

Introduction: Passing On: The Social Life of Death in South Asian Religions

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In his classic study of the collective representation of death, Robert Hertz suggested that death is best understood as a rite of passage in which the deceased makes a transition from the visible “here and now” to an invisible hereafter.¹ Death is thus the ultimate experience of passage; it is a threshold through which one passes beyond the house of life to some unknown place. As the termination of life, death is both a terminus ad quem and a terminus a quo, both an “end to which,” or conclusion, and an “end from which,” or commencement. In many South Asian religious traditions, death constitutes a particularly important moment of passage since it offers the deceased the opportunity to pass beyond the dissatisfactory and often painful cycle of repeated birth and death (*saṃsāra*) and to experience liberation (*mokṣa* or *nirvāṇa*). It is through the terminal of death that those who are ready for it pass into the deathless interminability of the unconditioned.

For those who are not yet ready for this ultimate passage out of the realm of conditioned existence, death entails a transition to another life. As this transition is represented in many South Asian traditions, the assistance of the living is vital. To ensure safe passage of the deceased to his or her post-mortem destination, a great deal of sustained ritual activity is required. Without the ritual intervention of the living—the provision of sustenance and the ritual manipulation of various surrogates for the dead, for example—the deceased may fail to achieve a satisfactory postmortem condition and end up instead suspended in limbo between life and death. Hindus perform ancestral rites (*śrāddha*) in order to provide sustenance for the deceased on the year-long journey to the abode of the ancestors (*pitṛ-loka*). Tibetan Buddhist mourners sponsor recitations of texts such as the *Bar do thos grol*

(known in the West as the *Bardo Thödol* or Tibetan Book of the Dead) in the presence of the dying/dead person to provide guidance on what to expect at each stage of the postmortem journey. It behooves the living to provide such care for the dead, since those who lose their way along their postmortem journeys are often said to return to the realm of the living in unwelcome forms. The disgruntled dead whose exit from human life is untimely or inadequately effected through ritual means may pose a considerable threat to the ongoing vitality of the living.

The chapters in this volume describe various forms of passage associated with death and dying as well as the handling of, provision for, and disposal of the dead in South Asian religious practice. Exploring traditions followed by Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and tribal groups of South Asia, the contributors examine beliefs and practices associated with the moment of death itself, mortuary rituals by which the deceased are ushered into a new postmortem status, rites of mourning by which the survivors reconstitute and reconfigure their social ties to the deceased, and healing rituals in which the living are restored to health through ritual mimicry of death as well as through the intervention of the dead. In the passages from life to death and from death to postmortem states that contributors analyze here, a wide variety of surrogates serve as stand-ins for the dying and the dead. Effigies, monuments, plants, animals, and living persons provide temporary bodies for the disembodied dead. Human surrogates give voice to the concerns of the dead. The provision of food and the manipulation of ritually effective substitutes ensure that the dead can successfully navigate the uncertainties of the postmortem journey. In some cases, these ritual operations follow protocols laid down in canonical texts; in other cases, the rituals have little or no textual precedent.

Interpretations of the social history of death in South Asia as advanced by pioneers in the field tend to rely on texts composed by elites, such as literate brahmins.² We have had until very recently little idea of the considerable differences between social groups in the 'management' of death and the customs and rituals that attend to it. Recent ethnographic work by scholars such as David G. Mandelbaum and Jonathan Parry have to a certain extent remedied this situation.³ Such ethnographic investigations have expanded our knowledge of the relationship between textual ideals and actual practice and have supplemented the testimony of elite informants with ethnographic data representing more restricted social categories. The chapters in this volume carry forward this important project. Drawing on the oral testimony of illiterate people as well as tribal groups just beginning to be drawn into the dominant South Asian cultural ethos, many of the chapters presented here shed light on the practices of those in marginalized social categories.

Death by Design: Voluntary Death as a Means and Mark of Transcendence

Symbolic enactments of death are common in the history of religions. In the physical ordeals often associated with rites of passage in societies throughout the world, ritual enactments of death “kill” the initiand and herald the birth of a new social being. It is only by a ritually enacted death in which one dies to the social world, obliterating one’s social identity, that one can return to that world as a new being with a new station in life. Arnold Van Gennep—the trailblazing student of the anthropology of rites of passage—observed that funerary symbolism often plays a role in passage rituals, especially in the initial rites of separation and in the intermediary rites of transition that lead to the final rites of incorporation.⁴

Dying in a ritually controlled manner while yet alive is also an important feature of specialized rites of passage associated with the vocation of the religious virtuoso. The visionary journeys to heaven and hell that play such a central role in shamanic initiations are often preceded by the visionary death of the candidate.⁵ Neophytes commonly lose consciousness for prolonged periods of time, during which time their bodies are subject to dismemberment and renewal. In some instances, the candidate is symbolically killed and revived by the initiation master. Without such ritually controlled enactments of death, the shaman would be ill-equipped to communicate with ancestors, deities, demons, and other supernatural beings and hence less able to perform healing work on behalf of others.

South Asian religious texts and funerary performances place a high premium on the ritually controlled release of life, as S. Settar, Parry, Christopher Justice, and others have demonstrated in ethnographic and textual explorations of Hindu deathways.⁶ Although the voluntary termination of life is sometimes regarded as a superordinate pious practice undertaken only by a few saintly members of the Jain community (a minority community in Hindu-majority India), it is far from an isolated phenomenon. Settar demonstrates that the idea of death by design has great appeal to a variety of religious communities in South Asia. Elisabeth Schömbucher and Claus Peter Zoller indicate that the voluntary termination of life stands out as a central theme in a variety of South Asian religious traditions. In their introduction to *Ways of Dying* (as well as in the chapters in this collection), the editors demonstrate that many mainstream South Asian religious actors aspire to die by their own hands, as it were, through a voluntary relinquishing of the life force.⁷

David Gordon White examines ritual enactments of death and cremation performed by *yogins* of the Śaiva sect known as the Nāth Siddhas or “Perfect Masters” in “Ashes to Nectar.” Death is the royal road to the state of liberation that Nāth Siddhas, following medieval traditions, seek to attain. Eschewing

disembodied liberation, their goal is bodily immortality or liberation while still alive (*jīvanmukti*). White's study of the alchemical and yogic practices of Nāth Siddhas suggests that the attainment (*siddhi*) of bodily immortality is only available to those who are willing to die for it. Without "killing off" the gross body, there is no chance of bodily immortality. The *yogin* who is willing to die lives forever by committing yogic or alchemical suicide—from yogic breath-control practices by which one suspends the body's vital functions and thus "swoons" in mimicry of death to alchemical lab-work in which one cooks oneself in a vat of "swooned" mercury and boiling oil.

The alchemical and yogic forms of ritual suicide that such *yogins* perform are modeled on the death and regeneration of the cosmos. They reenact on a microcosmic level the macrocosmic *pralāya* or "cosmic dissolution" by which the world itself is incinerated and re-created at the end of each cycle of existence. Thus the *yogin* who seeks immortality in this very body wears ashes specially prepared to represent the dissolution of the cosmos. In addition to the outer chemical process of incineration that produces the holy ash, internally the *yogin* burns with ascetic heat. Unleashing inner and outer forms of radiant energy, *yogins* who desire liberation in the body transform the gross material elements of the body into their subtle correlates. This is done by incinerating the gross body through yogic breathing practices that generate ascetic heat or by alchemical practices that "cook" and thus transform the gross body. "Dying is sweet" either way, whether yogic or alchemical, for the conflagration that consumes the *yogin* also burns up the fire of aging and death (*kālāgni*) and thus deprives death of its dominion.

Liz Wilson also takes up the themes of voluntary death and fire as an agent of transformation in her chapter, "Human Torches of Enlightenment." South Asian Buddhist hagiographies often attribute masterful powers over the circumstances of death to Buddhas and to Buddhist saints. It is customary for Buddhas, scriptural reports suggest, to die by choice, voluntarily giving up a portion of their allotted span of life. Likewise, many saints are said to determine the precise moment of their deaths well in advance. Rather than being taken by death unaware, Buddhas and Buddhist saints relinquish life voluntarily, declaring that they have achieved what they set out to achieve in life and that there is no point in remaining any longer. Rather than being a feared event, death becomes a ceremonial occasion and a teaching opportunity by which central points of Buddhist doctrine are wordlessly conveyed in the manner in which a Buddha or saint passes away.

Hagiographic accounts describe a variety of spectacular means by which Buddhas and Buddhist saints pass out of conditioned existence, but burning oneself in the flames of one's own inner radiance appears most frequently in hagiographies relating the deaths of saints. Saints who die by self-incineration thereby demonstrate meditative mastery over the elements that comprise the

physical body, making manifest the radiance that always exists within, but is not normally visible to the untrained eye. In this fiery manner of departing from the world of conditioned existence, Buddhas and Buddhist saints follow ancient Indian precedents. The cultivation of radiant energy as a means of transformation plays a central role in Vedic descriptions of the ritual work of sacrifice. Buddhist texts describe the disciplined life as an internalized kindling of the Vedic fire sacrifice; the practice of self-immolation may be seen as the culmination of a life of sacrificially conceived self-discipline. Contextualizing self-immolation and other acts of self-ignition (e.g., the spontaneous combustion of the funeral pyres of the awakened ones) by reference to Vedic-Hindu sacrificial practices, Wilson explores themes that cut across the boundaries of South Asian religious communities while highlighting a practice that has been developed to a unique extent by Buddhist practitioners not only in South Asia but also in Southeast and East Asia.

Labor Pains: The Ritual Work of Death and Rebirth

In his influential study of collective representations of death, Robert Hertz demonstrated the extent to which the boundaries between life and death vary from culture to culture. Arguing that death is a social fact rather than simply a biological occurrence, Hertz demonstrated his thesis by reference to a variety of cultures in which death is not seen as an instantaneous event but rather as a gradual process that takes months or even years. Many cultures, for example, enact a second burial long after the initial disposal of the corpse. Intended to ensure that the deceased has successfully completed the postmortem journey, this secondary disposal of the corpse operates on the premise that the dead are not truly gone until the bones of the deceased have become dry and free of decaying flesh. It is often only at this second funeral that ties between the deceased and the survivors (e.g., the marriage bond) are broken.

David Knipe's "When a Wife Dies First" explores postcremation rituals that ensure the controlled passage of the deceased from an earthly locale to an ultimate destination. Knipe observed a dramatic ritual of transformation performed for deceased Hindu women in Andhra Pradesh. When a woman predeceases her husband, she is ritually transformed ten or eleven days after her cremation into the goddess Gaurī, who was once herself transformed by the creator-god Brahmā. Formerly the dark goddess (Kālī), Gaurī received her golden (*gaurī*), luminous form in recognition of her unwavering devotion to her husband Śiva. To die before one's husband marks a woman as an exemplar of wifely devotion—the antithesis of the wife whose husband dies before her, ostensibly because of her failure to carry out the vows that devoted wives are said to perform to ensure the longevity of their husbands. Just as Gaurī was rewarded for her wifely

devotion, so too the wife who dies before her husband is rewarded with a divine status.

As Knipe demonstrates, however, there is much ambiguity in her transformation into Gaurī. The ritual both deifies and dismisses the deceased wife. It ensures her transformation into a goddess, but it also signals that her husband is free to marry again and has no more ritual obligations toward his dead wife. Marital symbolism is used in the ritual functions so as to turn back the clock, as it were, presenting an already married woman as a maiden on the eve of her wedding, still identified with her family of birth and not yet connected by affinal ties to her bridegroom's family. Marital imagery thus serves to uncouple the couple, disjoining the wife from her husband.

In "Return to Tears," Richard K. Wolf draws attention to the significance of music in mourning observances, and its mutability as a sign of affect. Wolf examines the narrowing of the spectrum of emotional display seen over the past century in the funeral practices of a tribal group living in the Nilgiri hills as well as in urban Indian and Pakistani Shī'ah observances of Muḥarram, a festival commemorating slain Muslim martyrs. The Kotas, who are classified by the government of India as a tribal people, practice secondary funeral rituals that traditionally included rites that might be described as life-affirming ritual markers of the termination of mourning. Many Kota communities follow the immediate postmortem cremation of the dead (known as the green funeral) with a collective annual ceremony (the dry funeral). Bones remaining from the first cremation are carried on decorated biers to be reinterred at a special "dry" cremation ground; the soul of the deceased is thereby sent off to the "mother land" or land of the ancestors. In contrast to the green funeral with its emphasis on loss and grieving, the dry funeral is not a somber affair but a celebration of the ongoing life of the community. The more celebratory aspects of the dry funeral have been attenuated in some villages, while the ceremony itself has been completely abandoned in one. As Wolf indicates, there are conflicting views on the status of certain practices, competitive displays involving buffalo sacrifice, dancing, and drinking, as regards the proper affective comportment toward the dead. These areas of ambivalence have been particularly vulnerable to change in a changing social and political climate.

Wolf sees a similar narrowing of the spectrum of permissible emotions in the musical and dramatic performances accompanying Muḥarram observances in twentieth-century urban centers in North India and Pakistan. He links this narrowing of the permitted range of emotions to colonial encounters with more austere ritual performance moods and iconoclastic discourse about ritual, as well as to Islamist reform rhetoric that degrades Shī'ī ritual "excess" and "superstition" as signs of Hindu influence on Muslim life in India. Disagreements about the appropriate manner of memorializing dead leaders during Muḥarram has polarized urban South Asian Shī'ī and Sunni communities of the twentieth century.

Wolf documents the violence that has erupted in urban centers (e.g., riots in Lucknow in the early decades of the twentieth century) over the manner in which to remember long-dead Muslim leaders. Wolf's emphasis on memorialization as a site of communal tension (between Sunnis and Shi'as and by extension between Muslims and Hindus) underscores a theme that is often overlooked in the treakly, self-congratulatory trend in contemporary popular writing on death and dying epitomized by Mitch Albom's best seller *Tuesdays with Morrie*: caring for the dying, and remembering/memorializing the dead do not always inspire noble sentiments.⁹

***Remembering and Demembering the Dead:
The Social Lives (and Deaths) of the Dead***

As Knipe's chapter suggests, funerary rituals can be read as codes that determine how the dead remain socially significant in the world of the living, encoding such features of identity as the kinship ties that will henceforth connect the deceased to the living community. In "Deanimating and Reanimating the Dead in Rural Sri Lanka," Jonathan S. Walters explores various ways in which Sri Lankan mortuary rituals enact continued relationships with the dead. Walters separates out the different strands of tradition that have contributed to contemporary mortuary practices in Sri Lanka, noting the divergent conceptions of death that these strands entail. Theravāda Buddhist rituals stress the inescapable reality of death and are orchestrated by monks whose social status as renunciators mirrors the condition of the dead. Like the deceased, monks are no longer members of the world of production and reproduction. In their professed and constantly reaffirmed renunciation of familial ties and hence separation from loved ones in this life, Buddhist monks and nuns take great solace in the idea that such a social separation in this life can serve as an antidote to the painful emotional separation that takes place at the death of a loved one. By going forth while still young and while one's loved ones still thrive, one anticipates and "works through" the pain of saying goodbye to those loved ones that death inevitably snatches from the clinging arms of the living. Thus for Sri Lankan Buddhists, a visit to the village cemetery or cremation-ground is an educational experience; the cemetery is a locus of insight where the implacable reality of death is made evident in the piling up of bones in grave upon grave and by the convention of providing no grave-marker for the deceased. Unmarked graves underscore the essential Buddhist teachings of impermanence and lack of abiding essence or selfhood. The discourse of monks during mortuary rites drives home the lesson that the dead are truly gone, never having existed in any abiding sense in the first place.

But if the Sri Lankan village cemetery is place where the dead are socially deanimated, where their continued presence among the living is shown to be nil,

it is also the locus of ritual reanimations where the dead return to the world of the living in response to necromantic spells. Sri Lankan cemeteries are also said to be visited by sorcerers who, in contrast to the monks whose liturgical function in the cemetery is to stress the fact that the dead are truly gone, are hired by clients to reanimate the dead for various necromantic purposes. These sorcerers rely on the help of a divine pantheon imported from Hindu South India that since the eighteenth century has been well-known and often resorted to by Sri Lankan Buddhists (although Buddhists relegate these Hindu gods to an inferior cosmological level below that of the Buddhas). *Sohon deviyo*, the “god of graves,” is said to cause the dead to rise again as zombies when called to action by powerful mantras that combine incantatory syllables from the Tamil and Pāli languages.

Walters thus sets up a contrast between those who deanimate or ritually enact the social death of the deceased and those who reanimate the dead for necromantic purposes. In the cemetery, forces of deanimation work at cross-purposes with forces of reanimation. But, as Walters goes on to suggest, the distinction is by no means absolute. Sometimes in order to protect a client, sorcerers also deanimate or terminate the renewed existence of a deceased being whom some other sorcerer had animated for nefarious purposes. These necromantic killings or deanimations are not all that different in practice from the liturgical chanting of unintelligible Pāli verses; as mantra-driven rites of separation, Buddhist and theistic deanimations share the same basic liturgical forms.

Gregory Schopen’s “Suppression of Nuns and the Ritual Murder of Their Special Dead in Two Buddhist Monastic Texts” shows that Buddhist monks and nuns were well aware of the necromantic possibilities afforded by the ongoing presence of the special dead. Housed in their funerary monuments (*stūpas*)—monuments that are the primary focus of Buddhist devotional activity throughout the Buddhist world—the special dead are very much alive. In his groundbreaking analysis of Buddhist mortuary deposits, Schopen provided archaeological and epigraphic evidence to support the idea (suggested but inconclusively proved by more textually oriented scholars) that *stūpas* are imbued with the living presence of the Buddhas and saints whose relics are there enshrined.⁸ If a *stūpa* can live, Schopen argues, then “it also—by necessity—should be able to die or even, indeed, be murdered.” To destroy a *stūpa* is clearly an act of ritual murder and is condemned as such by Buddhist authorities. But Schopen’s reading of monastic codes redacted at different times in different parts of the South Asian Buddhist world shows the act going uncensored when it takes the form of a political assassination of another group’s very special dead. When these ritual murders are directed against “heretical” groups on the margins of the Buddhist fold or against the order of Buddhist nuns, standing (by virtue of its administrative subordination to the order of Buddhist monks) on the margins of the Buddhist monastic community, then these killings evidently went uncensored.

In her chapter on Tamil countersorcery rites, Isabelle Nabokov also examines ritual processes of killing those who are in some sense already dead. This vivid first-person account entitled “A Funeral to Part With the Living” deals with Tamil healing rituals that bring those “killed” by sorcery (i.e., understood by the community to be socially dead) back from the state of death to the state of life. These countersorcery rituals operate under the premise that further destruction is necessary for healing to occur. In order to neutralize the social annihilation effected by the sorcerer, it is necessary for the victim to terminate his or her relationship with the sorcerer’s client (the individual whom the victim believes to have paid the sorcerer to annihilate the victim) by a rite that is in some ways the ritual equivalent of a murder-suicide. The ritual of healing involves two phases: first, the creation and animation of an effigy that represents both the suffering victim and the sorcerer’s client; second, the destruction of the effigy, at the conclusion of which the sorcerer’s spell is presumed to have been neutralized and the victim is declared to have returned to life as a newly born self. With one effigy representing both parties, the victim “killed” by sorcery and the presumed culprit are both symbolically terminated with the termination of the “life” of the effigy. The ritual enactment is thus a homicidal act but not necessarily a malevolent one because in the “killing” of the effigy, it is essentially the relationship between victim and tormentor that is killed. With this relationship terminated, the victim is able to return to life as a new social being with new possibilities. Nabokov suggests that in their regenerative capacity, the countersorcery rites she observed in Tamil Nadu are comparable to the initiatory rites that render a Hindu man “twice-born” and enable him to engage in a career of regenerative ritual acts. But unlike the initiatory and sacrificial rites for which only certain Hindu men are eligible, these Tamil counter-sorcery rites can be performed on behalf of anyone, regardless of their gender or caste identity. If death is, as many Indologists have suggested, the ultimate *samskāra* or “ritual of perfection/transformation,” then rituals that allow the individual to enact his or her death can lead the individual to new and better ontological states.

Where the chapters by Walters, Schopen, and Nabokov reveal an unexpected level of factionalism, rivalry, and intrigue with regard to the treatment of the dead and of the living in the name of the dead, Peter Gottschalk’s chapter, “Dead Healers and Living Identities,” suggests a surprising level of communal harmony where one might not expect it—in relationships between Hindus and Muslims who rely for healing on the powers of the dead in a North Indian village. In the village of Arampur, those who seek relief from various physical ailments, psychological afflictions, and possessing spirits can resort to the healing powers of two men who died in the fifteenth century: a Muslim saint known as Makhūm Šāhib and a Hindu royal minister known as Harsū Brahm. Muslim and Hindu residents of Arampur proudly claim both men as key figures in the history of their village. And narratives about the two figures connect them both to

the fifteenth-century ruler Rājā Vicitra, who through his civic-building projects shaped Arampur more than any other ruler. Gottschalk found that local narratives about Makhūm Ṣāhib and Harsū Brahm are divided along communal lines in some ways but not in others. When the narrator attempts to demonstrate the figure's authority as an agent of healing, the narration will tend to stress Makhūm Ṣāhib's Muslim identity and Harsū Brahm's Hindu identity. But in describing the efficacy of Makhūm Ṣāhib and Harsū Brahm as healers, residents of Arampur produce narratives that elide the religious identity of these figures in interesting ways. Thus in Arampur, civic pride and common reverence for the dead unites the living through intercommunal narratives and activities that go beyond the confines of communal boundaries.

Passing On: Transitions and Transformations

In this brief synopsis of some of the customs and rituals that accompany death and dying in South Asian religious traditions, various levels of transformation can be seen involving both the individual who confronts death and the community that lives on after the death of one of its members. The deceased, in transit between this life and the beyond, undergoes a transformation commensurate with the postmortem status to be achieved. For some women who die before their husbands, this transformation is an apotheosization: the deceased becomes a goddess. In the case of ritual enactments of death performed by the living, radical transformations are possible. Victims of sorcery emerge as new social beings and *yogins* as living immortals. But death not only transforms the deceased; it also shapes the surviving community. In mortuary rituals in which the living help transfer the dead to their proper levels in the world beyond, social ties are reconfigured and new social orders are established. These ritual activities not only patch up holes in the social fabric rended by death but creatively reconstruct kinship bonds and other social ties in such a way as to produce new relationships. Exercising transformative power from beyond the grave, the dead never sleep. The social consequences of the dead may continue to be felt long after the death of an individual and those consequences may change, as Wolf's chapter shows, to a considerable degree over the years. Having passed beyond life, the dead are often thought to be able to mediate between domains normally considered incommensurate. Due to their powers of mediation and their role as icons and touchstones for the living, the dead can thus sustain and heal the living as well as generate conflict and legitimate violence.

That the dead are standard-bearers for the living who aid in the process of communal identity formation and expression is not exactly late-breaking news in anthropological or religious studies circles. But this volume explores some of the less-explored tributaries of the stream of theory on how attitudes toward the

dead shape living communities. We demonstrate how riots in early twentieth-century India have erupted out of communal conflict over proper decorum in remembering the deaths of Muslim leaders who died centuries ago in other lands. We show how conflict between Buddhists and outsiders and also between Buddhist nuns and monks in competition for lay support was expressed as a ritual homicide that took the form of destroying rival monuments as well as ritual cannibalism, or the eating of food in a ritually provocative way that expressed homicidal or communicidal intent. Those who wish to see more comfort with ambivalence in scholarly and popular discourse on death and dying will appreciate the importance given to anger, hatred, and communal conflict in this volume's explorations of how memorializing the dead can engender certain unpleasant moods and motivations among the living.

While significant work has been done on protocols surrounding death and the handling of the dead within specific religious traditions in South Asia, there is much comparative work to be done on patterns and themes that cut across the boundaries of religious communities. This is especially the case now that scholars are moving outside the narrow confines of what can be learned from texts and from the practices of cultural elites. We hope that the chapters in this volume contribute not only to the growing conversation on death and dying among students of the history of religions but also to the emerging interest in ethnographic methods that shed light on the social life of death in underrepresented groups.

Notes

1. Robert Hertz, "A Contribution to the Study of the Collective Representation of Death," in *Death and the Right Hand*, trans. R. C. Needham (London: Cohen and West, 1960).

2. See, for example, A. Hillebrandt, "Death and the Disposal of the Dead (Hindu)," in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, ed. James Hastings (Edinburgh, Scotland: T. & T. Clark; New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1908–26), pp. 475–79.

3. See Jonathan Parry, *Death in Banaras* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994). See also the editorial comments of Elisabeth Schömbucher and Claus Peter Zoller, eds., *Ways of Dying: Death and Its Meanings in South Asia* (New Delhi: Manohar, 1999) (South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University South Asian Studies Series, no. 33).

4. Arnold Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, trans. M. B. Visedom and G. L. Caffee (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 81–115.

5. See Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964), pp. 53–66.

6. See S. Settar, *Inviting Death: Indian Attitude Towards the Ritual Death* (Leiden, Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1989); Parry, *Death in Banaras*; Christopher Justice, *Dying*

the Good Death: The Pilgrimage to Die in India's Holy City (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997).

7. Schömbucher and Zoller, *Ways of Dying*, pp. 20–24.

8. “Burial ‘Ad Sanctos’ and the Physical Presence of the Buddha in Early Indian Buddhism,” *Religion* 17 (1987): 193–225.

9. Mitch Albom, *Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, A Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson* (New York: Doubleday, 1997).