

graduate-level survey courses on theory, time and society, and the history of capitalism. For scholars of temporality and for Marxist scholars, the book offers avenues for a deeper understanding of how time achieves its compulsory force in capitalist relations.

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*The Bahá'is of America: The Growth of a Religious Movement*, by **Mike McMullen**. New York: New York University Press, 2015. 279 pp. \$27.00 paper. ISBN: 9781479851522.

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The Bahá'í Faith was born in the writings of the Iranian prophet Bahá'u'lláh (1817–1892), who wrote letters, commentaries, and books throughout his 40 years of exile in different parts of the Ottoman Empire. While emerging from an Islamic background, the Bahá'í Faith emphasizes the unity of all religions, abrogates any form of holy war or violence, and calls for communication and fellowship among all religions, races, and nations. Writing in three successive stages, Bahá'u'lláh elaborated on three principles that define the identity and worldview of the Bahá'í Faith: the spiritual interpretation of reality, historical consciousness, and global orientation. In Bahá'u'lláh's teachings, the unity of all religions is rooted in the interaction of a common spiritual origin of all scriptures and the historically specific social context of each religion. Thus religious consciousness should focus on the common truth of all religions and view the differences of laws and rituals as historically conditioned, secondary aspects of various religions. The combination of the spiritual interpretation of reality and historical consciousness leads to a new perception of the unique feature of the contemporary age—namely, the principle of global consciousness and the oneness of humankind.

Reflecting aspects of these principles, during their 160 years of history, the Bahá'is have created a community that is global in scope (after Christianity, the Bahá'í Faith is the most widely distributed religion on earth) and organization (the Bahá'í Faith has an

administrative order that connects local, national, and global levels of the community) and democratic, non-violent, impressively diverse, and united in its modes of operation. While the Bahá'í community generally and particular Bahá'í communities represent unique and challenging sociological characteristics, they have remained relatively unnoticed in the study of the sociology of religion. Mike McMullen's book *The Bahá'is of America* is his second sociological study of the American Bahá'í community. In his first book, *The Bahá'í: The Religious Construction of a Global Identity*, McMullen studied the Bahá'is of Atlanta. The author summarized the findings of his first book by defining the Bahá'is as "situated universalists."

The main topics addressed by McMullen's second book are the dynamics of the growth of the American Bahá'í community from 1963 to 2013 and the fact that it represents the most diverse religious community in America. Discussing Emerson and Smith's theory of the causes of racial, ethnic, class, and cultural segregation of religious communities in the American religious marketplace, McMullen offers various reasons for the active promotion of diversity in American Bahá'í communities. Data gathered through FACT (Faith Communities Today) surveys reveal that more than 50 percent of local Bahá'í communities (both general membership and leadership) are composed of at least 20 percent minority groups.

McMullen's discussion of growth becomes particularly interesting when we remember some of the unique features of the Bahá'í Faith. For example, in Bahá'í religion there is no clerical caste of priesthood. Instead, all Bahá'is are assumed to be equal, and, thus, participatory consultation is the basis of decision-making in the community. An expression of this principle is the yearly election of administrative bodies called local spiritual assemblies to administer the affairs of the Bahá'is at the local level. This is accompanied by another yearly election of a national spiritual assembly that governs the affairs of a national Bahá'í community, such as the Bahá'is of the United States. The international governing body of the Bahá'is of the world is the Universal House of Justice, which is elected by the members of all national spiritual assemblies every five years. The first

Universal House of Justice was elected in 1963.

The absence of an organized church or priesthood creates particular challenges for expansion of the religious community, since collective participation in the promotion of the community may encounter the free rider problem. A further point is McMullen's elaborate distinction between attracting and retaining new converts to the community and the younger generation born within Bahá'í families. Again, consolidation becomes particularly challenging when there is no clerical entity to maintain the new converts. Retention of the younger generation becomes equally challenging because the Bahá'í Faith does not define religious identity in hereditary ways. In Bahá'í teachings, religion is a matter of the kingdom of hearts, and therefore neither violence nor blind imitation of the parents is perceived as a legitimate ground for becoming a Bahá'í.

McMullen's method is based on his concept of "situated universalism." After examining the history of the Bahá'í Faith and the development of the American Bahá'í community from the 1890s to 1963 (the year individual charismatic leadership of the Bahá'í Faith was replaced with the institutionalized democratic leadership of the Universal House of Justice), McMullen reviews through archival research the global messages of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'í world—systematic plans and orientations for collective action. Subsequent chapters deal with specific systematic plans developed by American Bahá'í institutions in the context of the global messages of the Universal House of Justice. Using various other sources of data, particularly FACT surveys, the rest of the book is devoted to the analysis of the distinct phases, challenges, and achievements related to the twin processes of the expansion and consolidation of the American Bahá'í community.

McMullen's study distinguishes three distinct phases of the development of the Bahá'í community during the years 1963 to 2013. The first phase (1964 to 1979) is a period of emphasis on numerical growth of the community both within and without the United States, as well as an inward orientation of building Bahá'í institutions and administrative structure at various local levels. A pattern resembling mass conversion of African Americans to the Bahá'í community in the

southern United States during this phase contributed to the increasing diversity of the community. Yet these numerical achievements were frustrated with a low emphasis on consolidation and retention, which slowed the process of growth.

The second phase (1979 to 1996) represents a transitional stage and an assessment of the imbalance between expansion and retention/consolidation. At this stage, the main challenge facing the Bahá'í world is the systematic and brutal persecution of the Bahá'í of Iran following the Islamic revolution of 1979. The Bahá'í community of the United States assumed a significant role in bringing the plight of the Bahá'í to the attention of the public, human rights organizations, the United States Congress, and the United Nations. The other consequence of the Islamic revolution was the massive influx of Iranian Bahá'í refugees to America. While such infusion of Iranian Bahá'ís into American Bahá'í communities enhanced diversity of the community, it created an enormous task: integration of the new immigrants. However, at the same time, the emphasis on numerical expansion was expressed in the new context of the persecution of the Iranian Bahá'ís in Iran. Massive proclamation activities related to the violation of the human rights of the Bahá'ís of Iran brought the Bahá'í Faith to the attention of American public and made it a familiar faith category.

The final phase comprises the years 1996 to the present. This phase represents a major transformation in the direction of the Bahá'í community. Instead of undue emphasis on expansion, the main strategy is combining expansion and consolidation through building resources and capacities. Teaching activities aimed at expansion become intertwined with the process of involvement in the life of the communities, engagement in socioeconomic development projects, and building local communities. In addition, there is a heightened emphasis on retention of children and youth and involving them in Bahá'í activities. The main mechanisms realizing these goals are development of study circles, children's classes, junior youth classes, and interfaith devotional meetings at local levels. Having built Bahá'í institutions through previous phases, there is now a new emphasis on outward orientation, where the main

concern is not a formal membership in the Bahá'í community. Instead, the emphasis is on the development of a culture of service and the oneness of humanity that embraces cooperation with all individuals and communities who share the same spiritual approach to building a just and peaceful global community.

Although *The Bahá'is of America* provides detailed and valuable information and analysis of the growth of the Bahá'í community of the United States in the last 50 years, it would have benefited from exploring some additional themes and concerns or expanding on certain aspects of its presentation. In discussing the growth of the Bahá'í community, there is a detailed emphasis on the perceptions and plans of Bahá'í institutions. However, such emphasis needs to be accompanied with more emphasis on social, cultural, and political trends and developments within American society. The author points to some of these external events (for example, the impact of the civil rights movement on the mass conversion of African Americans to the Bahá'í Faith in the southern United States, or the migration of the Iranian Bahá'is following the Islamic revolution in Iran), but the book lacks a systematic interactive orientation. The book would also have benefited from pursuing a further line of theoretical research comparing the process of democratic institutionalization of the Bahá'í Faith with the dilemmas of clerical routinization and institutionalization developed in the writings of Weber and O'Dea. Similarly, the book would have benefited from a more detailed discussion of other relevant developments within the American Bahá'í community during that same period, including the emergence of a significant academic study of the Bahá'í Faith within the community itself. Finally, the discussion of Bahá'í ideas and theology remains at a general level and rarely penetrates the complexity of Bahá'í philosophy and social worldview.

Overall, *The Bahá'is of America* is a study with a specific project and goal that offers significant insight into a relatively unknown aspect of American religious history and a welcome and timely contribution to the sociology of religion.

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*The Playdate: Parents, Children, and the New Expectations of Play*, by **Tamara R. Mose**. New York: New York University Press, 2016. 192 pp. \$89.00 cloth. ISBN: 9780814760512.

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There is a large literature on parenting style as an important mechanism in social class reproduction. Annette Lareau and many other researchers have found that middle-class parents cultivate their children through structured activities such as sports teams, music lessons, science camp, and volunteering, while working-class parents provide for their child's basic needs and allow them to play and grow naturally.

In *The Playdate: Parents, Children, and the New Expectations of Play*, Tamara Mose addresses how middle-class parents socialize their children to use the free time that is *not* accounted for by structured activities (or before children are old enough to fully participate in structured activities). A generation ago, middle-class children used their free time to spontaneously play with other children of their choosing (as working-class children still do today). But Mose shows that play for middle-class children today has been transformed into "The Playdate," which is tightly scheduled and parent supervised and where children often have limited choice in their playmates. Mose argues that the playdate redefines play in private spaces and reproduces social and cultural capital for middle-class parents and their children.

Mose defines the playdate as "an arranged meeting, organized and supervised by parents or caregivers, between two or more children in order to play together at a specific time and place, for the most part at an indoor location" (p. 3). Mose examines playdates through 41 in-depth interviews with New York-area parents and teachers who are diverse by social class, race, ethnicity, and children's ages. Mose supplements this with comparative data from 25 interviews and ethnographic observations of Caribbean childcare providers from her fascinating