

Gender & Development

Volume 15 Number 1 March 2007

Contents

Editorial <i>Joanna Hoare</i>	1
Gender-based violence and property grabbing in Africa: a denial of women's liberty and security <i>Kaori Izumi</i>	11
No more killings! Women respond to femicides in Central America <i>Marina Prieto-Carrón, Marilyn Thomson, and Mandy Macdonald</i>	25
'We Can': transforming power in relationships in South Asia <i>Mona Mehta and Chitra Gopalakrishnan</i>	41
Gender violence in schools: taking the 'girls-as-victims' discourse forward <i>Fiona Leach and Sara Humphreys</i>	51
Domestic violence – a burning issue in Georgia <i>Rusudan Pkhakadze and Thea Jamaspishvili</i>	67
Gender-based violence against children in emergencies: Save the Children UK's response <i>Tina Hyder and Johanna Mac Veigh</i>	81
Approaching old problems in new ways: community mobilisation as a primary prevention strategy to combat violence against women <i>Lori Michau</i>	95
Constructing an alternative masculine identity: the experience of the Centro Bartolomé de las Casas and Oxfam America in El Salvador <i>Susan Bird, Rutilio Delgado, Larry Madrigal, John Bayron Ochoa, and Walberto Tejada</i>	111
Resources <i>Compiled by Julieanne Porter</i>	123
Views, events, and debates <i>Edited by Julieanne Porter</i>	143
Book reviews <i>Edited by Julieanne Porter</i>	157

migration as emancipatory as is sometimes held. The Nepal paper (chapter 4, Adhikari) points out that although overseas migration opens up the possibilities for women to change gender relations, it may not necessarily lead to social transformation. In this regard, the chapter addressing the family's place and role in women's migration suggests that the social context is crucial to women's migration. It shapes the decisions women make on whether or not to migrate, as well as where and how to undertake migration.

While the volume tries to go beyond India and brings in interesting information from other countries, by leaving out China in a body of work on gender, poverty, and migration in Asia, it does leave a gap in the range of gender and migration issues it addresses. It would also have been interesting if the situation of migrant women in Malaysia or Sri Lanka had been included, particularly to compare poor migrant women's situations in the diaspora with the lives of women in the communities they leave behind.

Overall, the arguments in the papers are well presented and illustrated through brief case studies and narratives where available. The main strength of the volume is in the way it both addresses the questions of poverty and gender in the debate on migration and development, and offers insights into the factors that shape poor women's migratory choices. The interrogation of the state, the family, and the market provides the backdrop to the discussion of the nature of gender relations in the context of migration. This volume will be useful to academics, students and development practitioners engaged in questioning gender and development hierarchies.

Dr Meena Shivdas, Gender Adviser, Commonwealth Secretariat, London, tel: 0207 7476457, email: m.shivdas@commonwealth.int

Ouzgane, Lahoucine (ed.)

Islamic Masculinities

Zed Books, 2006, ISBN: 1 84277 275 9, 248 pp.

As pointed out in the introduction to *Islamic Masculinities*, scholarly attention to gender issues in the Middle East and North Africa has mainly focused on women. Studies of Islamic masculinities are scarce, with the notable exception of Ghossoub and Sinclair-Webb's 2000 collection of articles, *Imagined Masculinities*, and Lahoucine's own writings. Considering that 'gender and patriarchy lie at the heart of the ongoing crisis of Arab and Muslim society' (p. 2), this new ensemble of essays, which aims to analyse the construction of masculinity within particular social and historical contexts, is welcome.

homosexuality, and of other types of 'failed masculinities' (p. 129). Monterescu distinguishes three competing models of masculinity: Islamic, which is politically anti-imperialist and dictates a specific perception of gender demanding covered women and pious men; liberal-secular masculinity, the main cultural alternative, promoting equality between genders; and the most usual form, 'situational masculinity', maintaining ambivalent relations with the two poles.

The final section, entitled 'Masculinities and Social Practice', examines 'the dynamic social processes that construct masculine identities' in Morocco, Iraq, Yemen, Egypt, and London (p. 5). Conway-Long exposes the reactions of a number of urban Moroccan men to limited reforms introduced by the Moroccan government allowing some rights to women. Through interviews, he explores their fears – of losing control over women, the sense of weakness before sexual desire, the threat that the presence of women at work represents for patriarchal economic domination – all of which contribute to mixed and anguished feelings towards modernity. Baobaid's description of women's experience of male violence in Yemen hardly deals with masculinity other than to attribute violence to tradition and ill-intended clerics, clearing Islam itself of this 'charge'.

Rohde's piece on cultural production in Ba'thist Iraq during the 1980s is much more clearly at the centre of the volume's debate. The questions of nationalism and gender, and militarism and gender, are clearly exposed. He convincingly analyses war iconography in the Iraqi press, showing how the regime's limited drive toward gender reforms was partly reversed during the 1980s. In contrast, Siraj's interviews with seven individuals identifying as male homosexual Muslims, in London, examine how they try (or renounce) reconciling identities they deem at odds with one another. Given that most of the interviewees are of Pakistani descent, it would have been more interesting to know how 'gay' men in Pakistan would react to the questions posed, and if London-based gay men of Hindu culture would provide significantly different answers. The Islamic specificity remains unclear.

The final article by M. Inhorn studies the threat male infertility constitutes in Egypt, interviewing women and men from the lower and middle classes. This well informed article necessarily returns to the subject of patriarchy and masculinity, and clearly exposes the paradoxes of a supposed loss of virility, which women strive to hide in order to save their husband's reputation, and maintain a secure marriage.

Many issues remain open, such as the implications of some Arabic terms (*dhukura*, *rujula*), and the existence or absence of an Islamic model of masculinity in medieval religious texts and in modern literature and public discourse. Some pieces take patriarchy as a given fact and an explanation for the social practices they analyse. Furthermore, most articles only consider masculinity in its relation to femininity, and not as the 'homosocial enactment' (p. 20) the editor identified at the outset. Therefore, space remains for numerous other volumes on Islamic masculinities. Overall this

volume will be more useful for the many researchers in the field of gender studies who are not familiar with Arab–Islamic culture.

Frédéric Lagrange, Université de Paris-Sorbonne (Paris IV), email: fredlag@noos.fr

Mukhopadhyay, Maitrayee, Gerard Steehouwer and Franz Wong

Politics of the Possible: Gender Mainstreaming and Organisational Change: Experiences from the Field

Amsterdam: KIT Publishers in association with NOVIB and Oxfam GB, 2006, ISBN: 0855985704, 168 pp.

Politics of the Possible is about organisational change for the promotion of gender equality. Using a case study analysis format, this book examines the challenges and opportunities of gender mainstreaming in seven development NGOs. The organisations showcased in this book were among the 35 Novib partner organisations invited to join Novib's Gender Focus Programme (GFP) in 1996. The GFP was a strategy introduced by Novib to integrate a gender perspective into organisations. Using a self-diagnostic 'Nine-Box Tool', the participating NGOs were required to analyse their organisational strengths and weaknesses in relation to gender sensitivity, and examine the levels of commitment to promoting gender equality within NGOs. The book summarises the experiences of the NGOs in six different countries in Asia and the Middle East, including Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (CHA) in Afghanistan, the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committees in rural areas of Palestine/West Bank, and Prodiplan from Bangladesh.

The central argument of the book is that organisational change is necessary for promoting gender equality. Gender mainstreaming is gaining increasing currency in a range of development agencies around the world. The adoption of the term suggests substantive changes to the way in which organisations address gender issues. While many donor agencies and development organisations are keen to promote gender mainstreaming, it is not without its pitfalls. Gender mainstreaming has been criticised by feminist scholars for its superficiality. For example, tasks such as assigning gender-related work to a staff member (ie. giving one staff member the responsibilities of representing the organisation at gender meetings, designing a gender policy and/or providing gender training to other staff members) are conceived as gender mainstreaming. However, rarely do these activities translate into meaningful political and/or organisational change that promotes gender equality. While gender mainstreaming is widely adopted and accepted in principle, we know little about how it translates into practice. *Politics of the Possible*, with its emphasis on case study organisational analyses, is an important contribution to our understanding of the impact of gender