

supranational culture and politics, and provides little incentive to venture beyond disciplinary boundaries.

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Jane Cowan, ed. 2000. *Macedonia: The Politics of Identity and Difference. Anthropology, Culture and Society*. London: Pluto. pp. xviii + 166. ISBN (hbk) 0 7453 1594 1, (pbk) 0 7453 1589 5. Price: £45, £13.99.

This book originated in a Forum Against Ethnic Violence (FAEV) conference held in London in 1994. The time elapsed between the original conference and the book's publication suggests some of the complexities of dealing with the 'Macedonian question'. Only three of the contributors had papers at the conference (Rikki Van Boeschoten, Loring Danforth, Jonathan Schwartz), and the editor's intention has been to expand the remit of the original conference into an inquiry into what constitutes 'Macedonia' or 'Macedonian' and how these concepts are constructed, conceptualized and deconstructed. The book is short (seven chapters plus the Introduction), readable, and a very good introduction to a complex field of issues.

Jane Cowan and Keith Brown's introduction provides a fair historical overview of the region, emphasizing the construction of ethnicity and deconstructing recent stereotypes like the myth of 'ancient hatreds'. More contemporary antagonisms, like the war of words between Greece and the Republic of Macedonia, are cited but perhaps sidestepped with the instance of Cambridge University Press's 1995 withdrawal of Karakasidou's *Fields of Wheat: Hills of Blood* in mind. I felt uneasy on noting that all three maps in the book refer to the Republic of Macedonia under its 'provisional' name (the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) which was forced on it by Greek diplomacy and which still causes humiliation and offence to Macedonians.

The chapters in the book oscillate between history and ethnography, and the chapters make sense as a whole. Van Boetschoen explores the consequences of ethnicity in the district of Florina (Greece), while Danforth and Schwartz present the results of their research among diasporas in Canada and Australia. These contributions point to difficulties in deciding who 'the Macedonians' are; sometimes different identities and ethnic allegiances exist even within the same family. Piero Vereni writes about a Greek man whose first language is Macedonian, while Georgios Agelopoulos discusses multiculturalism in Greece's largest city, Thessaloniki. Iakovos Michailidis treats the post-Second World War period in the Florina region while Brown examines the period 1994–1998 in the Republic of Macedonia. Brown's overview of state symbols should prove of interest to scholars concerned with politics and identity in the region, while Michailidis's critique of Greek historians' attitudes and analyses in the wake of the war shows the roots of much contemporary Greek popular anxiety concerned with what can only be called a 'lunatic fringe's' claims to a 'Greater Macedonia'.

Perhaps because this is a relatively short book, it mostly considers Greek-Slavic Macedonian controversies. It would have been interesting to include views, attitudes and (most importantly) ethnographies from the Bulgarian and Serbian sides of the spectrum. Future study of the region must also look at the views of Albanians (considered a 'minority' in the Republic of Macedonia, but with huge political influence), as well as of ethnic groups like Roma and Turks. It is unfortunate that no Macedonian scholar is included; some, like Professor Dimitar Mircev, would have had useful contributions to make on the recent history of the region.

The concept of ethnicity is still very problematic in anthropological theory. Is it a concept or a methodological tool, something to be deconstructed or something that is just 'there' to be studied 'as such'? These are important questions, and although they figure in several chapters, the book does not pretend to answer them. Where I see the book's particular value is in problematizing 'ethnicity' (as well as 'identity' and 'difference') through actual ethnographic data (especially Van Boetschoen, Danforth, Schwartz, Vereni), and providing material based on which further, more theoretical, debates can follow. The complexities and paradoxes of the whole concept of 'Macedonia' are telling not only for the situation 'in the field', but also for the ways in which anthropologists construct what they study. I see the book *Macedonia: The Politics of Identity and Difference* as an important prelude to a crucial debate about ethnic identities, allegiances and the problems with dealing with them. This is, however, a debate which has yet to start.

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Christopher Houston. 2001. *Islam, Kurds and the Turkish Nation State*. Oxford: Berg. pp. ix + 215. ISBN (hbk) 1 85973 472 3, (pbk) 1 85973 477 4. Price: £42.99, £14.99.

This work is a labour of love, to deliver which the author spent two years in Turkey, mainly at Istanbul. The choice of this capital of the erstwhile Ottoman Empire was not arbitrary. Out of a Turkish population of 67 million some 13 to 15 million are Kurdish-speakers. The 1990s in south-eastern Turkey were marked by the Kurdish *serhildan* (uprising). Ankara answered with a state of emergency in which 2200 villages were destroyed and 3 million persons rendered homeless. The army's war on 'Kurdish terrorism' sent hundreds of thousands of Kurdish refugees fleeing to western Europe and to Istanbul, which is now the biggest Kurdish city in the world.

Since the 1980s the flow of the Kurdish population to Istanbul has produced a modern Kurdish elite eager to participate in the opportunities offered by Turkey's customs union with the European Union and the post-1983 reconstruction of democracy. The international pressure exerted on Ankara to observe human rights helps this stance. With the Turkish government's 1990 acknowledgement of the existence of the Kurds, they were granted a limited right to use their language. So most Kurdish politicians distance themselves from the Marxist PKK's military struggle to build a Kurdish