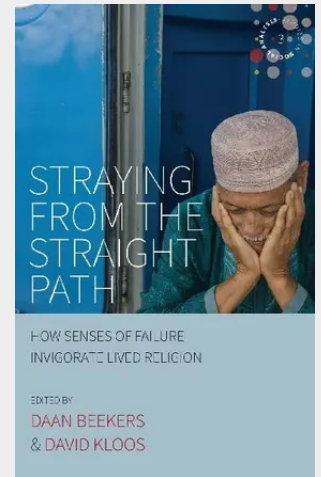


Straying from the Straight Path

How Senses of Failure Invigorate Lived Religion

If piety, faith, and conviction constitute one side of the religious coin, then imperfection, uncertainty, and ambivalence constitute the other. Yet, scholars tend to separate these two domains and place experiences of inadequacy in everyday religious life – such as a wavering commitment, religious negligence or weakness in faith – outside the domain of religion 'proper.' Straying from the Straight Path breaks with this tendency by examining how self-perceived failure is, in many cases, part and parcel of religious practice and experience. Responding to the need for comparative approaches in the face of the largely separated fields of the anthropology of Islam and Christianity, this volume gives full attention to moral failure as a constitutive and potentially energizing force in the religious lives of both Muslims and Christians in different parts of the world.

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