often some of the most engaging sections. I also wanted to learn more about class differences in Ifá/Orisha communities, and I appreciated learning the names and histories of, and reading interviews with, specific personages who played significant roles in the development and transformation of Ifá/Orisha religion in Trinidad.

Overall, what the reader takes away is a new appreciation for the diversity of approaches and experiences within Ifá/Orisha communities in Trinidad—Yorùbá-centric or Trinidad-centric; middle-class or grass roots; Itenifa or Elean initiations into different Ifá lineages—and the role of

national politics, Black Power and African consciousness for shaping what became (and what continues to become) Ifá/Orisha religion as practiced in Trinidad. In this, we learn how specific local contexts, international connections and particular travelers shaped and continue to mold this diasporic African-based religion in Trinidad, placing Castor’s ethnography alongside recent work of scholars of Yorùbá religion in places like South Carolina (Clarke 2004) and Cuba (Beliso-De Jesús 2015). This highly recommended ethnography would be a very valuable text for undergraduate and graduate students, general scholars and practitioners alike.

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Being Muslim: A Cultural History of Women of Color in American Islam. Sylvia Chan-Malik. New York: New York University Press, 2018. 288 pp. (Cloth US\$89.00; Paper US\$29.00)

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DOI: 10.1111/traa.12147.

In the introduction to *Black Looks: Race and Representation*, bell hooks insists on the centrality of the image in creating humanizing, and liberating epistemological frameworks for people of color in arguing “[w]e experience our collective crisis as African American people within the realm of the image” (1992, p. 6). The spectrum of available representation has a profound relationship with individual and collective notions about constraints and possibilities with far-reaching ideological, social, political, economic, and spiritual implications. It is with hooks’ assessment in mind that I consider the myriad intellectual contributions of Sylvia Chan-Malik’s monograph on women of color and US Islam not only to the available

scholarly literature on Black religion in the US, American Islam and, significantly, Muslim women but also to the expanded possibilities for representation more broadly that her monograph provides. Given the long-standing, historical investments in orientalist imaginaries and clash-of-civilizations frameworks that infuse much of the contemporary public discourse on Islam and Muslims—paradigms that have been amplified in the decades following the Iranian Revolution, the attacks of September 11th, and the election of Donald Trump—her work is a necessary and timely intervention.

In *Being Muslim*, Chan-Malik deftly analyzes the intertwined exigencies and possibilities of race, gender, and class as lived by historical and contemporary US Muslim women of color through their intentional spiritual practice. Though this work also analyzes the lived experiences of Latina, South Asian, and Arab-American Muslim women, most of the women she profiles are African American Muslims, and it is from this perspective that much of the work's central thesis emerges. For Chan-Malik, "being Muslim and practicing Islam [in the US] have consistently been forged against commonsense notions of racial, gendered, and religious belonging and citizenship" (p. 5). As such, they represent the embodiment of what she terms "affective insurgency," a central hallmark of how Islam is practiced by US Muslim women. *Being Muslim* emphasizes the centrality of Black women's experiences in the story of US Islam and locates the women she profiles within a web of contested social relations and Black struggles for freedom and agency. Using both archival materials and interviews with her contemporary subjects to inform her work, she uses embodiment and affect as a lens through which she excavates and provides a cohesive account of US Islam that departs from dominant narratives that center the perspectives of prominent American Muslim men, while simultaneously minimizing the deep connections between Islam and Black American experiences.

Chan-Malik provides detailed, nuanced, and rigorous biographical accounts of a range of Muslim women, including African American luminaries Betty Shabazz, jazz singer Dakota Staton, and Sonia Sanchez—a decorated poet and veteran of the Black Arts Movement. Her treatment of Shabazz is refreshing, in that it rescues her significant accomplishments beyond her marriage to Malcolm X, and, at the same time, she brings to the surface the lesser known religious connections to Black

US Islam in the biographies of Staton and Sanchez. These famous women's narratives are brought together in this work with the life histories of previously nameless African American Muslim women, including one Florence (Zeinab) Watts, who converted to Islam in the 1920s. Watts was heretofore known primarily as one of "Four American Moslem Ladies" as described in a caption underneath a photograph taken of her and three other women that appeared in the *Moslem Sunrise*, a periodical published by the US branch of the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam in 1923. Following similar interventions of works by writers such as Ula Taylor (2017), Donna Murch (2010), Robyn Spencer (2016), and Ashley Farmer (2017), which destabilized the predominating male-centric recountings of the Black Power era, Chan-Malik's book places the perspectives of US Muslim women of color front and center. *Being Muslim* strikes a delicate and critical balance. Her work does not apologize for instantiations of patriarchy that have manifested in Muslim institutions in the US, in the often interconnected Pan-Africanist and Black liberation circles, nor does it reproduce well-worn analytical binaries that are often presumed to bifurcate Muslim women's lives. Importantly, in this work, by treating the women she writes about as full human subjects, not limited to a narrowly conceived set of concerns such as national security or the heavily fetishized discourse of "the veil," her account allows for the possibility of representing the lives of these women in a more robust way, including an insightful and necessary discussion of how a Muslim feminism—as generated by the lives of the women she writes about—might effectively enter into conversation with these issues.

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