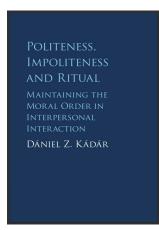Dániel Z. Kádár, **Politeness, Impoliteness and Ritual: Maintaining the Moral Order in Interpersonal Interaction,** Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2017, 427 pp., $110.00 (hardcover).

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POLITENESS,
IMPOLITENESS
AND RITUAL
MAINTAINING THE
MORAL ORDER IN
INTERPERSONAL
INTERACTION
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The past four decades have seen increasing interest in research on linguistic (im)politeness. There currently exists a proliferation of models, approaches, and applications (Culpeper, Haugh, & Kádár, 2017). ***Politeness, Impoliteness and Ritual: Maintaining the Moral Order in Interpersonal Interaction***, containing eight chapters in two parts, aims to examine the interface that exists between politeness, impoliteness, and ritual by adopting an interdisciplinary approach and setting up a multilayered analytic model.

The introductory first chapter begins by using two anecdotes to discuss the interface between ritual action and (im)polite inferences, then briefly introduces the three elements of an original hypothetical model of ritual and (im)politeness: participatory structure, (im)polite fringing behavior, and morality. A complex participatory structure includes producers, recipients, third parties and observers, etc. Fringing behavior enables a producer to make a ritual sound more or less (im)polite, and hence to influence a recipient's perceptions of the ritual action. Morality influences people's perception of that action.

Part I includes chapters 2-4, introducing the term "ritual" and its relationship to (im)politeness. Chapter 2 provides a technical definition of ritual from an interactional perspective, explaining its typology and relational functions. A ritual is a formalized and recurrent act, a performance, and is emotively invested. It can be categorized into four subtypes: covert, personal, in-group, and social ritual. In a simple model of ritual and (im)politeness without (im)polite fringing behavior being involved, (im)politeness relates to the perceptions triggered by a relationally constructive or destructive function of a ritual action. That is, relationally constructive ritual actions trigger positive evaluations, while destructive ritual actions trigger negative evaluations.

Chapter 3 takes the politeness researcher's position and describes the boundaries of ritual phenomena within (im)politeness. It focuses on the relationship between ritual and convention, two significantly similar manifestations of recurrent forms of (im)politeness. They differ from each other, however, in terms of audience, salience, setting, and ratification. This chapter also illustrates how rituals come into existence via the ritualization of interactional practices associated with (im)politeness.

Chapter 4 discusses the basic relationship between (im)polite fringing, ritual actions, and evaluative tendencies, using rites of workplace dismissal and promotion/hiring as a case study. In the

preliminary model, which does not take cases of moral aggression into consideration, polite fringing behaviors situated in ritual actions are perceived morally, impolite fringing behaviors immorally.

Part II, which includes chapters 5–7, applies the hypothetical model to analyze the complex relationship between ritual and (im)politeness by examining rites that animate moral aggression,. Chapter 5 examines how rites of moral aggression operate by comparing the ritual actions of countering the heckler and bystander intervention. The two most important similarities of these ritual actions are the performer's intention to align with the third party, and the social and moral pressure on the performer to restore the perceived moral order. These are also the typical features of rites of moral aggression.

Chapter 6 examines the interrelationship of (im)politeness and (im)morality by examining metadiscourses on (im)politeness and altruism/cruelty that exist in any rites of moral aggression. In the case of bystander intervention, the intervener makes metacommunicative appeal to altruism/cruelty and highlights the moral need for intervention (i.e., that the wrongdoer's behavior is immoral); while the wrongdoer refers to principles of politeness by moralizing metacommunicative comments related to "personal rights" (i.e., that the intervener's behavior is impolite).

Chapter 7 returns to rites of countering the heckler as a case study of moral responsibility in rites of moral aggression. It focuses on how third-party participants tend to perceive impolite fringing behaviors in such rites. Moral responsibility via individual agency plays a crucial role in this process. For example, a performer may be de-ratified by third-party participants if they hold her/him responsible for the moral order not being restored, and thus her/his impolite fringing behavior tends to be perceived negatively. However, impolite fringing is tolerated in those rites that aim to restore the communal moral order.

Chapter 8 summarizes the previous chapters' findings and proposes some topics for future research. It concludes that the present framework captures ritual through the lens of (im)politeness and may aid the examination of a range of interpersonal phenomena, such as in-group abuse.

This book provides a solid analytic framework for researching the interface between ritual and (im)politeness from both theoretical and interactional perspectives. Its model has two important features. First, it is presented gradually by integrating different elements, hence starting simply and becoming increasingly complex. Specifically, the model is presented in two steps. Part I (Chapters 2-4) overviews the basic relationship between ritual and (im)politeness by examining the (im)polite fringing behavior or the lack thereof. Part II (Chapters 5-7) adds the element of morality into the model, thus establishing a more complex relationship for discussion. In this way, the model brings together three characteristics of ritual—its nature as a practice of a community, its intriguing relationship with (im)politeness, and its moral nature—within a single framework. As such, the complex relationship between ritual and (im)politeness is presented gradually and clearly, making the model more accessible to readers.

Second, the model has wide application due to its variability. The proposed model is based on the examination of large interactional datasets, which have been drawn from various languages (i.e. Hungarian, English, Chinese, and Japanese) and genres (i.e. CMC conversations, extracts from films, literary pieces, etc.). Hence, it is able to capture ritual interaction in various data types. Moreover, as

proposed by Kádár, more elements can be added into the model, thus making it a variable one, "which could help the reader analyze what is happening, in terms of (im)politeness, in ritual interaction" (p. 19).

This book is also notable for its intersection of different disciplines, including pragmatics, sociology, social anthropology, psychology, etc. As Kádár argues, it fills two interdisciplinary gaps. First, it draws attention to the importance of studying ritual in the field of (im)politeness research. Second, it emphasizes the importance of the (im)politeness phenomenon for ritual researchers. Moreover, the book points to the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of contemporary (im)politeness research and how this can add to the depth and breadth of our knowledge of (im)politeness. For example, when situated within ritual action, (im)politeness is an evaluation influenced by morality. In cases of moral aggression, the impolite fringing of a ritual action is perceived negatively by a recipient, but may be acceptable and morally justifiable to a third party who regards it as "the only/most efficient way to maintain the moral order of a community" (p. 26).

In summary, this is an original and compelling book, clearly exploring the interface between politeness, impoliteness, and ritual. It serves as an excellent resource for experienced (im)politeness researchers looking to further extend their research scope, for ritual researchers exploring the oft-neglected phenomenon of (im)politeness in ritual study, and for readers interested in the relationships between (im)politeness and language aggression.

References

Culpeper, J., Haugh, M., & Kádár, D. (Eds.). (2017). *The Palgrave handbook of linguistic (im)politeness.* London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.