
Ron Geaves

EDITORIAL

Ron Geaves is Visiting Professor in the Centre for Study of Islam in Britain based in the School of History, Archaeology and Religion, Cardiff University. He has previously held Chairs in the Study of Religion and the Comparative Study of Religion at the University of Chester and Liverpool Hope. He is a pioneer of the study of Muslims in Britain, carrying out a number of empirical studies and publishing on the development of religious life within Muslim communities since 1988.

Islam-UK Centre
School of History, Archaeology and Religion
Cardiff University
John Percival Building
Colum Drive
Cardiff CF10 3EU
UK
GeavesR@cardiff.ac.uk

As I noted in the editorial for Volume 9.2, the tenth year of publication of *Fieldwork in Religion* was a good moment to consider my tenure as founding editor and in the light of my retirement from full-time employment in academia in December 2013. As a consequence of those two factors I decided to step back as editor and this volume of the journal is my last, and this my final editorial. As with any successful finale, there are always thanks to offer up to those whose support has been invaluable. My first thanks goes out to all our contributors who have seen fit to offer up their scholarship to the journal, for without their commitment to write and publish with us, our pages would have remained empty. I also thank all our peer reviewers. Peer review is a thankless task, undertaken by so many dedicated academics, without praise or financial reward, and in an age of endless demands on time, one that only adds to the stress of modern academic life. As an editor I have really appreciated the time given by such selfless commitment. Peer reviewers ensure the quality of the end product and I hope that many of our regular reviewers will remain in service to the new editors. I would like to also thank George Chryssides for operating quietly and efficiently throughout my tenure as editor as the journal's review editor. The reviews were always there for every issue as if by osmosis. However, I know that behind the scenes George was ensuring the process of collecting books for review, finding reviewers and chasing editorial deadlines. Thanks again, George.

I would like to also remember with gratitude past fellow editors, Chris Partridge and Andy Dawson. Theirs was more than an editing function, but a sharing in the vision of the journal and its commitment towards field work undertaken with lived religious communities. In that respect, also, I thank Janet Joyce of *Equinox*, who shared the vision too; she had a true affection for the study of religion and a love of journals. She immediately bought into the vision of the founding editors and offered us a home. Finally all my thanks to the various editors of *Equinox* who have worked with getting the journal out on time. In particular, to Audrey Mann, who worked tirelessly behind the scenes as a gracious and reliable copy-editor. Audrey has retired too, after ten years and I offer my best wishes to Sarah Norman who has taken over already for Volume 10. I also wish all success to the succeeding editors, Carole Cusack and Rachelle Scott. I am sure that they will take the journal to new heights, ensuring its place among other highly reputed international peer reviewed journals in the study of religion. I am sure that they share my passion for the empirical study of lived religion and I know the journal remains in good hands. I do not intend to completely disappear. I remain founding editor and I hope to work with Janet Joyce to publish some edited collections of the journal's most influential papers over the last ten years.

In this final edition under my editorship there are five contributions, including an offering of my own. The first article by Marcus Moberg and Tommy Ramstedt, both from the Department of Comparative Religion at Åbo Akademi University in Finland, and is titled "Re-contextualizing the Framework of *Scene* for the Empirical Study of Post-institutional Religious Spaces in Practice." Moberg and Ramstedt explore less conventionally organized, post-institutional forms of religion that can arise in places in the western world where there is a continuing general decline in institutional religion. They posit that such religious forms are empirically elusive through the application of available methodological frameworks and put forward a re-contextualizing of the framework of *scene* for the study of post-institutional religious spaces in actual practice. The article outlines and explicates the methodological utility of the framework of *scene* through applying it on a particular geographically located post-institutional religious space: the present-day so-called "fringe-knowledge" *scene* in Finland.

Nisbert Taisekwa Taringa and Clifford Mushishi from the Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy, University of Zimbabwe provide the second article entitled "Mainline Christianity and Gender in Zimbabwe." The research was undertaken to establish the actual situation on the ground regarding various Christian denominations' attempts to confront or conform to biblical and cultural norms regarding the role and position of women. The research is based on six mainline churches and reveals that it may not be enough to concentrate on gender

in missionary religions such as Christianity, without paying attention to the base culture; that is, African traditional religio-culture which informs most people who are now Christians.

Emily Burns, a PhD candidate in the Religion and Society Research Cluster, School of Social Sciences and Psychology, Western Sydney University, provides insights into the disturbing dilemma faced by young researchers when they are suddenly faced with access issues. It is somehow fitting that Emily's piece should appear here in my final edition as editor. The very first issue of *Fieldwork in Religion* contained a ground-breaking piece entitled "Closed Worlds: (Not) Accessing Deobandi *dar ul-uloom* in Britain" by the very experienced researcher Sophie Gilliat-Ray, Director of the Centre for the Study of Islam in Britain at Cardiff University. Emily, too, has been faced with the experience of failure to gain entry to her chosen field site and continues the tradition of discussing such failure as part of the field experience. Entitled "'Thanks, but no thanks': Ethnographic Fieldwork and the Experience of Rejection from a New Religious Movement," the researcher notes that "rarely do researchers publicly divulge their experiences of failure and rejection during fieldwork." The article offers the author's experience of participant refusal during her doctoral research on a New Religious Movement in Australia in 2009, focused on the group's home birth practices. It provides an analysis of the methodological literature on access, rapport, and the importance of a reflexive approach to one's positionality, and questions the relative lack of scholarship on fieldwork rejection and failure. By engaging with the experience of rejection, this article argues that rather than a mere lack of rapport, it was the complex social and political context of the group, compounded by the politically charged topic of home birth, that generated the decline to participate. Using this experience as an example, this article argues that rather than embarrassment and shame, rejection and failure form part of the "non-data" of research practice, offering methodological and epistemological insights that come from a critical engagement with such experiences.

In the penultimate piece, "Emancipatory Possibilities beyond Kyriarchy: A Mexican Woman's Story," Catherine Caufield of Athabasca University in Edmonton, Canada offers a sensitive but penetrating oral history of María. It is our second rendering on gender in this issue but takes a very different approach to a Christian woman's negotiation of patriarchal culture embedded in religious forms. In this article, it is the (pseudonymous) voice of María in interview with the researcher that will lead the reader, as it did the researcher, through the major phases of her life, centred as it is from her evolving perspectives on God. The application of critical theory to what Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza identifies as the kyriarchal systems of domination active in María's life provokes possibilities for different kinds

of thinking for both María and for the reader about María's life and about the context in which she lives it. As María understands her life in terms of her relationship with God, each of the phases of her spiritual life—her Catholicism, her conversion to fundamental Protestantism, her break from the fundamentalist *Templo*, and her current phase of solitary communion with God—serve as the basis from which to articulate her concrete, actual suffering. In attempting to break through either positive or negative identifications of what Mexican religious discourse implies, this article utilizes the tool of non-identity thinking as an approach to listening and entering into the way María conceptualizes God. With the assistance of critical theory, this article reflects on the way María's conceptualization articulates with her lived experience, seeking the crevices which permit, however briefly, the possibilities of reconciliation and resistance to the kinds of kyriarchal domination that are reflected in María's particular story.

In the final article of this issue I bow out as the journal's editor with a piece of my own, entitled "Questioning the Category of 'Spiritual Capital' Drawing upon Field Studies of 'Spiritual Entrepreneurs' and their Role in the Economic and Social Development of British South Asian Muslims." The article explores the categories "social" and "spiritual capital" used by sociologists and argues that, on the basis of field studies carried out on "spiritual entrepreneurs," namely South Asian origin Sufi *shaykhs* in the UK, the category of "spiritual capital" needs to be sharpened, even redefined, in order to create distance from the category of "social capital." The article critically explores a number of social theorists who have commented on spiritual capital as a form of social capital and challenges their understandings of religious phenomena.

Well, there it is: my final editorial is completed. A warm goodbye from the 10th volume of *Fieldwork in Religion*. In the first editorial it was stated that "whether one is researching indigenous religions, world faiths, new religions and alternative spiritualities, or, indeed, the religious significance of contemporary popular culture, *Fieldwork in Religion* will become an invaluable source of scholarship." I hope that we have come close to that aim over the last ten years and that the new editorial team will go further still over the next decade.