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978-0-521-02826-4 - The Making of the Modern Greek Family: Marriage and Exchange in Nineteenth-Century Athens

Paul Sant Cassia and Constantina Bada

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This original and ground-breaking study deals with a specific set of institutions in nineteenth-century Athens. Relying on matrimonial contracts, travellers' accounts, memoirs and popular literature, the authors show how distinctive forms of marriage, kinship and property transmission evolved in Athens in the nineteenth century. These forms then became a feature of wider Greek society which continued into the twentieth century.

Greece was the first post-colonial modern nation state in Europe whose national identity was created largely by peasants who had migrated to the city. As Athenian society became less agrarian, a new mercantile group superseded and incorporated previous elites and went on to dominate and control the new resources of the nation state. Such groups developed their own, more mobile, systems of property transmission, mostly in response to external pressures of a political and economic character. These same pressures resulted in a distinctive ethic of family life that in turn influenced models of kinship, marriage and property transmission in the rural areas. Of particular significance was the impact of the growth of the dowry and massive cash transactions upon the position of women.

This is a persuasive piece of detective work, full of brilliant insights, which advances our knowledge of modern Greece. It is a model for future scholarship on the development of family and other 'intimate' ideologies where nation states encroach upon local consciousness.

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Editors: *Jack Goody, Stephen Gudeman, Michael Herzfeld
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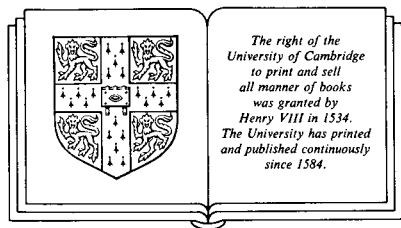
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University of Cambridge

and

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*This book is dedicated to my grandmother, Lady
Genoveffa Boffa, who, in a different Mediterranean land
than that dealt with in this book, originally stimulated my
interest in the anthropology of the recent past.*

Paul Sant Cassia

To my family, without whom....

Constantina Bada

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