

life-styles. These hunters and collectors use lean-toe and huts that fit their purposes best.

The houses of Jambi, Palembang, and southern Sumatra are covered by detailed essays strengthening the impression of much more variation in the architectural repertoire than was usually assumed. The five articles on Java comprise two on rural areas, including one on the Kanekes (Baduy) people. The other three have to do with houses of the Betawi, this very specific group in Jakarta, with dwellings of three Betawi families in very poor state. The final chapter starts with the notion of *kampung* and its many meanings, including the idea of the spacious rural community as well as the crowded and noisy slum area.

This book with its predecessor, volume 1 of “Indonesian Houses,” is a compendium of good descriptions and analyzes. That there is – nevertheless – more to be done, is exemplified by three further publications that appeared in the meantime in the Leiden Series on Indonesian Architecture. As of now, the most comprehensive volume of studies on western Indonesian houses and house life is placed at our disposal. Editors and authors and the related institutions are to be congratulated on this achievement.

Wolfgang Marschall

Sibeth, Achim (Hrsg.): *Bali im Fokus der Kamera. Drei balinesische Fotografen 1930–2009*. Frankfurt: Museum der Weltkulturen, 2009. 183 pp., Fotos. ISBN 3-88270-416-0. (Galerie 37 des Museums der Weltkulturen, 15) Preis: € 27,80

The island of Bali is worldwide known for its rituals, dances, and beautiful landscapes. A limited number of stereotypical visual representations have reproduced these images time and again. This even happened to such an extent that images outside the categories ritual, dance, and landscape are very rare. Because the main producers of the stereotypical images of Bali were Western photographers, the Museum der Weltkulturen in Frankfurt am Main decided to invite three Balinese photographers to show their representations of Bali. However, the book under review, which was published as a catalogue of a photo exhibition in Galerie 37 of the Museum der Weltkulturen, confirms the same set of clichés. I failed to discover significant differences between the work by mainstream Western photographers and the three photographers from Bali.

Auw Kok Heng (1913–1976) was born in China but moved to Bali where he opened a photo shop during the colonial period. His work is very similar to the well-known photos made by Gregor Krause in the 1920s. From the 43 black-and-white photos by him, which are reproduced in this book, 23 depict Balinese women with naked breasts, thirteen are about rituals or performances, and only four show scenes from everyday life.

The second photographer from Bali is the son of Auw Kok Heng, Karyadinata Sudjana (b. 1942). From the 28 photos by him, twelve are about rituals and dances, and eight present landscapes. From Ida Bagus Putra Adnyana, a son of a tourist guide, no less than 60 pho-

tos are presented. Again the majority (34) cover rituals and dances, eleven photos present landscapes, and only four contain scenes from ordinary life. What we see are photos selected for their marketability, selling “Bali, the dream” and neglecting other aspects of life in Bali. What is left out are important themes from contemporary life in Bali like tourism, urbanization, environmental problems, youth culture, the emergence of an affluent middle class, and the growing gap between rich and poor.

Therefore, this book is a missed opportunity. How different would the exhibition – and the book – have looked if, for instance, a photographer like Rama Surya had been invited. Born in West Sumatra, but living in Bali, Rama Surya made a brilliant series of photos for a critical self-portrait by Balinese intellectuals about the anxieties of “modern” life in “traditional” Bali (U. Ramseyer and I. G. Raka Panji Tisna [eds.], Bali. *Living in Two Worlds. A Critical Self-Portrait*. Basel 2001). Unfortunately, unlike the photos by Rama Surya, the representations of Bali in the book under review do not offer new perspectives or (un)pleasant surprises.

Henk Schulte Nordholt

Sibeth, Achim (Hrsg.): *Being Object. Being Art. Meisterwerke aus den Sammlungen des Museums der Weltkulturen Frankfurt am Main*. Tübingen: Ernst Wasmuth Verlag, 2009. 323 pp., Fotos. ISBN 978-5-8030-3336-9. Preis: \$ 75,00

Ausstellungskataloge getrennt von den Ausstellungen zu betrachten, die sie begleiten, kommentieren und erklären sollen, ist nicht unproblematisch. Ausstellung und Katalog entspringen einer gemeinsamen konzeptionellen Idee, gehören zusammen und existieren folglich nicht unabhängig voneinander. Der von Achim Sibeth herausgegebene Katalog “Being Object. Being Art. Meisterwerke aus den Sammlungen des Museums der Weltkulturen Frankfurt am Main” ist allerdings nicht nur der Katalog zur gleichnamigen Ausstellung, sondern darüber hinaus der aktuelle Kommentar des Frankfurter Museums der Weltkulturen zur Frage nach dem diffizilen Verhältnis von Kunst und Kontext in ethnologischen Museen. Er steht, darauf weisen die Autoren ausdrücklich hin, in einer Reihe von Ausstellungen und zugehörigen Publikationen, die sich seit etwa 10 Jahren mit der Diskussion um Kontext und Kunstcharakter von ethnografischen Objekten sowie der Weiterentwicklung musealer Präsentationsformen ethnographischer Objekte als Kunst bemühen.

Das Anliegen der vorliegenden Publikation wird dabei von Achim Sibeth (151) folgendermaßen zusammengefasst: “Die zentrale Aufgabe dieser Publikation sollte sein, den Lesern einen Einblick in die künstlerische Qualität der im Museum lagernden Sammlungen zu vermitteln. ... Vor dem Hintergrund der Sammlung sollte die Bandbreite des künstlerischen Schaffens sowohl regional als auch thematisch durch die Wahl möglichst repräsentativer, hochwertiger, seltener, ausgefallener und ästhetisch ansprechender Kunstgegenstände thematisiert werden.” Für diese Auswahl herausragender Objekte wurde der