

cally describes a lived Islam that is complex, with its own aesthetic power, providing a dramatic contrast to the depictions of Muslims that we read today almost daily in the press. It is the kind of book that we need to teach right now.

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REED, ADAM. *Papua New Guinea's last place: experiences of constraint in a postcolonial prison*. x, 197 pp., maps, figs, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2003. £30.00 (cloth)

A prison ethnography might be the last place to expect an innovative account of an emergent national culture. Indeed, in his book on Port Moresby's Bomana jail, Adam Reed does not emphasize the question of nationality or the nation. The book's modest aim, to describe one prison largely on the basis of interviews conducted on the premises, perhaps prevents it. Yet Papua New Guinean public culture is today dominated by discussions of law and order, effective governance, and social decline. The book is a moving account of men and women struggling to create themselves and their worlds out of the threads of unravelled personal and political pasts. Scholars of Melanesia, and of law, will find it a thought-provoking evocation of the postcolonial present.

Reed is in some ways aided by the limitations that he imposes on himself. Suspending moral judgement of, or even inquiry about, the criminal acts that landed his research subjects in prison, mostly murder and theft, he is able instead to listen to their own thoughts about living there. This yields a narrative organized around the 'experience of constraint' and its constitutive elements: physical seclusion, social separation, temporal discontinuity, personal salvation, and ethical reflection. Throughout, Reed uses the classic accounts of imprisonment by Sykes and Foucault as foils for his own deft applications of Marilyn Strathern's analyses of Melanesian sociality. While never belittling the suffering of prisoners during their months or years of confinement – or the magnitude of their crimes – he shows how incarceration can be socially productive in ways that, it seems, only Melanesians could imagine.

For example, while some prison studies have considered the jail a self-contained world, Reed shows prisoners suspended in relations that extend beyond the razor-wired perimeter. Their bodies twitch in tandem with events elsewhere (their home villages, for example) and their dreams foretell of relations both near and far. None the less, though Foucault emphasized the panoptic techniques of

the modern prison, male prisoners at Bomana regard it as a 'dark place'. They work to suppress thoughts of relations outside the jail and regard their seclusion there as enabling. In their view, separation from women and from domestic relations re-enacts the gender exclusions of traditional social orders. Such separations afford the invention and/or elaboration of new forms of collectivity, in particular crime gangs, ethnic or regional affiliations, and ecclesiastical associations.

Throughout, Reed demonstrates a disciplined devotion to Strathern's analysis and in particular to her picture of sociality as alternating between two modal forms: collective (gender-exclusive) and particular (cross-sex). Reed's descriptions of gangs as clan-like forms of egalitarian male association is of special interest to scholars of transformations in Papua New Guinea politics and gender relations. However, his claim that female inmates at Bomana are orientated especially to the 'particular' relations of affinal or kin affiliation is not as well developed.

Though he criticizes conventions of Melanesianist anthropology as old-fashioned (pp. 79–82), Reed's work could be strengthened by greater knowledge of Papua New Guinea outside its capital. Pielans, I think, would be chagrined to learn that they live in the country's eastern highlands (p. 133 – they in fact live in the far west). Reed's translations of Tok Pisin, while never incorrect, are a bit unevenly poetic. And it may surprise him to find that some of the activities that he describes as produced by the prison environment (e.g. obsessive gambling) in fact frequently characterize village life. Moreover, the contest between 'autonomy' and moral social obligation that Reed sees as a nascent reflexive critique of Melanesian sociality (chap. 6) has long been a tension at the heart of Melanesian forms of social life.

Indeed, a great strength of this book is its description of ideas that resonate all over the country. Upon release, prisoners often start new lives while also plying stories of their adventures, soliciting the approving admiration or moral edification of (especially) younger generations. Reed's descriptions of gangs, of the seductive ethos of the cowboy-criminal, of penile incisions and other body practices, of the dangerous appeal of city life, of nostalgia for lost pasts and lost places – these all richly evoke the contemporary social world of Papua New Guinea.

Reed's writing is always lucid and often bold, and he incorporates poetry, song lyrics, dream narratives, and other texts produced by prisoners. The book also includes cartoon line-drawings of scenes from prison life. I suspect that those illustrations will make the volume more accessible to Papua New Guineans who do not read English, but the drawings' effect on other audiences may be to

lighten the gravity of Reed's subject. Nevertheless, legendary 'Bomex' (as it is abbreviated) – dusty and hot, indeed quite hellish – is here effectively portrayed as an ordeal of singular cultural consequence.

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SOMMERS, MARC. *Fear in Burundiland: Burundian refugees in urban Tanzania*. xviii, 219 pp., maps, figs, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2001. £15.00 (paper)

This accessibly written study describes the clandestine lives of members of a self-settled, Pentecostalist, Burundian refugee community living and working illegally in Dar es Salaam. The author's fieldwork among these young urban-based men provides a refreshing change in perspective from most studies of African refugees that focus on refugees living in camps. Although based upon a small sample of key informants – Pasteur Albert, John, James, Luka, William, and Marco – the results provide important qualitative data on the situation of an estimated three-quarters of all African refugees, who are self-settled rather than inhabitants of UNHCR refugee camps.

The first half of the book contextualizes the urban migrants' situation in terms of their historical experience, life in the refugee camps, and the Tanzanian authorities' attitudes and policies towards urban migrants, especially young men. The latter part of the book traces the networks and strategies that the young men employed to get from their rural refugee settlements to establish themselves safely in Dar es Salaam with secure jobs and accommodation. The importance of patronage emerges clearly from these accounts, though I suspect that slightly too much significance is given to the Pentecostal Church, rather than to the continuation of forms of patron-client relations central to Burundian society. An interesting sub-theme of the presentation is the analysis of *Isiqha ya Hibirini* – the Dar es Salaam youths' patois – whose vivid and provocative idioms and clichés offer a vibrant commentary on life in Dar es Salaam that Sommers exploits to good effect.

The analysis focuses on the interminable uncertainty of these refugees' lives, discussed mostly in terms of fear. As infants or very young children, these men fled Burundi during the Tutsi massacres of Hutu in 1972. Although mostly unable to remember these events for themselves, the terror of this period has traumatized their families and led to the constant worry that the Tutsi still seek to kill them. Fear, Sommers argues, pervades their life experience, and is therefore central in

the identity construction of these second-generation Hutu refugees.

Finding themselves in refugee settlements with little or no prospect of return in the foreseeable future, Burundian Hutu elders turned memories of ethnic holocaust into historical narratives that strengthened group solidarity and connected the children of genocide survivors to the traumatizing experiences of their parents. These narratives stereotyped the Hutu as victimized for generations by murderous Tutsi adversaries. Although these accounts of the past inspired genocidal violence by Hutu extremists in Rwanda in 1994, in the refugee settlements they enabled the young refugees to identify themselves as Burundian nationals and ethnic Hutu. This history infused the young refugees with a culturally transmitted terror, which Sommers characterizes with the term 'cultural fear'.

Sommers uses the idea of cultural fear to explain why the Burundian urban migrants' fears go beyond the realities of being illegal urban migrants. While urban Tanzanian migrants refer to 'anxieties' when discussing life in Dar es Salaam, Burundian refugees talk of 'being afraid'. The emotional difference between these, Sommers argues, reflects the role of 'cultural fear' in the Burundian refugees' lives.

The occasional tendency for self-congratulation in the author's description of fieldwork spoils what is otherwise an interesting account of the challenge of adapting research plans to suit a changing situation. The use of snowballing techniques is central to urban ethnography, but in this case was made more difficult by the mostly illegal lives of those studied. Given the small number of informants, the author does not convincingly demonstrate why these interesting case studies should be applicable to all 'Burundi refugees in urban Tanzania', as the subtitle suggests.

With such a limited base of informants, one is forced to wonder how much William's excessive paranoia affected the atmosphere in the tailoring shop and influenced Sommers's analytic bias to 'cultural fear'. Although paranoia, suspicion, uncertainty, anxiety, terror, horror, and so on, are mentioned, Sommers does not systematically explore why these terms should be reduced to 'cultural fear', even less so from a Burundian Hutu perspective. This absence has led him to overstate his position: 'In the case of young Burundi refugees, cultural fear was the lens through which they perceived reality' (p. 185). One inevitably thinks of informants such as Luka, who were not dominated by cultural fear, and yet who represent a significant proportion of those consulted.

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