

evaluation of Mary is attractive to Catholics seeking a more prominent role for women in the Church. Feminist sentiments also underlie another trend in contemporary Christianity to which Dubisch alludes in her summary article at the end of the volume, the rediscovery of Mary Magdalene as image of the “Divine Feminine.”

Like Notermans, Gemzöe, and Klungel explore the connections among Mary, motherhood, and caring for family members living and deceased in northern Portugal and Guadeloupe, respectively. Gemzöe refutes the notion inherited from an earlier generation of Iberian ethnographers that women in Portugal are drawn to religion through a sense of their own sinfulness and polluting nature. Rather, she argues, women construct a religious realm of their own in which they are active agents and which centers on vows made to Mary and prayers for the dead.

Klungel’s article makes excellent use of reflexivity as a tool for ethnographic insight. She describes her own experience living in a matrifocal, impoverished Guadeloupan family, where Marian pilgrimage reinforces the dominant position of the woman household head. Mary is also central for those whose families have been shattered by the death of a mother: Mary becomes “the deceased mother by proxy” (179). Klungel concludes that “Family organization in Guadeloupe could also be referred to as religious matrifocality, in the sense that Mary is at the centre of family life” (170).

The last two chapters in the book, by Edith Turner and Robert A. Orsi, complement one another nicely. Writing of the shrine of Knock in Ireland, Turner eloquently portrays the experiential side of Marian visions and the devotion they inspire. It is this immediacy of religious experience that Orsi seeks to capture in his concept of “abundant events” (220). Abundant events are those occasions, as at Knock and other Marian sites, when “the transcendent broke into time” (215). Orsi calls on historians, ethnographers, and scholars of religion to “imagine a new historiography” that will make it possible to study and write about abundant events in a nonreductionistic yet nontheological manner, a goal which requires a “vocabulary of practice, understanding and experience” (225).

The final word in the volume is given to Jill Dubisch, who has studied devotion to Mary in her Greek Orthodox form, the Panayia, for over three decades. Dubisch’s epilogue unifies the volume by drawing together a number of the common themes that recur throughout the articles, and underscores the centrality of Mary in Catholicism worldwide. “Moved by Mary” represents a major contribution to research on popular Roman Catholicism, pilgrimage, and more broadly on the anthropology of religion. The book is a valuable resource for scholars, yet accessible enough to be used by students at both undergraduate and graduate levels in the fields of anthropology, religious studies, and cultural studies.

Ellen Badone

Holtzman, Jon: *Uncertain Tastes. Memory, Ambivalence, and the Politics of Eating in Samburu, Northern Kenya.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009. 285 pp. ISBN 978-0-520-25737-5. Price: £ 14.95

This is a very good book. It describes and analyses the foodways of the Samburu of north central Kenya, East Africa. Holtzman provides rich ethnographic description of how Samburu think about and value food and drink. He shows both how such notions control and direct social relations and how they embody a sense of ethnicity and culture. He also shows how these have changed with the introduction of foreign food and drink and also with radical new pressures of modern political change and dire restrictions in the supply of food. These issues have played a prominent part in sociocultural change over all of Africa. It is therefore surprising that this is one of the few important, ethnographically focused studies of foodways in Africa. The other two important research projects are the early works on the Bemba by Audrey Richards, “Hunger and Work in a Savage Tribe” (1932) and “Land, Labour, and Diet in Northern Rhodesia” (1959) and more recently Elias Mandala’s study of famine among Nyanja-speaking people in southern Malawi “The End of Chidyerano” (2005).

The Samburu are an offshoot of the Maasai and have been studied by many able ethnographers and have been frequently filmed. They were traditionally patrilineal pastoralists organized into male age-sets. Strict hierarchy by these age-sets and strong segregation of the sexes were and are powerful principles of their social organization. The warrior (*murrān*) age-sets are viewed as the moral and aesthetic heart of Samburu culture. Food practices are central expressions of these division and rankings. Erosion of these practices now threatens Samburu ethnic identity and values. Yet such changes are inevitably taking place. Government policies (hostile to pastoralism), a growing money economy, and a decline in livestock-holdings due to environmental degradation and droughts have steadily weakened these practices. Holtzman describes how changes in diet (mainly a shortage of meat) have led to changes in the separation of the sexes who now often openly share food in one another’s company.

Meat is the most valued form of food among the Samburu, traditionally available only on the occasion of sacrifice at rituals. (This was also the case among the Nuer and Dinka of the Sudan and among the classical Athenians of ancient Greece, all famous cases in the ethnographic literature.) Meat is consumed by all Samburu, but it is the special food of warriors and is thought to convey courage and power. A Samburu warrior may eat meat only in the company of other age-mates and then only in the absence of married women. The staple food for all Samburu is, however, not meat but milk. This is drunk fresh or more often after it has been soured so that it may be stored for many days. With the decline in herds Samburu increasingly now face a shortage of milk as well as meat. As a result of these shortages Samburu supplement their diet with carbohydrates, mainly from maize or millet made into porridge or fermented into beer. Honey is also prized as another source of beer. Foods other than proteins or

honey are described as “gray” foods and are not prized even though they are now recognized as vital for the current survival of Samburu.

Samburu now consume these “gray” foreign foods, but they also consume two other previously alien foods which they view either positively or at least with mixed emotions. The one alien food that has been embraced by the Samburu is tea. Of course, tea itself is a stimulant but has no caloric value. It is considered a food because it is always drunk with considerable quantities of sugar and milk. Milk makes tea almost traditional and in its diluted form allows a stretching of the valued but waning supply of this staple. The large amounts of sugar put in tea now account for the largest everyday caloric intake of most Samburu. Obviously, Samburu are no longer so well nourished as before, even though most are probably better off than many other Kenyans. Holtzman’s arguments about the decline in Samburu social order relates to the fact that these “gray” foods, and even tea, may be consumed without regard toward sexual boundaries. Men and women, even warriors and married women, may consume these in one another’s presence.

The other new food introduced among Samburu is alcohol. Traditionally beer was always consumed on ritual occasions, but this was usually made from honey. Today beer is produced in large quantities for everyday consumption. It is usually made from grain or from sugar purchased in local shops. Making and selling beer has become a major source of cash for Samburu women, providing a new source of their independence. In addition, today local Africans also brew hard liquor. Strong drink is no longer only associated with ritual but has become an everyday indulgence of Samburu elders and, to the disapproval of many, also sometimes drunk by younger men. Alcohol has always been a mark of the privilege and power of older men, though now this is increasingly abused. Holtzman remarks that he knew no Samburu chief who was not a drunk. (Unfortunately, I found the same situation among the Bantu- and Maa-speaking peoples with whom I worked in Tanzania.) This issue of alcoholism and political privilege is one of the most interesting points that Holtzman makes, even though widespread drunkenness is now a topic of considerable awkwardness when brought up in the ethnographic literature.

In this excellent study Holtzman perceptively describes how these new patterns of food consumption and sharing have broken down the boundaries between Samburu warriors and women. Many Samburu see this as a shameful change that threatens their most valued aspects of their culture, the manly warriors who serve all the community, not just their household of origin. Food shortages and alcoholism have also problematized all male prestige. In general, changes in Samburu foodways have altered all gender relations as well. Sharing food is central to the most important of all Samburu values, *nkanyit* (civility, propriety, sociability). This value, like all values, only exists through its constant demonstration in observable personal conduct, the most important being the giving and sharing of food, the act of hospitality, and, of course, responsibly providing food for those in one’s homestead.

Unfortunately, these two demands increasingly compete with one another. Furthermore, a money economy enables men to sell livestock and other resources, including labour, while concealing this income since their sources and receipt are not public. This contrasts sharply with previous consumption of meat at sacrifice, a supremely public occasion where distribution of meat is formally dictated. Hospitality can only be reasonably expected if a person has resources to bestow, but a windfall of cash is easily concealed. The value of hospitality depends on the assumption that it is extended willingly; yet that hardly excludes it from powerful social pressures to conform. It has now become a highly contended arena of social strategies where desires for social esteem compete with private desires and needs. This is true, of course, for all societies, but it has become especially difficult for Samburu where resources are increasingly scarce. Finally, even traditionally Samburu women had exclusive control of how milk and grain were distributed from household stores. Thus, while a man may sell or slaughter his livestock as he chooses, only a woman can distribute other food. Men may express eagerness to provide hospitality, yet they often are unable to give any. A wife may claim that she has no food to give out and no one can challenge her. A guest has no way of knowing whether the host is concealing his true resources. Even a husband has no idea whether a wife who refuses to serve his guests milk, tea, or “gray” food is truly out of food or whether she is instead reserving these for her children, for herself, or even for a lover. While this was always true even in the past, present shortages of food and the rise of a money economy have made the tactics of hospitality, with their important associations with masculine prestige and solidarity with neighbours and age-mates, become an issue of constant contention, subterfuge, and suspicion and a sector of struggle between men and women. Foodsharing consequently is not simply an issue of nurturing, but it is also central to expressing and achieving men’s sense of respectability and prestige and women’s goals of protecting household security. How one consumes any food has increasingly become a matter of neighbourly and age-group concern. It is an issue that potentially divides the interests of families from those of neighbours, as well as divides men from women, and young from old. Holtzman is thoughtful and provocative in his analyses of these complex relations.

This is an instructive and enjoyable study. The general facts about Maa-speaking peoples are well-known to most East Africanists and many others as well. Yet the complex and shifting tactics and implications of their food consumption have never been well analyzed. For that matter, as I already noted, sophisticated consideration of the meanings of food consumption in East Africa remains a poorly considered topic. I, therefore, recommend this book very highly. My only complaint, a common one lately, is that the press’s copy-editors could have better served the author. The book is needlessly repetitious in places and there are slips in English. For example, the author repeatedly uses the word *reticent* where he clearly means *reluctant*. There is no good excuse for such embarrassing gaffs in such a fine volume. Leaving such cavils aside,

I strongly urge all East Africanists and anyone interested in food consumption to read this excellent book. That should be a large audience.

T. O. Beidelman

Hornborg, Anne-Christine: *Mi'kmaq Landscapes. From Animism to Sacred Ecology.* Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008. 202 pp. ISBN 978-0-7546-6371-3. Price: £ 50.00

In "Mi'kmaq Landscapes. From Animism to Sacred Ecology," Anne-Christine Hornborg explores social, cultural changes in the lifeworld of the Mi'kmaq, an aboriginal people who primarily reside in eastern Canada's Atlantic region. This historical overview centres on the role of Kluscap, a Mi'kmaq cultural hero, in reference to Mi'kmaq cosmologies and changing human-environmental relationships within the context of two particular historical periods: the first being between 1850 and 1930, and the second focusing on the 1990s when Kluscap was evoked to protect Mi'kmaq lands. Generally, "Mi'kmaq Landscapes" offers a significant and valuable contribution to understanding the lifeworld and lifeways of the Mi'kmaq. However, the unique interpretive challenges that accompany the study of Mi'kmaq history and culture, especially the difficulty in transposing precontact cosmology into present-day contexts, are not adequately addressed in this work. By applying standard interpretive strategies Hornborg has missed the mark; although the theoretical approaches and interpretive strategies she employs render non-Western, culturally-specific concepts accessible to the general readership, they often impede accurate understandings of Mi'kmaq lived realities, past and present. It is also important to note that Hornborg's use of Mi'kmaq (sing.) and Mi'kmaqs (plural) is inconsistent with referents currently in use: the more commonly accepted forms are Mi'kmaq (sing./adverbial/adjectival) and Mi'kmaq (plural) in accordance with the Smith-Francis orthography.

Admittedly, any attempt to construct an accurate diachronic portrait of Mi'kmaq cosmology, beliefs, and practices involves significant challenges. In reference to which, Hornborg is quite convincing in her arguments and offers the reader an impressive reconstruction of Mi'kmaq lifeworlds and lifeways, past and present. However, such reconstructions must be considered cautiously as readers need to be aware that this is *a* perspective and not a definitive characterization of the Mi'kmaq. While such cautions are unnecessary for the seasoned reader/scholar of Mi'kmaq society and culture, newcomers to the field need to be aware that there are several areas within the text that require attention, particularly chap. 2 (13–65) wherein lengthy descriptions of precontact lifeworlds and lifeways are provided. Here, Hornborg's attempt at academic rigor falls short in several areas: First, my most serious concern is with the archetypes and interpretive strategies employed by Hornborg. Here, the author follows the Durkheimian categories of sacred and profane, as explained and expanded on by Ruth Holmes-Whitehead in her conceptualization of "The Six Worlds". Such categorization, as derived from Western-based formalities, serve to dissect and classify Mi'kmaq precon-

tact lifeways into typologies discernable to non-Mi'kmaq speakers/readers. In which case, Hornborg does not draw on the strength of ethnographic data, but provides arguments otherwise derived as indicated by her reliance on scholars such as Leland (1884), Martin (1999), Parkhill (1997), and Rand (1894) among others, and the absence of Mi'kmaq voices in "The Six Worlds" description. Second, an argument for "The Six Worlds" is no more or less relevant than arguments for seven, eight, nine, or more worlds as it is merely a typology that allows fleeting (and insufficient) access to Mi'kmaq "traditional" ways of thinking and experiencing the world. There is no absolute certainty that the Mi'kmaq would have perceived their lifeworld in this manner. In fact, language limitations restrict our ability to conceive of, and appreciate the ways in which Mi'kmaq speakers understood matters of existence. While the formulation provided by Hornborg works quite well for the project at hand, it is not a comprehensive representation of Mi'kmaq "being-in-the-world," and should be understood as such. However, the detailed reconstruction does draw attention to the breadth and complexity of Mi'kmaq precontact cosmological understandings. Third, Hornborg's assertion that the Mi'kmaq lifeworld is a product of biocentric (i.e., extending spiritual elements to all biological life) and not ecocentric thinking, is less convincing than an argument for an "ecocentric ethic" among the Mi'kmaq. Ecocentrism is more representative of the inclusivity that marks Mi'kmaq thinking and philosophy, past and present, in that it allows for biocentrism, and more accurately describes the way in which the Mi'kmaq perceived their world as it is conceived in the language. For instance, the Mi'kmaq philosophy of interdependency extends to all aspects of existence, including geological and astrological phenomena – a point which Hornborg acknowledges (xx) but fails to incorporate effectively. This may be a simple matter of applying the appropriate terminology since her extended argument is more in keeping with an ecocentric frame of reference noted above.

In the concluding chapter, "The Return of Kluscap (1970–2000)," Hornborg successfully outlines and addresses recent debates concerning the concept of the "ecological Indian," first popularized throughout North America (and beyond) during the 1970s. The author effectively explains several convoluted arguments for and against Indian ecology, and settles on a less romanticized notion of Mi'kmaq ecology that derives from culturally-specific beliefs and practices believed to have their origins in a precontact past. Historical documentation supports this position and provides a portrait of a people who employed conservation as a strategy for survival, which, one might argue, bears some similarity to economic/subsistence strategies employed at present. However, while the Mi'kmaq have availed of, and contributed to, notions of a "sacred ecology," more recent developments concerning land claims and rights to access resources have not been premised on such, but are determined by litigation processes. If sacred ecology marked the 1970s through to the 1990s, it is the Sparrow (1990) and Delgamuukw (1997) Supreme Court of Canada decisions in general,