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Gerrie ter Haar (ed.), *Strangers and Sojourners: Religious Communities in the Diaspora*. Leuven: Peeters, 1998, 244 pp., ISBN 90-429-0663-4, BFF 1600

This collection of essays is about diaspora, ancient and modern. Its special virtue is that it alerts us to the ideologies implied in the labels used in describing the religions of migrants. Johannes Tromp shows, in his analysis of the semantic history of 'diaspora' (13-36), that its modern connotations of displaced persons pining for home in exile, are alien to both its biblical meaning and historical fact. The Jews living outside Judea in Hellenistic and Roman times felt most often quite at home in the cities in which they lived and were accepted as equal residents despite their distinctive religion. The analyses of Van der Toorn of the religious aspects of migration in ancient Mesopotamia (59-63), and of Dirven of the religion of migrant Palmyrene merchants and soldiers in the Roman empire (77-94) show that plural religious allegiance was normal in polytheist societies. E.g., one was privately loyal to one's ancestral religion, and adhered publicly to the local religion. The Deuteronomists in the Ephraimite diaspora in Judea in 'pre-exilic' times were an exception. Van der Toorn shows (64-75) that they vigorously undermined polytheist family-religion in order to promote mono-Yahwism.

The other central essay is Ter Haar's (37-58). Her thesis is that the concepts of diaspora, ethnicity, and fundamentalism serve as mechanisms for othering African migrants to Europe. They segregate African Christians from their European co-religionists, replicating Fortress Europe at the religious level. This is documented in the other contributions to this volume on Black and African Christians in UK by Kalilombe (173-193) and Beya (195-220), in Germany by Adamvi-Aho Ekué (221-234), and in the Netherlands by Ter Haar (153-171).

The focus of the other two contributions is on the changes which migration brings about in the religious practices of migrants. Baumann (95-132) analyses the many varieties of Hinduism in Europe. He finds that Hindus feel at home abroad but become more aware of the need to preserve their religious identities. Dessing (133-151) discusses the changes in the ritual of circumcision among Muslims in the Netherlands.

This well-produced volume is of great interest for a wide range of scholars of religions for both its subject matter and its approach.

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