Marian Piety and Modernity: The Perpetual Help Devotion as Popular Religion in the Philippines

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Abstract:

This article argues that Marian piety in the form of the Perpetual Help Devotion exemplifies “modern popular religion,” which has grown through mechanisms of strategic accommodation and creative refashioning in response to urban transitions in Metropolitan Manila and the ecclesiastical elites’ regulation of piety. Differences between religious authorities and devotees have produced diversified devotional practices, which retain their relevance due to an ethic of self-care that enables devotees to craft identities and self-understandings in the modern context. Rather than a threat, modernity provides opportunity structures and resources that enable religious beliefs and practices to respond to the exigencies of modernity.