and State in Contemporary Europe" was to also allow for comparability (an issue discussed with nuance by Patrick Heady in his introduction to Vol. 2) across this wide range of localities. Researchers were thus asked to cover common themes, including prevailing ideas about reciprocity, altruism, and self-interest; symbolism and ritual; and the impact of economic and administrative forces on families. Researchers were also instructed to collect quantitative data about interactions between relatives (with the help of a new computer program, the "Kinship Network Questionnaire," specifically designed for this purpose), thus offering an alternative means for comparing patterns of cooperation between different categories of kin. The diversity of methods used in "Family, Kinship and State in Contemporary Europe" seemed to have been productive not only because it allowed for historically and culturally grounded case studies to be thoughtfully set within a comparative frame. They were productive also because the comparison of quantitative questionnaire data with qualitative ethnographic research sometimes revealed slippages between official ideologies of care voiced by informants (who had been directly influenced by state discourse, as Gaunt and Marks, for example, describe for the Swedish case) and actual everyday practice.

Taken together, the first two volumes of "Family, Kinship and State in Contemporary Europe" are not only meticulously researched but also unparalleled in their breadth and depth. The series will become an important reference work for anyone interested in one of the most pressing issues facing Europe today – the question of care in an era of economic, political, and familial crisis. What is at stake is both substantive and methodological in that the series' unique contributions with regards to the transformation of kinship arrangements and mutual assistance in postwelfare Europe are paired with the productivity of combining multiple (quantitative and qualitative) kinds and several (national and local) scales of information.

Andrea Muehlebach

Grimes, Ronald L., Ute Hüsken, Udo Simon, and **Eric Venbrux** (eds.): Ritual, Media, and Conflict. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 299 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-973554-9. Price: £ 18.99

This is an interesting and valuable book produced by an international and interdisciplinary group of scholars in ritual studies. With grants from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research and the German Research Foundation, the group of 24 scholars was able to sustain their collaborations over a period of two years at the Radboud University Nijmegen and the University of Heidelberg. The group was drawn mostly from anthropology and religion studies, with a few participants from languages, literature, classics, and elsewhere in the humanities. They focused their attention on a series of case studies drawn to test and elaborate ideas about the relationships among ritual, media, and conflict in a wide range of world cultures, political settings, and media situations. What a special opportunity!

The result is this coherent yet diverse collection of nine chapters, seven based on case studies plus opening and closing statements by Ronald Grimes and Michael Houseman respectively. Each of the case study chapters follows this form: two to four coauthors from different national academies and usually different fields of study, address two or three case studies, also selected from different national settings, institutional domains, media forms, etc. The authors open each chapter with theoretical statements and a brief review of relevant literature, identify the key points of contrast for their case studies, and then examine each case on its own. Each chapter closes with lessons drawn from comparison across the cases. The opening and closing chapters of the book aim for more general theoretical points, attempting to offer some lessons from across the cases.

Grimes' opening chapter works around the triangle of ritual, media, and conflict, examining each from the perspective of the other and inviting the reader to see them as equals in dynamic relation. He admits, though, that the authors represented here "collaborated less on the basis of our knowledge of either media or conflict than on our research into ritual" (5). It shows. While the book is fascinating and valuable, it is a shame they did not recruit some communication and media scholars into their group, or devote more time to the extant literature (some of it does appear in a couple of the chapters). In fact, media and ritual is a mature area of study in communication with a rich literature now 30 or more years old, with established paradigms, counter proposals, and a thick empirical literature. The whole project would have benefitted from more contact with that work.

It was good to see that the concept of mediatization did receive some discussion in the opening and closing chapters and occasional mention through the body of the book. This concept, the most important work on which has been done in Germany, the Netherlands, and the Scandinavian countries from which most of the authors here derive, identifies the institutional and historical processes by which the logics and forms of media gain influence in other institutional spheres, ranging from family life to politics, education to art to business and entertainment. This is obviously of key relevance to the study of the relations of ritual and media. Even so, the engagement with that literature is rather thin; few of the original sources are cited. Of equal relevance are the literatures on media events, ceremonial media, religion and media, media ritual, and ritual communication. The literature on media and conflict is huge and varied too, though rather less my own area of expertise. Peculiarly, even the burgeoning literature on media anthropology is mostly left out of discussion, though most of us would count this book as an example of that trend.

That all aside, is it still a good book? Is it interesting and valuable in its own ways? Yes. What we see here is a fairly purely anthropological approach to the articulation of ritual in the contemporary world where media are primary means of public communication and conflict a predominant reality. Theirs was an unusually sustained engagement that produced an unusually coherent edited volume. We see then important conceptual materials, clas-

sic and contemporary concepts from anthropological theory as well as the mainstream of ritual studies, brought to bear in new ways on new topics, tested against case study materials for which they were not originally designed. One recurrent theme, for example, is the debate between Grimes and Jonathan Z. Smith on the relation of ritual and place, space, and related issues. Reflecting, I assume, the sustained discussion among the chapters' authors, the core ideas of Smith's book and Grimes's response are thoroughly engaged, used in different ways, and varying conclusions drawn depending on their interpretation by different authors and their utility for the case study at hand.

The case studies addressed in the book represent a wonderful diversity, including such varied materials as adaptations of Catholic rite, Masonic oaths, film portrayals of evangelicals, Muslim call to prayer, political parades, holidays, religious websites, memorial websites, toppling of statues, appearances of white elephants, the Abu Ghraib photographs, weddings and war in Second Life, and more, from settings widely spread across world cultures – and those that exist only in the media of the world wide web as well. Historical materials make an appearance too. The thoughtful pairing of case studies within chapters to create empirical contrasts is a strong feature of the book.

Houseman's concluding chapter is a seriously engaged review and response to the rest of the book; not all edited books have such a feature. He identifies key themes, including some implicit tendencies across the chapters, offers some points of critique, introduces some work of his own, and points to possible future work. This is a substantial, analytical contribution; worthy of reading on its own, read as a conclusion to the book it seals the deal, raising the value of the whole collection.

I cannot resist quoting his concluding lines, to set up my own conclusion: Should we consider reality TV, self-help workshops, Internet Weblogging, and other familiar features of current Euro-American life to be instances of this type of ritualization? I have no ready answer to this question. However, recalling the often encountered assertion that "traditional" societies are imbued with ritual, I wonder if, in changing our perspective, we might discover that the same holds true for "contemporary" Western culture. Imagine: a ritual-filled society of our very own (282).

Indeed, those scholars who work with ritual in the field of communication and media studies offered an answer years ago: Yes indeed; ritualized communication is everywhere and fundamental to everything social. Now let's get on with analyzing how it works. To that end, despite my criticisms, this book makes a good contribution.

Eric W. Rothenbuhler

Hamberger, Klaus : La parenté vodou. Organisation sociale et logique symbolique en pays ouatchi (Togo). Paris : CNRS Éditions ; Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2011, 679 pp. ISBN 978-2-271-07255-9 ; ISBN 978-2-7351-1337-8. Prix : € 35.00

Ce volumineux ouvrage introduit dans le monde villageois sud-togolais d'une manière claire, systématique et ordonnée. Ce n'est pourtant pas une introduction à quelque chose de plus complet, une sorte d'initiation. C'est, en effet, l'immersion totale dans la société ouatchie sous tous ses aspects : familial, rituel, religieux. En somme, l'auteur renoue avec la tradition bien française en présentant la vie d'un village ouatchi comme un fait social total. En plus, il reprend un autre fil de cette tradition en se servant du schéma d'oppositions, par exemple agnatique/utérin ou contiguïté/substituabilité. Dans la démarche adoptée il ne s'agit nullement de l'accommodation des données du terrain à une grille préétablie. Les oppositions forment plutôt les pôles des relations qui régissent la vie du village. L'auteur, au lieu de classifier les différents acteurs visibles et invisibles de la vie villageoise, se donne comme objectif de comprendre les relations qui animent la vie sociale. "… comment ces relations se forment, se transmettent et se combinent, quelles pratiques elles supposent ou excluent, et comment elles se distinguent selon qu'elles relient proches ou semblables, inégaux ou égaux, dépendants ou opposés" (xii).

L'argument principal qui revient tout au long de l'ouvrage est formulé au début du premier chapitre : "la parenté ne constitue pas un système particulier d'organisation sociale, mais une logique symbolique qui imprègne tous les domaines de la vie sociale, y compris la vie religieuse" (17). À l'opposition agnatique/utérin correspondent celles de maison/ventre ou de tabouret/bracelet, le tout s'inscrivant dans un système symbolique basé sur la contiguïté et la substituabilité. Pour démontrer cette logique des relations l'auteur se sert des récits d'origine, ainsi que des fonctions sociales primordiales des familles paternelles et maternelles. Les chapitres II et III révèlent en détail les relations sociales du groupe concerné. Tout d'abord, l'auteur analyse plusieurs récits d'origine en montrant leur importance à la compréhension du langage symbolique et de certaines croyances religieuses. Ensuite, il se penche sur l'espace agricole et l'espace résidentiel en montrant la logique du don et de la segmentation liée à la parenté agnatique. Quant à l'unité résidentielle qui est la maison, elle reproduit la dichotomie entre parenté agnatique et parenté utérine. En plus, un rôle important revient à la case maternelle. Pour appuyer ses thèses l'auteur puise un argument important dans le rituel concernant la naissance.

Le chapitre IV est consacré au mariage, à son rôle dans l'établissement des liens et dans la création des réseaux de parenté. L'auteur donne la description détaillée de différentes étapes du mariage et des rites qui les accompagnent. En plus, il s'attarde sur les préférences et interdits matrimoniaux et analyse la terminologie de l'affinité. Selon une perspective agnatique, tout mariage crée une opposition entre donneurs et preneurs en tant que groupes en situation de confrontation. Par contre, selon une perspective utérine, chaque mariage signifie un déplacement, une transformation de l'espace local. "Si tout homme est attaché à une maison unique, toute femme est attachée au moins à deux : celle de son père où elle a grandi, et celle de sa mère, qui n'a jamais coupé le lien