



To Be Cared For: The Power of Conversion and Foreignness of Belonging in an Indian Slum (The Anthropology of Christianity)

Nathaniel Roberts

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To Be Cared For offers a unique window into the conceptual and moral world of slum-bound Dalits ("untouchables") in the South Indian city of Chennai. The book focuses on the decision by many women to embrace locally specific forms of Pentecostal Christianity. Nathaniel Roberts challenges dominant anthropological understandings of religion as a matter of culture and identity, as well as Indian nationalist narratives of Christianity as a "foreign" ideology that disrupts local communities. Far from being a divisive force, Roberts argues, conversion to Christianity serves to integrate the slum community—Christians and Hindus alike—by addressing hidden moral fault lines in the slum that subtly pit women against one another. Christians and Hindus in the slum are not opposed; they are united in a struggle to survive in a national context that renders Dalits outsiders in their own homes.

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