

Wombs And Alien Spirits Women Men And The Zar Cult In Northern Sudan New Directions In Anthropological Writing

Some of the most innovative and provocative work on the emotions and illness is occurring in cross-cultural research on depression. Culture and Depression presents the work of anthropologists, psychiatrists, and psychologists who examine the controversies, agreements, and conceptual and methodological problems that arise in the course of such research. A book of enormous depth and breadth of discussion, Culture and Depression enriches the cross-cultural study of emotions and mental illness and leads it in new directions. It commences with a historical study followed by a series of anthropological accounts that examine the problems that arise when depression is assessed in other cultures. This is a work of impressive scholarship which demonstrates that anthropological approaches to affect and illness raise central questions for psychiatry and psychology, and that cross-cultural studies of depression raise equally provocative questions for anthropology.

Just one generation ago, the Sora tribe in India lived in a world populated by the spirits of their dead, who spoke to them through shamans in trance. Every day, they negotiated their wellbeing in heated arguments or in quiet reflections on their feelings of love, anger, and guilt. Today, young Sora are rejecting the worldview of their ancestors and switching their allegiance to warring sects of fundamentalist Christianity or Hinduism. Communion with ancestors is banned as sacred sites are demolished, female shamans are replaced by male priests, and debate with the dead gives way to prayer to gods. For some, this shift means liberation from jungle spirits through literacy, employment, and democratic politics; others despair for fear of being forgotten after death. How can a society abandon one understanding of reality so suddenly and see the world in a totally different way? Over forty years, anthropologist Piers Vitebsky has shared the lives of shamans, pastors, ancestors, gods, policemen, missionaries, and alphabet worshippers, seeking explanations from social theory, psychoanalysis, and theology. Living without the Dead lays bare today's crisis of indigenous religions and shows how historical reform can bring new fulfillments—but also new torments and uncertainties. Vitebsky explores the loss of the Sora tradition as one for greater humanity: just as we have been losing our wildernesses, so we have been losing a diverse range of cultural and spiritual possibilities, tribe by tribe. From the award-winning author of *The Reindeer People*, this is a heartbreaking story of cultural change and the extinction of an irreplaceable world, even while new religious forms come into being to take its place.

"Zigon's ethnography provides a fascinating window onto the concrete processes through which people undergoing rehabilitation for drug addiction are remade as moral persons. This book adeptly combines ethnographically-based descriptions with forays into theology and Soviet history to deliver a compelling account of self-transformation in a contemporary Russian Orthodox milieu."—Eugene Raikhel, University of Chicago "Over the last decade, anthropologists have increasingly come to study the role of morality in shaping the course of social life. Within anthropological debates around morality, Zigon has been developing one of the most creative and challenging positions. In this book, he pushes his project to a whole new level, working it out carefully through

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an important ethnographic case. Those interested in morality in any field will want to read this striking exemplification of the way an anthropology of morality can help us think about social life in new ways."—Joel Robbins, University of California, San Diego

A comprehensive history of abortion in Renaissance Italy. In this authoritative history, John Christopoulos provides a provocative and far-reaching account of abortion in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Italy. Drawing on portraits of women who terminated—or were forced to terminate—pregnancies, he finds that Italians maintained a fundamental ambivalence about abortion, despite injunctions from civil and religious authorities. Italians from all levels of society sought, had, and participated in abortions. Early modern Italy was not an absolute anti-abortion culture, an exemplary Catholic society centered on the “traditional family.” Rather, Christopoulos shows, Italians held many views on abortion, and their responses to its practice varied. Bringing together medical, religious, and legal perspectives alongside a social and cultural history of sexuality, reproduction, and the family, Christopoulos offers a nuanced and convincing account of the meanings Italians ascribed to abortion and shows how prevailing ideas about the practice were spread, modified, and challenged. Christopoulos begins by introducing readers to prevailing medical ideas about abortion and women’s bodies, describing the widely available purgative medicines and surgeries that various healers and women themselves employed to terminate pregnancies. He also explores how these ideas and practices ran up against and shaped theology, medicine, and law. Catholic understanding of abortion was changing amid religious, legal, and scientific debates concerning the nature of human life, women’s bodies, and sexual politics. Christopoulos examines how ecclesiastical, secular, and medical authorities sought to regulate abortion, and how tribunals investigated and punished its procurers—or didn’t, even when they could have.

Based on the Book of Genesis, Dinah shares her perspective on religious practices and sexual politics.

In 2074, while attending the Hanover School for Expecting Teen Mothers aboard an earth-orbiting spaceship, sixteen-year-old Elvie finds herself in the middle of an alien race war and makes a startling discovery about her pregnancy.

Weaving early accounts of witchcraft-trial records, ecclesiastical tracts, folklore, and popular iconography-into new and startling patterns, Carlo Ginzburg presents in *Ecstasies* compelling evidence of a hidden shamanistic culture that flourished across Europe and in England for thousands of years.

From the author of the National Book Award finalist *Black Leopard, Red Wolf* and the WINNER of the 2015 Man Booker Prize for *A Brief History of Seven Killings* "An undeniable success." — The New York Times Book Review A true triumph of voice and storytelling, *The Book of Night Women* rings with both profound authenticity and a distinctly contemporary energy. It is the story of Lilith, born into slavery on a Jamaican sugar plantation at the end of the eighteenth century. Even at her birth, the slave women around her recognize a dark power that they- and she-will come to both revere and fear. The Night Women, as they call themselves, have long been plotting a slave revolt, and as Lilith comes of age they see her as the key to their plans. But when she begins to understand her own feelings, desires, and identity, Lilith starts to push at the edges of what is imaginable for the life of a slave woman, and risks becoming the conspiracy's weak link. But the real revelation of the book-the secret to the stirring imagery

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and insistent prose—is Marlon James himself, a young writer at once breathtakingly daring and wholly in command of his craft. Based on the author's dissertation (Columbia University).

"Its publication should be a major event for cognitive linguistics and should pose a major challenge for cognitive science. In addition, it should have repercussions in a variety of disciplines, ranging from anthropology and psychology to epistemology and the philosophy of science. . . . Lakoff asks: What do categories of language and thought reveal about the human mind? Offering both general theory and minute details, Lakoff shows that categories reveal a great deal."—David E. Leary, *American Scientist*

A trailblazing, conversation-starting history of women's health—from the earliest medical ideas about women's illnesses to hormones and autoimmune diseases—brought together in a fascinating sweeping narrative. Elinor Cleghorn became an unwell woman ten years ago. She was diagnosed with an autoimmune disease after a long period of being told her symptoms were anything from psychosomatic to a possible pregnancy. As Elinor learned to live with her unpredictable disease she turned to history for answers, and found an enraging legacy of suffering, mystification, and misdiagnosis. In *Unwell Women*, Elinor Cleghorn traces the almost unbelievable history of how medicine has failed women by treating their bodies as alien and other, often to perilous effect. The result is an authoritative and groundbreaking exploration of the relationship between women and medical practice, from the "wandering womb" of Ancient Greece to the rise of witch trials across Europe, and from the dawn of hysteria as a catchall for difficult-to-diagnose disorders to the first forays into autoimmunity and the shifting understanding of hormones, menstruation, menopause, and conditions like endometriosis. Packed with character studies and case histories of women who have suffered, challenged, and rewritten medical orthodoxy—and the men who controlled their fate—this is a revolutionary examination of the relationship between women, illness, and medicine. With these case histories, Elinor pays homage to the women who suffered so strides could be made, and shows how being unwell has become normalized in society and culture, where women have long been distrusted as reliable narrators of their own bodies and pain. But the time for real change is long overdue: answers reside in the body, in the testimonies of unwell women—and their lives depend on medicine learning to listen.

Vicky is desperate to make her mark, in a world which just doesn't seem to notice her. Silence and smiles hide the pain that Nell is keeping to herself. Sarah's dreams of having a family seem hopeless. And then there's Shannon, who's in trouble at school yet again. But what these four women don't know is that someone - or something - is watching them. A much-recycled soul, suspended between one life and the next, realises that Vicky, Nell, Sarah and Shannon are embarking on their journey towards Motherhood. As memories from past incarnations return to this Soul, it becomes clear that one of these women will be chosen to guide it once more. Soul to take explores what it is to become a parent and considers the possibility that actually, our children are the ones who carefully select us.

In this volume of 15 articles, contributors from a wide range of disciplines present their analyses of Disney movies and Disney music, which are mainstays of popular culture. The power of the Disney brand has heightened the need for academics to question whether Disney's films and music function as a tool of the Western elite that shapes the views of those less empowered. Given its

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global reach, how the Walt Disney Company handles the role of race, gender, and sexuality in social structural inequality merits serious reflection according to a number of the articles in the volume. On the other hand, other authors argue that Disney productions can help individuals cope with difficult situations or embrace progressive thinking. The different approaches to the assessment of Disney films as cultural artifacts also vary according to the theoretical perspectives guiding the interpretation of both overt and latent symbolic meaning in the movies. The authors of the 15 articles encourage readers to engage with the material, showcasing a variety of views about the good, the bad, and the best way forward.

Purity and Danger is acknowledged as a modern masterpiece of anthropology. It is widely cited in non-anthropological works and gave rise to a body of application, rebuttal and development within anthropology. In 1995 the book was included among the *Times Literary Supplement's* hundred most influential non-fiction works since WWII. Incorporating the philosophy of religion and science and a generally holistic approach to classification, Douglas demonstrates the relevance of anthropological enquiries to an audience outside her immediate academic circle. She offers an approach to understanding rules of purity by examining what is considered unclean in various cultures. She sheds light on the symbolism of what is considered clean and dirty in relation to order in secular and religious, modern and primitive life.

Civilizing Women is a riveting exploration of the disparate worlds of British colonial officers and the Muslim Sudanese they sought to remake into modern imperial subjects. Focusing on efforts to stop female circumcision in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan between 1920 and 1946, Janice Boddy mines colonial documents and popular culture for ethnographic details to interleave with observations from northern Sudan, where women's participation in zâr spirit possession rituals provided an oblique counterpoint to colonial views. Written in engaging prose, *Civilizing Women* concerns the subtle process of "colonizing selfhood," the British women who undertook it, and those they hoped to reform. It suggests that efforts to suppress female circumcision were tied to the continuation of slavery and the rise of commercial cotton growing in Sudan, as well as to concerns about infant mortality and maternal health. Boddy traces maneuverings among political officers, teachers, missionaries, and medical personnel as they pursued their elusive goal, and describes their fraught relations with Egypt, Parliament, the Foreign Office, African nationalists, and Western feminists. In doing so, she sounds a cautionary note for contemporary interventionists who would flout local knowledge and belief.

"*Alien Ocean* immerses readers in worlds being newly explored by marine biologists: the deep sea, the microscopic realm, and oceans beyond national boundaries. Working alongside scientists on ships at sea, in coastal research labs, and at undersea volcanoes, Stefan Helmreich charts how revolutions in genomics, bioinformatics, and remote sensing have pressed marine biologists to view the sea as animated by its smallest inhabitants: marine microbes. Thriving in astonishingly extreme conditions, such microbes have become key figures in scientific and public debates about the origin of life, climate change, biotechnology, and even the possibility of life on other worlds."--Cover.

A Companion to the Anthropology of Religion presents a collection of original, ethnographically-informed essays that

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explore the variety of beliefs, practices, and religious experiences in the contemporary world and asks how to think about religion as a subject of anthropological inquiry. Presents a collection of original, ethnographically-informed essays exploring the wide variety of beliefs, practices, and religious experiences in the contemporary world Explores a broad range of topics including the perspectivism debate, the rise of religious nationalism, reflections on religion and new media, religion and politics, and ideas of self and gender in relation to religious belief Includes examples drawn from different religious traditions and from several regions of the world Features newly-commissioned articles reflecting the most up-to-date research and critical thinking in the field, written by an international team of leading scholars Adds immeasurably to our understanding of the complex relationships between religion, culture, society, and the individual in today's world

Maliodoma Patrice Some was born in a Dagara Village, however he was soon to be abducted to a Jesuit school, where he remained for the next fifteen years, being harshly indoctrinated into European ways of thought and worship. The story tells of his return to his people, his hard initiation back into those people, which led to his desire to convey their knowledge to the world. *Of Water and the Spirit* is the result of that desire; it is a sharing of living African traditions, offered in compassion for those struggling with our contemporary crisis of the spirit.

A new edition of an occult classic, which includes a new introduction by Mary K. Greer, author of *Women of the Golden Dawn*, and a new afterword with excerpts from rarely seen documents by Fortune herself describing how the book came about. After finding herself the subject of a powerful psychic attack in the 1930s, famed British occultist Dion Fortune wrote this detailed instruction manual on protecting oneself from paranormal attack. This classic psychic self-defense guide explains how to understand the signs of a psychic attack, vampirism, hauntings, and methods of defense. Everything you need to know about the methods, motives, and physical aspects of a psychic attack and how to overcome it is here, along with a look at the role psychic elements play in mental illness and how to recognize them. This is one of the best guides to detection and defense against psychic attack from one of the leading occult writers of the twentieth century.

Compelling evidence that life, intelligence, and evolution on Earth were seeded by comets and cosmic intelligence • Explains how life first came from interstellar dust and comets and how later arrivals of cosmic dust and comets spurred evolution • Explores the possibility that universal knowledge may be stored in human DNA and how ancient cultures may have known a way to retrieve this knowledge • Reveals new discoveries about the dimensions of the Great Pyramid of Giza All ancient cultures link humanity's origins to the heavens. The Egyptians, for example, were adamant that their ancestors came from the stars of Orion and Sirius. Today, however, religion and science assert that life arose

spontaneously here on Earth. Did the ancients know our true cosmic origins? Have they left us clues? Expanding on the panspermia theory developed with the celebrated astronomer Sir Fred Hoyle--namely that the building blocks of life were imported to Earth by comets in the distant past--Chandra Wickramasinghe and Robert Bauval explore the latest findings in support of a cosmic origin for humanity. They detail the astrobiological discoveries of organic molecules deep in space, how microbes are incredibly resistant to the harshest conditions of space--enabling the transfer of genes from one star system to another, and the recent recovery of microorganisms from comets still in space. They argue that the universe was "born" and preset with the blueprint of life and that the cosmos must be teeming with lifeforms far older and perhaps far more developed than us. They show how life arrived on our planet in the form of interstellar dust containing alien bacteria approximately 3.8 billion years ago and how later comets, meteoroids, and asteroids brought new bacterial and viral genetic material, which was vital for evolution. Using the latest advances in physics, cosmology, and neuroscience, the authors explore how universal knowledge may be stored in human DNA and cells, and they postulate that ancient cultures, such as the pyramid builders of Egypt and the temple builders of India, may have known a way to retrieve this knowledge. Sharing new discoveries from experienced architects, engineers, and mathematicians, they show how the Great Pyramid is a three-dimensional mathematical equation in stone, bearing a potent message for humanity across time and space about who we are and where we come from.

Based on nearly two years of ethnographic fieldwork in a Muslim village in northern Sudan, *Wombs and Alien Spirits* explores the zâr cult, the most widely practiced traditional healing cult in Africa. Adherents of the cult are usually women with marital or fertility problems, who are possessed by spirits very different from their own proscribed roles as mothers. Through the woman, the spirit makes demands upon her husband and family and makes provocative comments on village issues, such as the increasing influence of formal Islam or encroaching Western economic domination. In accommodating the spirits, the women are able metaphorically to reformulate everyday discourse to portray consciousness of their own subordination. Janice Boddy examines the moral universe of the village, discussing female circumcision, personhood, kinship, and bodily integrity, then describes the workings of the cult and the effect of possession on the lives of men as well as women. She suggests that spirit possession is a feminist discourse, though a veiled and allegorical one, on women's objectification and subordination. Additionally, the spirit world acts as a foil for village life in the context of rapid historical change and as such provides a focus for cultural resistance that is particularly, though not exclusively, relevant to women.

Zar is both a possessing spirit and a set of reconciliation rites between the spirits and their human hosts: living in a parallel yet invisible world, the capricious spirits manifest their anger by causing ailments for their hosts, which require

ritual reconciliation, a private sacrificial rite practiced routinely by the afflicted devotees. Originally spread from Ethiopia to the Red Sea and the Arabian Gulf through the nineteenth-century slave trade, in Egypt zar has incorporated elements from popular Islamic Sufi practices, including devotion to Christian and Muslim saints. The ceremonies initiate devotees—the majority of whom are Muslim women—into a community centered on a cult leader, a membership that provides them with moral orientation, social support, and a sense of belonging. Practicing zar rituals, dancing to zar songs, and experiencing trance restore their well-being, which had been compromised by gender asymmetry and globalization. This new ethnographic study of zar in Egypt is based on the author's two years of multi-sited fieldwork and firsthand knowledge as a participant, and her collection and analysis of more than three hundred zar songs, allowing her to access levels of meaning that had previously been overlooked. The result is a comprehensive and accessible exposition of the history, culture, and waning practice of zar in a modernizing world.

This volume explores what phenomenology adds to the enterprise of anthropology, drawing on and contributing to a burgeoning field of social science research inspired by the phenomenological tradition in philosophy. Essays by leading scholars ground their discussions of theory and method in richly detailed ethnographic case studies. The contributors broaden the application of phenomenology in anthropology beyond the areas in which it has been most influential—studies of sensory perception, emotion, bodilyness, and intersubjectivity—into new areas of inquiry such as martial arts, sports, dance, music, and political discourse.

"By means of your democracy we shall invade you, by means of our religion we shall conquer you. Victory will come to us from the wombs of our women." The post Brexit Europe should aim to stop the creeping incursion of illiberal and authoritarian ideologies disguised as "religions" or "cultures" into the continent's liberal and democratic way of life. In most European nations, our adherence to liberal values has resulted in the growth of illiberal values. To put it differently our liberal societies began to tolerate the intolerant. If this trend is not stopped, its long term consequences will be catastrophic for the face of Europe as we and our ancestors have known it. Europe's tolerance and support of the wrongly called ideal of multi-culturalism has resulted in the growth of a continent of multi-faithism. The revival of a religious narrative as an inevitable backlash to the growth of alien religiosity amidst secular Europe is a disturbing phenomenon. It took Europe five hundred years of evolution to reach this stage of separation of state and religion.

Michael Nimier

"If the Saint calls you, if you have an open road, then you don't feel the fire as if it were your enemy," says one of the participants in the Anastenaria. This compelling work evokes and contrasts two forms of firewalking and religious healing: first, the Anastenaria, a northern Greek ritual in which people who are possessed by Saint Constantine dance dramatically over red-hot

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coals, and, second, American firewalking, one of the more spectacular activities of New Age psychology. Loring Danforth not only analyzes these rituals in light of the most recent work in medical and symbolic anthropology but also describes in detail the lives of individual firewalkers, involving the reader personally in their experiences: he views ritual therapy as a process of transformation and empowerment through which people are metaphorically moved from a state of illness to a state of health. Danforth shows that the Anastenaria and the songs accompanying it allow people to express and resolve conflict-laden family relationships that may lead to certain kinds of illnesses. He also demonstrates how women use the ritual to gain a sense of power and control over their lives without actually challenging the ideology of male dominance that pervades Greek culture. Comparing the Anastenaria with American firewalking, Danforth includes a gripping account of his own participation in a firewalk in rural Maine. Finally he examines the place of anthropology in a postmodern world in which the boundaries between cultures are becoming increasingly blurred. Anthropology is the study of all humans in all times in all places. But it is so much more than that. "Anthropology requires strength, valor, and courage," Nancy Scheper-Hughes noted. "Pierre Bourdieu called anthropology a combat sport, an extreme sport as well as a tough and rigorous discipline. ... It teaches students not to be afraid of getting one's hands dirty, to get down in the dirt, and to commit yourself, body and mind. Susan Sontag called anthropology a "heroic" profession." What is the payoff for this heroic journey? You will find ideas that can carry you across rivers of doubt and over mountains of fear to find the the light and life of places forgotten. Real anthropology cannot be contained in a book. You have to go out and feel the world's jagged edges, wipe its dust from your brow, and at times, leave your blood in its soil. In this unique book, Dr. Michael Wesch shares many of his own adventures of being an anthropologist and what the science of human beings can tell us about the art of being human. This special first draft edition is a loose framework for more and more complete future chapters and writings. It serves as a companion to anth101.com, a free and open resource for instructors of cultural anthropology. This 2018 text is a revision of the "first draft edition" from 2017 and includes 7 new chapters.

Child Care and Culture examines parenthood, infancy, and early childhood in an African community, revealing patterns unanticipated by current theories of child development and raising provocative questions about the concept of "normal" child care. Comparing the Gusii people of Kenya with the American white middle class, the authors show how divergent cultural priorities create differing conditions for early childhood development. Combining the perspectives of social anthropology, pediatrics, and developmental psychology, the authors demonstrate how child care customs can be responsive to varied socioeconomic, demographic, and cultural conditions without inflicting harm on children. This text will be of interest to researchers in child development and anthropology.

Loosely based on Napoleon Hill's seminal title, *Think and Grow Rich*, *Settle for Best* lists the common mindsets and actions of renowned philanthropist millionaires from the early 20th century and encourages readers to develop and rely on the skills and mindsets that successful people still use to win big, no matter what shape the economy is in. Written for start-up entrepreneurs and anyone else anyone in search of the "keys to the kingdom" in whatever realm you travel, *SETTLE FOR BEST* will encourage,

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inspire and light a fire under you if you truly want to build the life and legacy your heart most desires.

A study in the collision between Western medicine and the beliefs of a traditional culture focuses on a hospitalized child of Laotian immigrants whose belief that illness is a spiritual matter comes into conflict with doctors' methods.

"Women, food and families" looks at how women with young families plan, provide, cook and serve food, from daily meals to special occasions. The authors interviewed women from a range of social backgrounds and the result is an account of the role played by food in relationships between women and men, parents and children within contemporary British families. It also reveals the contradictory and often problematic nature of women's own feelings towards food. The authors document the differential distribution of food within families along lines of gender and age and show that social class has a significant impact on diet. They illustrate the way in which practices surrounding food provision both reflect and create social divisions and that food conveys complex messages about power and status, love and anger, inclusion and exclusion.

Offers an introduction to the sociology of diagnosis. This title presents articles that explore diagnosis as a process of definition that includes: labeling dynamics between diagnoser and diagnosed; boundary struggles between diverse constituents - both among medical practitioners and between medical authorities and others; and, more.

In the Red Sea Hills of eastern Sudan, where poverty, famines, and conflict loom large, women struggle to gain the status of responsible motherhood through bearing and raising healthy children, especially sons. But biological fate can be capricious in impoverished settings. Amidst struggle for survival and expectations of heroic mothering, women face realities that challenge their ability to fulfill their prescribed roles. Even as the effects of modernity and development, global inequities, and exclusionary government policies challenge traditional ways of life in eastern Sudan and throughout many parts of Africa, reproductive traumas—infertility, miscarriage, children's illnesses, and mortality—disrupt women's reproductive health and impede their efforts to achieve the status that comes with fertility and motherhood. In *Embodying Honor* Amal Hassan Fadlalla finds that the female body is the locus of anxieties about foreign dangers and diseases, threats perceived to be disruptive to morality, feminine identities, and social well-being. As a "northern Sudanese" viewed as an outsider in this region of her native country, Fadlalla presents an intimate portrait and thorough analysis that offers an intriguing commentary on the very notion of what constitutes the "foreign." Fadlalla shows how Muslim Hadendowa women manage health and reproductive suffering in their quest to become "responsible" mothers and valued members of their communities. Her historically grounded ethnography delves into women's reproductive histories, personal narratives, and ritual logics to reveal the ways in which women challenge cultural understandings of gender, honor, and reproduction.

The visionary author's masterpiece pulls us—along with her Black female hero—through time to face the horrors of slavery and explore the impacts of racism, sexism, and white supremacy then and now. Dana, a modern black woman, is celebrating her twenty-sixth birthday with her new husband when she is snatched abruptly from her home in California and transported to the antebellum South. Rufus, the white son of a plantation owner, is drowning, and Dana has been summoned to save him. Dana is

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drawn back repeatedly through time to the slave quarters, and each time the stay grows longer, more arduous, and more dangerous until it is uncertain whether or not Dana's life will end, long before it has a chance to begin.

"Quite an interesting book... " Religious Studies Review "It is by far superior to anything else on demons we have seen in the past few years." The American Rationalist "... Goodman is to be commended for a stimulating and wide-reaching treatment of a compelling and much-debated subject." Journal of Folklore Research Rich in detail derived from the author's fieldwork and the anthropological literature, this work paints a picture of possession as one of the usually positive and most widespread of human religious experiences. It also details the ritual of exorcism, which is applied when things go wrong.

"... groundbreaking... clear, straightforward, and economical.... seminal... " ?American Anthropologist "This is a challenging book... a remarkable contribution to African intellectual history." ?International Journal of African Historical Studies "Mudimbe's description of the struggles over Africa's self-invention are vivid and rewarding. From Blyden to Sartre, Temples to Senghor, Mudimbe provides a bold and versatile resume of Africa's literary inventors." ?Village Voice Literary Supplement "... a landmark achievement in African studies." ?Journal of Religion in Africa In this unique and provocative book, Zairean philosopher and writer V. Y. Mudimbe addresses the multiple scholarly discourses that exist?African and non-African?concerning the meaning of Africa and being African.

In Africa as well as in Europe, many spirits and their mediums are part of local as well as global cultures. Christian spirits named Hitler, Mussolini, or King Bruce (Bruce Lee) flourish in a pantheon of new holy spirits in Uganda waging war against the government. Spirits of airplanes, engines, guitars, and angels are found in Central Africa; and thunder, snakes, and rain as well as playboys and prostitutes inhabit the spirit world in West Africa. Spirit possession cults have continued to proliferate, even in the secular West, and continue to be a subject of intense interest. Despite the continuous expansion of the field, some problems are only now beginning to be explored. The experts in this volume focus on questions of power, the history and inner dynamics of cults, the role of gender and images of the other, based on research conducted during the last fifteen years in Africa. The contributors document changes taking place across the continent as possession beliefs and practices respond to new circumstances and address the shifting local implications of an increasingly global socio-economy. Gender, ethnicity, and class are examined as intersecting forces and features of spirit phenomena. The case studies presented are richly contextualized: history, social organization and upheaval, alternative religious options—all are considered relevant to an understanding of possession forms. Contributors: Leslie Sharp, Heike Behrend, Adeline Masquelier, Mathias Krings, Jean-Paul Colleyn, Alexandra O. de Sousa, Susan Kenyon, Tobias Wendl, Ute Luig, and Linda Giles Co-published with James Currey Publishers, U.K. The Wisconsin edition is not for sale in the United Kingdom, the traditional British Commonwealth (excepting Canada), nor in Europe.

Melanie Stryder refuses to fade away. The earth has been invaded by a species that takes over the minds of their human hosts while leaving their bodies intact, and most of humanity has succumbed. Wanderer, the invading 'soul' who has been given Melanie's body, knew about the challenges of living inside a human: the overwhelming emotions, the too-vivid memories. But there

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was one difficulty Wanderer didn't expect: the former tenant of her body refusing to relinquish possession of her mind. Melanie fills Wanderer's thoughts with visions of the man Melanie loves - Jared, a human who still lives in hiding. Unable to separate herself from her body's desires, Wanderer yearns for a man she's never met. As outside forces make Wanderer and Melanie unwilling allies, they set off to search for the man they both love.

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