

particularly rich and complex. Never, however, have the foodways of particular groups been better described than herein, or more thoroughly chronicled in a comparative and analytic volume. These highly detailed ethnographic accounts are informed by recent theories of family and gender, as well as the classic work on kinship that owes so much to Indonesian research and researchers.

Rens Heringa goes into detail on a single ritual: the seventh-month-of-pregnancy ritual in a small, distinctive community in Java. This ritual is incredibly rich in symbolism – even by Javanese standards – and must be one of the few ceremonies of that particular time in life. It is directed by a midwife. Fiona Kerlogue describes use of food in incorporating people into the diffuse and expandable kinship networks of the Malays of Sumatera. Carol Davis treats land, fertility, matrilineal kinship, and food in Minangkabau society, also Sumateran. Kari Telle describes death and commemoration rituals of the Sasak, held to be the indigenous inhabitants of Lombok, who have the usual intricate food symbolism for these ceremonies. Timo Kaartinen looks at a Muslim community in the Kei Islands, an archipelago little known in the ethnographic literature. Its Muslim villages are particularly poorly covered, making this a very welcome study. Dianne van Oosterhout moves to Papua, a different world; Inanwatan of the northwest end of the island is clearly a Papuan society, concerned with semen and blood, sago and sago-grubs, and as different from the rice-eating Austronesian societies to the west as could be imagined. Willemijn de Jong studies rice rituals in another poorly documented area, a distinctive isolated region of central Flores where both kin relations and their symbolism in foodways are intricate even by east Indonesian standards. Stephen Sparkes examines offerings for the ancestors in northeast Thailand. Finally, Nguyễn Xuân Hiên examines the symbolism of “glutinous” rice in the Vietnamese New Year Festival, and the association of both with family, including the extended families and lineages of Vietnam. (This chapter uses an obsolete classification for sticky rice – which is neither “glutinous” nor a specific variety of rice, but a wide range of varieties that share only a mutation making their amylose cook up sticky. Nguyễn provides a fascinating, but not credible, origin story for it; actually, sticky rices occur in archaeological sites thousands of years old in the Yangzi Valley, and have probably been around as long as domesticated rice has. Nguyễn also gives a Vietnamese origin story for the sticky rice dumplings known as *chung*, but they are actually a borrowing from China.)

All the studies in this book are characterized by extremely thorough, detailed, and well-explained ethnographic reporting. To anyone who loves good ethnography, they are pure delight. They will restore the faith of those who weary of excessive rhetoric and of purported ethnographies that say much about international political economy but little about actual people on the ground. The book will amaze anyone not already familiar with the powerful, intricate, exquisite symbolism of kinship and lifeways in Indonesia and Southeast Asia, where

the layout of a meal can be a superb work of visual art as well as a symbolic chart whose every element may have four or five levels of meaning. Indonesian, Thai, and Vietnamese folk cultures remain among the greatest creations of the human spirit, and should be widely appreciated as such. This book will help bring them into wider visibility. For students of the anthropology of food, it is essential reading.

Eugen N. Anderson

Kasfir, Sidney Littlefield: *African Art and the Colonial Encounter. Inventing a Global Commodity.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007. 382 pp. ISBN 978-0-253-21922-0. Price: \$ 27.95

Kasfir tells us that the aim of this book is to “trace the ways widely different late nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century European impressions of Kenya and Nigeria and the subsequent British colonizing policies toward their imperfectly understood subject peoples intervened in and transformed the objects and practices of two groups of African artists” (1). Few would disagree that such changes have taken place all over Africa. Few would also disagree with the author’s aim of “effacing the boundaries between what is comprehended as African art and what is not” (315), if by that she means that she wants to include more practices and materials than are sometimes considered. Kasfir argues for including contemporary manufacture of spears and related metalwork, the making of beadwork, the fashioning of works for consumption by non-Africans such as tourists and European curio and art buyers, and the construction of a particular personal appearance by way of clothing, jewelry, grooming, body-painting, and other means so as to present a particular persona associated with one’s ethnic and/or gendered self. She includes not only African presentation of self to other Africans but African presentation of self to tourists and foreign film viewers. Obviously all contemporary African artifacts and practices are in many ways influenced by the events of colonial history, by colonial and post-colonial culture, and by local and global markets. Kasfir asserts that some African art historians discount many such contemporary crafts and fashions, even though African creativeness did not cease with European influence which only changed such forms of expression rather than put an end to them. Obviously these are all legitimate areas of study today even though these have not always qualified as “art” by all Africanists. Still, Kasfir’s broad perspective is not as innovative as she suggests. Pages of influential journals such as *African Arts* indicate that such an approach is more widely accepted than she seems to acknowledge. For these reasons, few would question her “claim for the full inclusion of the colonial encounter in the history of African art, not as a pretext for its decline but as the occasion for its reinvention” (315).

The author organizes her study around two contrasting societies, both apparently emphasizing the institution of warriorhood in expressing key cultural values. In one case, it is the Idoma, a people of east-central

Nigeria who engaged in warfare, headhunting, dance, and aggressive warrior organizations to express their manhood; in the other case, it is the Samburu of northern Kenya who employed spears, cattle-raiding, beadwork, and elaborate body grooming and dancing to express comparable beliefs and values. In the case of the Idoma, colonialists considered them brutal savages and condemned their warfare and headhunting, banning the display of human heads at warriors' dances. These were then replaced by carved wooded heads and the warrior dance groups transformed themselves into groups policing the social order rather than glorifying warfare. In the case of the Samburu, who were admired as romantic and noble pastoralist, their cattle-raiding and aggressive behavior were tolerated. Yet when they threatened colonial settlers' cattle and a British settler was slain, colonialists saw civil order threatened and temporarily banned Samburu warriors from carrying spears thereby threatening the livelihood of Samburu smiths and diminishing the ways warriors could express their aggressive manhood. Samburu continued to manufacture spears, often selling them to outsiders and concealing those they possessed until the ban was lifted. This led to many changes in the types of spears made and in the ways warriors presented themselves. Kasfir examines how Idoma and Samburu reacted to these colonial impositions and how through change, compromise, and deception they managed to continue their expression of warriorhood as a key cultural value.

The main problem with this book lies in the author's failure to provide sufficient new data which would add to our earlier understanding of the Idoma and Samburu. She provides almost no direct accounts of what the Idoma and Samburu craftsmen or warriors actually say about what they are doing and why. She provides almost no information about what women think about these matters even though, especially in the case of the Samburu, it is women as mothers, wives, and lovers who are often closely involved with warriors and their displays. Among the Samburu, women are also the main source of the decorations worn by warriors and are often the audience before whom men dance and pose. Kasfir's accounts of the Idoma are also somewhat weak in providing firsthand accounts of how those Africans actually speak about these changes and strategies. Finally, the volume itself seems unbalanced with about 110 pages devoted to the Idoma and 170 pages devoted to the Samburu, even though Kasfir wrote her doctoral dissertation on the Idoma. In any case, when writing about the Samburu of Kenya, Kasfir includes the closely related Maasai of both Kenya and Tanzania presumably because the far richer and more historically rich Maasai material supplements the thinner Samburu data.

There are numerous attractive black-and-white and coloured photographs throughout this book; even so, there are nowhere any systematic and detailed illustrations of the kinds of specific changes that have taken place in the woodcarving and body decorations of the Idoma or the changes in making and decorating

spears, beadwork, and body-grooming that have occurred among the Samburu. For a study such as Kasfir's one would expect photographs or diagrams clearly contrasting the before and after styles and forms of such objects and fashions along with African explanations about why such detailed alterations were made. These changes, especially if they are sometimes meant to appeal to a global or local tourist market rather than to local African needs and aesthetics, must raise questions for their makers. Do these differences bother the Africans? How do they explain or rationalize them? Can the items Africans especially made for tourists also be used and enjoyed by local Africans? What does this suggest about authenticity? Kasfir writes extensively about how her fellow art historians rightly or wrongly consider authenticity and tradition. Yet nowhere does she ever provide any sustained, firsthand account of how Idoma or Samburu themselves regard such issues even though these seem to be at the heart of the issues she earlier raised. Are changing styles sometimes dictated by alien factors and tastes which are sometimes repugnant to Africans? Presumably many objects and even self-presentations which these Africans make for members of their own society might not be fully appropriate if made in the same way to outsiders who are paying for what they want. Finally, at the risk of appearing nit-picking, I point out that "mild steel" (119) is surely "milled steel," the Samburu/Maasai name-term "ole" ("son-of") (*passim*) is more properly not capitalized, and the East African blackwood or ebony tree is not "mpingi" but "mpingo" (263).

The few points made in this book are insufficient to sustain such a long volume and might better have been made in an article, though even then they are not as innovative as the author implies. The book is digressive. Its lack of specific ethnographic details (especially about exactly how Samburu and Idoma actually speak about and explain the changes they have made in their material culture) does not allow it to clinch its arguments. On account of the many reasons I noted above, this work is not very profitable for those already knowledgeable about African art or for those already informed about the Idoma and Samburu. It does make handy a lot of scattered, published information on the Idoma and Samburu and on how early British colonialists felt about them, material that does not otherwise appear conveniently under one cover. This is not a bad book, but it is not a successful one. I did enjoy the lavish illustrations though they are sometimes not well explained or discussed.

T. O. Beidelman

Klostermaier, Klaus K.: A Survey of Hinduism. 3rd ed. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007. 700 pp. ISBN 978-0-7914-7081-7. Price: \$ 89.50

"A Survey of Hinduism" ist längst ein Klassiker unter Hinduismus-Studien geworden. Mit der 3. Aufl. liegt hier eine gründliche Bearbeitung und Erweiterung der ersten beiden Auflagen (1989, 1994) vor. Auf die Ein-