

that “the course of Jordanian society . . . will depend” (133).

Migration to Greece, which is described in chapter four, was for me one of the most interesting parts of this book. During the time I stayed in Jordan I met countless people who had gone abroad to study, but I never heard of anyone going to Greece. This makes me wonder, how representative the destinations described by Antoun are for Jordan, or whether they are typical only for Kufr al-Ma. In Greece, the migrants integrated most fully into the host society, several of them marrying Greek women and settling there for good. The high degree of integration seems to be a result of not only individual attitudes and of life patterns, but also of the cultural similarities between Jordanian and Greek rural worldviews, norms, and values.

The situation of the migrants to Pakistan, which is the focus of the following chapter, appears to be radically different from Greece mainly in terms of religion and language. Again, contrary to my own experiences and expectations, the largest number of migrants in Antoun’s sample had gone to various parts of Pakistan, following one pioneer. They all returned to Jordan, without having learnt the local languages, and with only one of them having married a local woman. But the students’ experiences were so varied that Antoun concludes with regard to the impact of this experience on their worldviews that it “would be difficult, if not impossible to establish causal links between a particular migration experience and particular views on social questions in the home country” (169). In fact, he argues that the “diversity of viewpoints . . . is the significant factor” which appears to be an attempt at avoiding conclusive statements.

In his eighth chapter, Antoun looks at the situation of migrants from Kufr al-Ma to various parts of the United States. This is by far the longest chapter of the book, but most of it consists of unrefined data, straight from the notebook it seems. The reader learns how the four migrants have responded to Antoun’s questions, but the analysis of this remains shallow.

The following chapter contains an examination of intergenerational relationships, mainly based on one particular family in Kufr al-Ma. Here, Antoun focuses on the father-sons relationship, and how this has been affected by migration abroad. He concludes that these bonds remain intact despite the critical views on “village customs” developed by the migrants upon their return.

It is not until the final chapter that Antoun moves beyond the raw data of his research and attempts to place his case study in a broader, comparative perspective. The chapter appears more like an “add-on” and the discussion focuses very strongly on questions of acculturation, integration, and adjustment. What seems to be important for Antoun is to emphasise the resilience of the community in the Diaspora situation, including norms and values that originate in the sending community. He concludes with the observation that “the family and the local community – not the national community –

continue to fill the imagination and the emotions of sons and daughters whether they are found in the diaspora or at home” (310).

One aspect that is completely missing in this ethnography is a gendered analysis, which Antoun considers impossible due to him being a male researcher and, therefore, a lack of access to female respondents. Given that all the migrants in this sample are male, this would have been a highly interesting issue to discuss. In a sense, however, this falls in line with the general lack of theorisation in this book. It remains true to its title and merely describes or documents. Another drawback of the study is the inconsistent use of names, letters, and numbers for his respondents, which impedes considerably on readability and understanding. I also would have expected more historical depth, given Antoun’s long-term familiarity with the situation. This ethnography contains valuable details and a wealth of information for readers interested in Jordan and/or issues of transnational migration and diaspora communities from the Middle East. Some of the chapters would make useful case studies for course reading lists. Focusing on single chapters would also circumvent the repetitiveness that runs through the book.

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**Bonnemère, Pascale** (ed.): *Women as Unseen Characters. Male Ritual in Papua New Guinea*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004. 254 pp. ISBN 0-8122-3789-7. Price: \$ 49.95

Male ritual life – that is, rituals concerned with initiating young men into the male corporate group, equipping them with certain skills, or enhancing and protecting their beauty and health – has long been a rich and productive field of enquiry for anthropologists of Melanesia, providing a lens through which to examine gender, sexuality, embodiment, violence, and male domination. Because indigenous discourse about these rituals often emphasized the necessity of male secrecy, the seclusion of boys away from the village, the removal of “female” substances from boys and/or the addition of “masculine” substances to them, it has been easy to assume that these rituals are “men’s business” in which women play no role whatsoever – that one of the aims of these rituals is exactly that, to eclipse female agency, if only temporarily. Through careful ethnographic exegesis and analysis, the scholars in this edited volume challenge that assumption and demonstrate not only that women played key (if often quite small) roles in these rituals, but also that the examination of women’s roles in male ritual adds to, and in some cases subtly changes, the interpretation of these rituals.

For example, it is well-known that male initiation rituals often entail the removal of young boys from their mothers into an exclusively male realm, and it is this male realm and the rebirth of the boys by the male corporate group that has received the most analytical attention. However, through an examination of mothers’ ritual practices, as well as the taboos they follow during their sons’ ritual seclusion, some of the

authors in this volume – Sandra Bamford, Pascale Bonnemère, and Gilbert Herdt, in particular – show that the powerful mother-son bond – and its rupture – are symbolically elaborated dimensions of these rituals, central to the ontogeny of masculinity. Drawing on Marilyn Strathern's theorization of relational personhood in Melanesia, Bamford and Bonnemère also suggest that past interpretations of male ritual have focused too narrowly on the masculinization of the individual, overlooking how such rituals can concern the transformation of the boys' positionality within a field of kinship relations.

There are two aspects of this volume that I found particularly rewarding. First, perhaps more than any other edited volume I've read, the chapters are truly in dialogue with each other, often explicitly invoking and commenting on each other, as well as addressing particular questions posed in Bonnemère's introduction. This rich conversation was likely facilitated by the genesis of the volume from the annual meetings of the Association for the Social Anthropology of Oceania (ASAO). ASAO sessions dedicated to a particular topic typically meet at least twice, and often three times, before deciding whether to proceed to an edited volume, and thus participants are able to develop their ideas over the course of two or three years while reading and thinking about the other participants' papers – with wonderful results in this case.

That said, the chapters also stand alone as evocative and thought-provoking analyses of ritual. Aletta Biersack's examination of the *omatisia* ritual practiced by young Ipili men (similar to the *sanggai* ritual practiced by the neighboring Enga) nicely resituates the analyses of highlands "bachelor cults" from a preoccupation with gender politics to a discussion of conjugality, marital sexuality, and the Ipili philosophy that "there is never regeneration without the risk of physical deterioration and death" and that human beings, male or female, "are vulnerable as propagators" (111). Marta Rohatynskij's chapter, although not quite as accessible as the others', provocatively widens the discussion about bodily substance and identity by illustrating the importance of territory, the ancestral spirits associated with specific tracts of land, and the transmission of ancestral spirit through food grown on specific territories. In essence she suggests that the plant substances consumed by ritual initiates are not merely symbols of gendered bodily substance, they are themselves substances necessary for the formation of clan and gender identity. Sandra Bamford's chapter on the Kamea also challenges a narrow focus on human bodily substances – and raises the question of whether previous analyses of reproduction and identity formation in Melanesia may have been overly influenced by Western ideas concerning the transmission of biogenetic substance – by effectively arguing that "the parent-child tie is not imagined in terms of shared bodily substance" (38); rather, "the defining feature of motherhood for the Kamea ... is the furnishing of a context – and enclosed environment – within which the fetus may grow" (38). Moreover, "until he is initiated, a

boy is, in a sense, still 'contained' ... It is only through initiation that a woman's son is finally 'de-contained'" (41).

The second aspect of this volume that I found noteworthy and gratifying is its comparative nature. Some of the chapters (those by Pierre Lemonnier, Pascale Bonnemère, Polly Wiessner, and Andrew Strathern and Pamela Stewart) deliberately set themselves the task of comparison, though with different theoretical strategies. Bonnemère, for example, shows that the different Anga-speaking groups draw on different aspects of women's procreative abilities (breastfeeding versus gestation, for example) in the symbolic content of their initiation rituals. Wiessner, in contrast, uses a vast corpus of life-histories, genealogies, and other oral genres to reconstruct the pre-colonial political-economic history of Enga-speaking groups, and she shows that over time, as women played increasingly important roles producing pigs for ever-intensifying and expanding exchange networks, their participation in male ritual also increased. Attempting to write a regional precolonial history is ambitious and rare in the literature on Papua New Guinea, and this chapter is thus both fascinating in its own right and makes an important counterpoint to the other chapters in which the historical context provided for the ritual analysis is not as deep. The volume does not attempt to cover all areas of Papua New Guinea; instead, it focuses primarily on two regions, the Anga-speaking peoples of the Eastern Highlands and a few cultural groups in the Western and Southern Highlands. Thus, even when the chapters aren't explicitly comparative, the reader cannot help but compare and contrast Wiessner's chapter with Biersack's or Bonnemère's chapter with Bamford's. In sum, this volume makes an important contribution to the study of male ritual life in Papua New Guinea, showing that a consideration of women's roles enriches its interpretation. Holly Wardlow

**Bsteh, Andreas, und Tahir Mahmood** (Hrsg.): *Intoleranz und Gewalt. Erscheinungsformen, Gründe, Zugänge*. Mödling: Verlag St. Gabriel, 2004. 186 pp. ISBN 3-85264-601-4. (Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table, 2) Preis: € 13.80

Von 19. bis 23. Oktober 2000 brachte Andreas Bsteh, der Direktor des Religionstheologischen Instituts St. Gabriel bei Wien, zum ersten Mal eine kleine Gruppe von Muslimen und Christen zusammen, die sich als "Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table" (= VICIRoTa) konstituierte. Die einzelnen Teilnehmerinnen und Teilnehmer nahmen jeweils "aus ihrer persönlichen Sicht der heutigen Weltsituation" zu der Frage Stellung: "Was ist das wichtigste Problem, vor dem die Menschheit auf ihrem Weg in die Zukunft steht, und was kann getan werden, es zu bewältigen?" Die Impulsreferate und vor allem auch die Diskussionsbeiträge wurden zwei Jahre später in der vorbildlichen Art und Weise veröffentlicht, die A. Bstehs zahlreiche und gewichtige Publikationen zum Dialog seit Jahrzehnten auszeichnen (siehe: Um unsere Zeit zu bedenken.