

conflict (the tension that maintains the narratives' progression), these stories offer a whole range of common Hindu themes: questions of time and space perception; oscillations between dream and reality; issues of morality, dream ethics, and gender; ontological transformations; passion and eroticism versus celibacy and meditation; and the relationship between kingship, sagehood, and proper rule.

As one reads the stories in *Gods, Demons, and Others*, all of these recognizable themes from the ocean of Hindu storytelling emerge with clarity, wit, and insight. That is why this book would be appropriate for use as an introductory text in classes on Hinduism or Indian folklore. But it is also well suited for general reading, either in private or out loud to an audience.

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MIDDLE EAST

BRAUER, ERICH. *The Jews of Kurdistan*. Completed and edited by Raphael Patai. Jewish Folklore and Anthropology Series. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993. 429 pages. Photos, glossary. US\$44.95; ISBN 0-8143-2392-8.

Erich BRAUER, the only trained ethnologist in what was the British mandate of Palestine during the 1920s and 1930s, produced his *Yahude Kurdistan. Mehqar ethnologi* [The Jews of Kurdistan. An ethnological study (1947)] as an "ethnography at a distance." Like his monograph on the Jews of Yemen (1934), this work was prepared on the basis of interviews with Jews who immigrated from Kurdistan after the beginning of the century, and not on the basis of direct fieldwork. Brauer died in 1942, leaving the manuscript unfinished. Now Raphael Patai's publication of a partial English translation opens to a wider audience a work that was heretofore accessible to the Hebrew reader only.

Patai's publication of these materials, however laudable it may be as a rescue of another man's work, requires some comment, though only preliminary remarks can be given here. Brauer's work needs complete revision, based on the original manuscripts. This could be done with the help of Brauer's materials (located in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem), which contain his complete field notes; negatives and positives of all his photographs; his collection of ethnographic objects;¹ the unfinished handwritten text of the present text in German; and a partial English translation of the German original. The name of the translator of this latter document is not mentioned in the papers, but it was not Brauer's work. After Brauer's death the translation was given to Patai to help him complete Brauer's work from the latter's papers, translate it into Hebrew, and publish it (the result being BRAUER 1947). The present English translation is the one done by the unknown translator, with some editing of style.

Patai wrote a new preface for the present publication, updated the scholarship about the Jews of Kurdistan somewhat, and added an English translation of his preface to the Hebrew edition. Patai changes the text of this last piece, both adding and dropping passages (e.g., page 14 of the Hebrew text has been dropped; "as a first-rate source of livelihood" in the Hebrew (2) has been changed to "and has a by-no-means negligible importance as a source of livelihood" in the English (27) [I couldn't help

wondering why the editor mistranslated his own words]). The body of the book abounds with misreadings (e.g., *sinīye* [99] and *sinīya* [426] versus *sinīyā* [101]; *tabaqe* (98) and *tabāqa* [427] versus *tabāqā* [100]).

So much for the many small problems that render the publication difficult to use. A much larger loss to scholarship is the pushing aside of Brauer's plan for the work (found in the German manuscript; see the plan of Brauer's *Ethnologie der jemenitischen Juden*). Also regrettable is the omission of those chapters in the German manuscript that had not been translated into English.

The reviewer hopes that a new edition, based on the materials in Brauer's archives and the materials accumulated since Brauer's death in the Israel Museum (see exhibition catalogue, SCHWARZ-BE'ERI 1981-82), will some day show the full extent of the work and supply a satisfactory monographic description of this ethnic group. It would be a worthwhile undertaking.

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The glossary (407-29), prepared by Patai, contains the native-language terms that are included in the English translation (Brauer's papers contain much more linguistic material). Patai introduces the glossary with a few comments on the Neo-Aramaic language; reading rules of the signs used are given, but no transcription or transliteration rules. The use of signs for transcription and transliteration is confused. Particular attention should be paid to the significance of the ' sign, as it is used for both the consonant *aleph* (glottal stop) and the vowel *sh wa n'a* (e.g., *sho'i* [426] versus *Y'huda* [= *Y hude*] [367], or even in the same word: *Sh'mu'el* [= *Sh mu'el*] [401]); it is also used inconsistently (e.g., *Y'huda* [= *Y hude*]/*Yehudim* [= *Y hudim*]/*shvile* [= *sh vile*], all on page 401). Inconsistencies (or misprints) are found with consonants too (e.g., *amaresa* [409] should be *amareša* according to the glossary in the Hebrew edition. A clear misprint is *abadkhāna* for *adabkhāna* (408).

As the terms used by the Jews of Kurdistan stem from six languages (407), it would have been useful if the glossary contained information on which of these six languages a particular term came from. Although linguists will be able to overcome this shortcoming, more serious is the omission of the page numbers on which the terms appear in the text (a feature present in the Hebrew edition of the work). Giving the page number would allow the reader to see the context in which the term is used. Without knowledge of this context, the term is of little use to the ethnographer. For example, *barbūk* is given as "old woman" (410); inspection of the text on page 139 (found by referring to the Hebrew translation [117]) revealed that this term designates a special acting role performed during the wedding complex by an elderly female member of the bride's family. Just as serious is the omission of information on the geographic origin of the terms, so that, in effect, all of the various dialects spoken by the Jews in Kurdistan have been thrown together (geographical information *is* given in the text, but as the glossary gives no page numbers the information cannot be looked up).

For the reader's information, the catalogue of the exhibition "Jews of Kurdistan" of the Israel Museum (Jerusalem) carries a small glossary of special terms (SABAR 1981-82).

NOTE

1. Some of the photographs and photographs of some of the objects have been

published by Patai in his Hebrew and English editions of Brauer's work, while others have been published in SCHWARTZ-BE'ERI 1981-82.

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1947 *Yahude Kurdistan. Mehqar ethnologi* [The Jews of Kurdistan. An ethnological study]. Completed, edited and translated by Raphael Patai. Jerusalem: The Palestine Institute of Folklore and Ethnology.

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1981-82 Millon munnahin [Dictionary of terms]. In SCHWARTZ-BE'ERI 1981-82.

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SCHROEDER, ROGER. *Initiation and Religion: A Case Study from the Wosera of Papua New Guinea*. Studia Instituti Anthropos 46. Freiburg: Universitätsverlag, 1992. 326 pages. Maps, figures, appendices of myths, narratives, and of an interview, select bibliography, glossary, index. Paper SFr 55,—; ISBN 3-7278-0787-3; ISSN 0570-3085.

Over a half-century has passed since the famous anthropologist Evans Pritchard published his now-classic *Witchcraft, Oracles, and Magic among the Azande* (1937). This work, based on thoroughgoing fieldwork, provided us with a certain perspective in looking at religion, teaching us to grasp it as a total system. Pritchard pointed out that Azande magic and witchcraft do not form independent systems; they form a system in combination with one another, a system of symbols and not a natural system based on the society's principles and laws. He saw the type of anthropology that promoted this sort of approach as an art, much in the same way that Lévi-Strauss defined anthropology as a work of *bricolage*.

Roger Schroeder's *Initiation and Religion* follows this same basic approach. Schroeder worked as a Catholic priest among the Wosera of Eastern Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea, for three years from 1980. While he was there he became interested in initiation. He did not, however, reconstruct the Wosera initiation simply as a traditional religious ritual. Papua New Guinea is undergoing change as a result of its contact with Western society. Schroeder, employing a number of different viewpoints, attempts to understand initiation as part of—even an important part of—this change.

Schroeder's method is to place the Wosera's beliefs concerning spirits and ancestors into the context of their life and worldview. Doing so enables one not only to understand the dynamics of Wosera religious culture but to gain, from an ethnographic perspective, a comprehensive picture of Wosera culture as a whole. A *bricolage* bringing together myths, ancestors, and spirits, this work presents a systematic interpreta-