

Lived Religion: An Overview

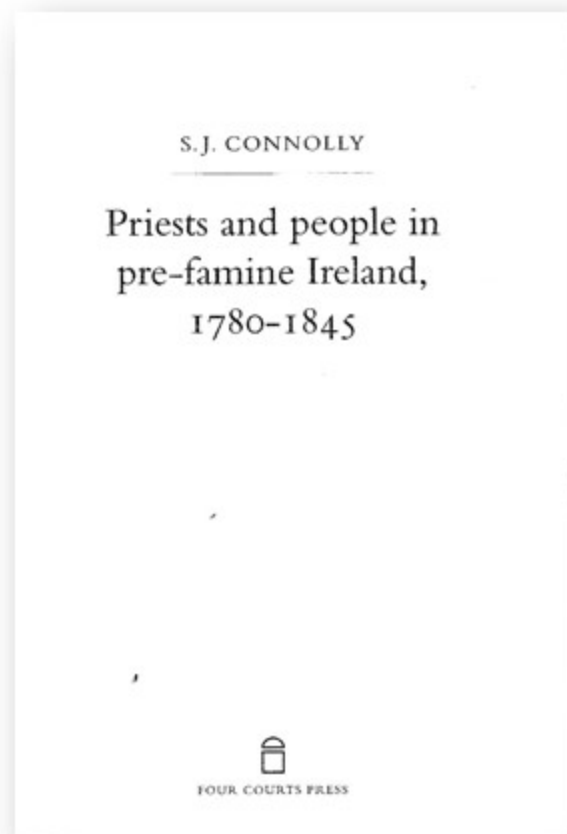
Prof. David Hall, Harvard Divinity School

Lived Religion in America; Toward a History of Practice

- Using “practice” and “lived religion” to overcome the misleading dichotomy of “elite” and “popular” religion

S. H. Connolly, Priest and People in Pre-Famine Ireland

- An Irish scholar's voyage from institutional history to a cultural and social history of Catholicism in Ireland



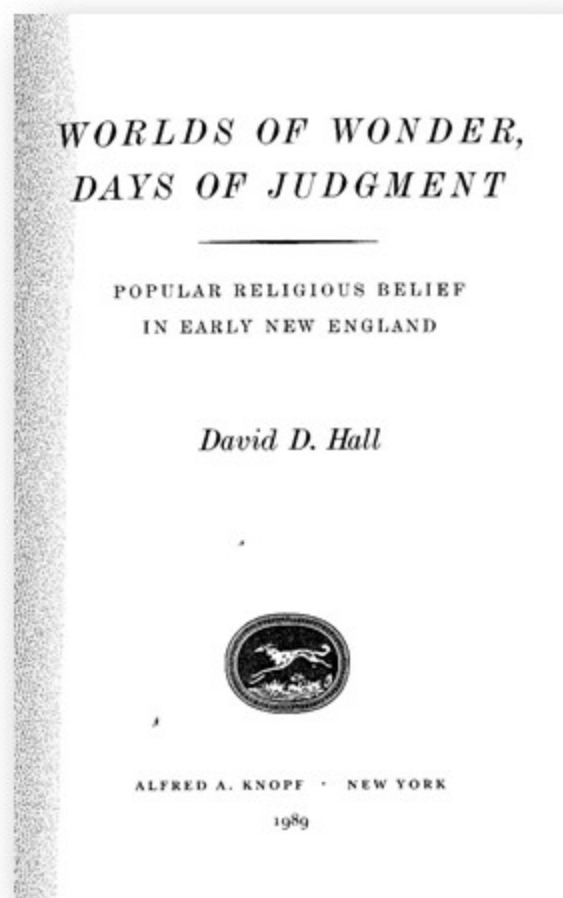
Willem Frijhof, Embodied Belief

- A Dutch scholar's voyage from institutional "church history" to religious experience and culture

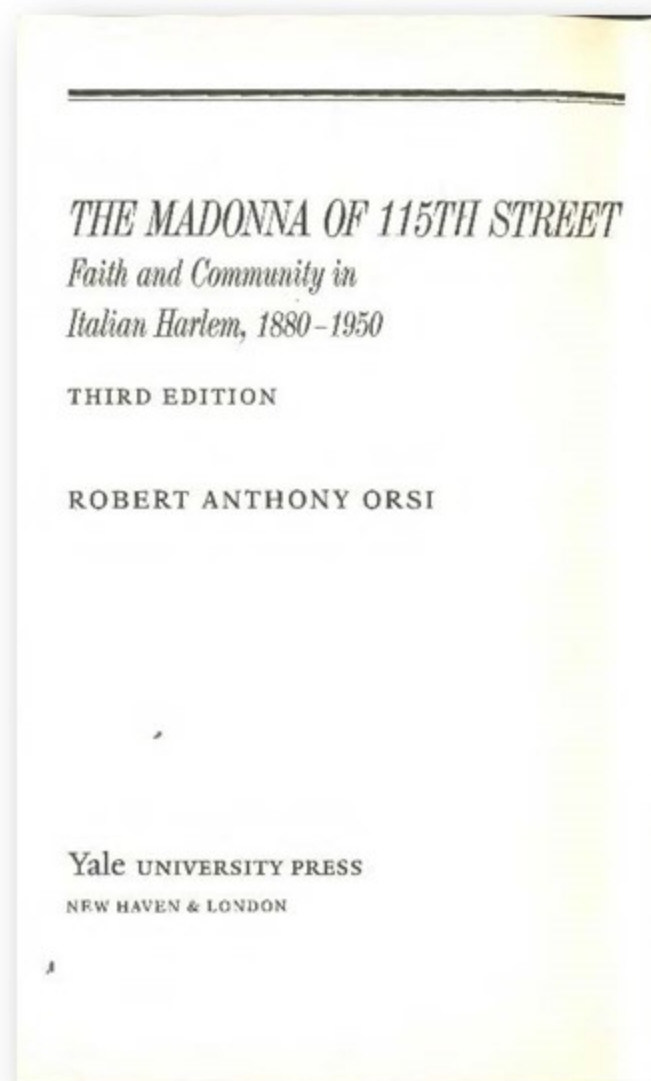
A scholar of Islam validating local understandings of Islam

My own work on “popular religion” in early New England

- Passing from high, intellectual history to a multitude of “meanings” and sometimes, contradictions in meaning and practice
- A crucial step: expanding the meaning of “literacy”
- “This little child, while he was studying
His little primer, as he undertook
Sitting at school, heard other children sing
O Alma Redemptoris from their book.
Close as he dared he drew himself to look,
And listened carefully to word to part
Until he knew the opening verse by heart.”
- Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales*



The Madonna of 115th St.



*Histoire
vécue
du peuple
chrétien*

sous la direction de

Jean Delumeau

Professeur au Collège de France

Tome 2

Privat

Broader Points

- Religion beyond the church or institution
- The “unorthodox” just as significant and interesting as the orthodox
- “reform” (i.e., movements to suppress or discipline the lived, or the “popular”)

A Change of Paradigms: “vicarious religion”?

- The decline of state churches in Europe, “mainstream” churches in the United States: attendance or participation; and especially, declining capacities to incorporate the next generation;
- Simultaneously, the rise of the “nones” (not affiliating with any church, and not engaged with “belief” (Christian or otherwise))

A Change of Paradigms: “vicarious religion”?

- Boundaries breaking down, in two ways:
 - Spirituality outside the churches (many sources of this spirituality)
 - Mixing and matching: a multitude of “identities” (cross-confessional marriages, etc.)
 - Meredith McGuire, Ritual Healing in Suburban America (1988)



A Change of Paradigms: “vicarious religion”?

- “Secularization”: the emptying out of sacred space and time (e.g., “Blue Laws”)
- The phenomenon of “belonging but not believing” (some state churches in Europe and some churches in the United States)
- Or, “religion as memory”
- Or, “vicarious religion”
 - Benefits of this approach: suits the ever more de-institutionalized situation of “the religious” in the United States and western Europe. This approach (which is primarily developed among sociologists) can also become ideological, i.e., a celebration of “diversity” [the Brad Braxton testimony]

Modernities, Memory and Mutations

Grace Davie and the Study of Religion

Edited by

ABBY DAY
*University of Kent and
Goldsmiths, University of London*

MIA LÖVHEIM
University of Uppsala

ASHGATE