

Editor's Introduction

Mathew N. Schmalz

Follow this and additional works at: <https://crossworks.holycross.edu/jgc>



Part of the [Aesthetics Commons](#), [Africana Studies Commons](#), [Anthropological Linguistics and Sociolinguistics Commons](#), [Asian Studies Commons](#), [Catholic Studies Commons](#), [Christian Denominations and Sects Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), [Comparative Methodologies and Theories Commons](#), [Cultural History Commons](#), [Folklore Commons](#), [History of Christianity Commons](#), [History of Religion Commons](#), [History of Religions of Eastern Origins Commons](#), [History of Religions of Western Origin Commons](#), [Latin American Languages and Societies Commons](#), [Latin American Studies Commons](#), [Liturgy and Worship Commons](#), [Missions and World Christianity Commons](#), [Oral History Commons](#), [Place and Environment Commons](#), [Politics and Social Change Commons](#), [Practical Theology Commons](#), [Quantitative, Qualitative, Comparative, and Historical Methodologies Commons](#), [Race and Ethnicity Commons](#), [Race, Ethnicity and Post-Colonial Studies Commons](#), [Regional Sociology Commons](#), [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#), [Rural Sociology Commons](#), [Social and Cultural Anthropology Commons](#), [Social History Commons](#), [Sociology of Culture Commons](#), [Sociology of Religion Commons](#), [South and Southeast Asian Languages and Societies Commons](#), and the [Spanish and Portuguese Language and Literature Commons](#)



Catholicism & Cultures

VOLUME 6 | ISSUE 1

Journal of GLOBAL CATHOLICISM

FALL 2021

ENCULTURATION, INCULTURATION, and AGENCY Burundi, Argentina, and the Philippines

ARTICLES

- Mathew N. Schmalz / Editor's Introduction
- Jodi Mikalachki / Fraternity, Martyrdom and Peace in Burundi: The Forty Servants of God of Buta
- Gustavo Morello, SJ / Catholicism in Context: Religious Practice in Latin America
- Antonio D. Sison / Manila's Black Nazarene and the Reign of Bathala



COLLEGE OF THE
Holy Cross

Cover image by Arnulfo Fortunado

MATHEW N. SCHMALZ

Enculturation, Inculturation, and Agency: Burundi, Argentina, and the Philippines



Mathew N. Schmalz is Founding Editor of the *Journal of Global Catholicism* and Professor of Religious Studies at the College of the Holy Cross. He received his BA from Amherst College and his PhD in the history of religions from the University of Chicago. He has published more than fifty articles and essays that engage global Catholicism (particularly in South Asia), Catholic theology and spirituality, Mormonism, and The Watchtower movement. He is co-editor of *Engaging South Asian Religions: Boundaries, Appropriations, and Resistances* (SUNY, 2012, with Peter Gottschalk) and author of *Mercy Matters: Opening Yourself to the Life Changing Gift* (OSV, 2016). Schmalz has also written more than one hundred opinion pieces that have appeared in *On Faith*, *Crux*, *The Huffington Post* and in the print editions of *The Washington Post*, *Commonweal Magazine*, *US Catholic*, *The National Catholic Reporter*, *the Providence Journal*, and *the Telegram & Gazette*. He has provided expert commentary to *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, *ABC's Good Morning America*, *NPR*, *CNBC*, *Hardball with Chris Matthews*, and *U.S. News & World Report*, among others.



The three articles in this edition were originally written independently and not as part of an issue focused on a particular theme or geographic space. Nonetheless, together they present fascinating vignettes into different ways Catholics and Catholicism work in and through individual and collective agency and enculturated forms of religiosity.

The first article is Jodi Mikalachki's ethnographic study of the story of Burundi's Buta martyrs. Incorporating accounts of survivors into her discussion, Mikalachki describes how Tutsi and Hutu seminarians stood with each other during a savage attack on the minor seminary at which they were studying. By the end of the attack, forty students had been killed and twenty-six seriously wounded. Within days, the murdered Buta seminarians were being called "martyrs" who had achieved "a poignant victory of fraternal love over the ethnic manipulation of the civil war." Mikalachki argues that enculturated African Catholic visions of solidarity, when combined with the heroic agency of the young seminarians, presented a vision of "non-violent masculinity" that bore important witness in a country torn by ethnic strife.

The second article, written by Gustavo Morello, SJ, interrogates conventional understandings of Catholic identity. Morello introduces us to Norma, a resident of Córdoba, Argentina, who meaningfully employs a wide range of religious symbols and practices from a variety of traditions, while self-identifying as a Catholic. Morello uses Norma's example to reflect more broadly beyond conventional understandings of religious identity and modernity as construals that often do not provide enough nuance to understand the agency and complexity of individuals such as Norma.

The third article, authored by Antonio Sison, focuses on the Quiapo Black Nazarene of the Philippines. Sison argues that the dynamics of devotion to the Quiapo Black Nazarene are deeply linked to "the hidden regions of the Filipino psyche where the vanquished religious beliefs of a primal religion have beaten all odds." In his discussion, Sison himself journeys to Quiapo and reflects upon the Filipino concept of "pagdama" or "felt-experience." He also most interestingly

—and for some provocatively—connects devotion to the Black Nazarene to indigenous Filipino religion, particularly to belief in the enchantment of the world under the influence of the Godhead Bathala. It is not a case of parallelism or syncretism that Sison examines, but the rootedness of devotion to the Black Nazarene in indigenous and living Filipino memory and agency.

Taken together, these three articles could be said to discuss the dynamics of inculturation—a Catholic neologism and version of the word “enculturation” meaning to adapt to, or adopt, the norms of a new and different culture. But the processes discussed in all three articles are not those of the official Catholic Church consciously encouraging or allowing specific integration of local practices into vernacular Catholicism. Instead, Mikalachki, Morello, and Sison all emphasize the multi-faceted register on which—or against which—a variety of different kinds of agencies work to make Catholicism not just diverse, but also deeply meaningful.



On the cover: Young people show off their own statues of the Black Nazarene at the January 9 feast in Manila. Photo by Arnulfo Fortunado. See more at <https://www.catholicsandcultures.org/philippines/feast-black-nazarene>