

Book Reviews

Ethnography of Pottery Making: Community-Based Technology of Ethiopian Women Potters (*Doki Tsukuri no Minzokushi: Echiopia Josei Shokunin no Chien Gijutsu.*). Morie Kaneko, Kyoto: Showado, 2011, pp. 287+xii (in Japanese).

Earthenware, one of the earliest products made by humans, has been an important archeological material in researchers' construction and verification of hypotheses about human evolution. The techniques of African earthenware production have often been considered undeveloped due to morphological similarities between modern and ancient pottery types. The relationship between humans and materials in pottery making, however, has not been examined sufficiently. Kaneko has attempted to elucidate the dynamics of human society and technology by focusing on individual potters' physical techniques. This book, based on her doctoral thesis for Kyoto University in 2005, seeks to establish a new anthropological approach to the analysis of material culture.

The introduction states that the contradictory perspectives of evolutionism and cultural relativism have obstructed the progress of research on techniques of the body. From the perspective of evolutionism, physical techniques are analyzed separately from human society and are considered to be a decisive indicator distinguishing humans from other species. On the other hand, cultural relativist analyses have not highlighted physical techniques, denying the correlation between technology and social development. In contrast, Kaneko stresses the necessity of gaining an interactive understanding of the relationship between potters and other agents, such as raw materials, the natural environment, and pottery users. She analyzes the overall practice of Ari pottery making, redefining it as a community-based technology (CBT). CBT implies a locally embedded technique based on tradition that relies on native materials and local demand.

The research area is located in southwestern Ethiopia. The Ari people speak the Ari language, which is categorized as an Omotic language. Two social groups are known among the Ari people: the *kantsa*, which consists of farmers, and the *mana*, which consists of potters, blacksmiths, and woodworkers. The *mana* group is further subdivided into

three social groups: the *gasbi-mana*, *tila-mana*, and *faka-mana*. Approximately 350 potters and their relatives belong to the *tila-mana* group.

Chapter 2 explains the values of various clay pots, which are used for cooking, food storage, and funeral rites. The Ari people identify more than 30 kinds of pots based on size and usage, and use approximately 60 pots in daily life. Users prefer to buy pots that have a quality termed *malki*. Although some users say that a pot has *malki* if it is red and all of its parts are appropriately sized, the concept of *malki* varies among individuals. Kaneko points out that the expression of *malki* is not based on static criteria, but on conceptualized standards developed by the Ari people who use various kinds of pots according to the demands of individual situations.

Chapter 3 describes the physical techniques potters use to shape pots. Kaneko investigates individual variation in these techniques, focusing on each potter's posture, finger movement patterns, and process units consisting of multiple finger movement patterns. The results show that potters shape a pot by repeatedly using at least 20 varieties of finger movement pattern. In addition, the sequence of process units differs among individuals, even between two potters in the same family who use the same clay. Although previous studies of techniques of the body emphasized the homogeneity of technologies that have been practiced for generations in a community, Kaneko reveals that individual potters have their own body techniques, such as finger movement patterns.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 describe how individual potters learn, change, and create the technologies of pottery making. Legitimate peripheral participation (LPP), proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991), is considered to be an appropriate theoretical framework for the examination of technology transmission. According to LPP, newcomers become members of a community initially by participating in peripheral activities, and then by becoming acquainted with the community's tasks, vocabularies, and organizing principles. Although Kaneko recognizes the validity of LPP, she also emphasizes that the relationship between technology and the natural environment should be considered. Young potters begin acquiring pottery making skills by shaping clay on their own, following their mothers' simple advice. Accordingly, inexperienced potters learn to form pots by interact-

ing with elements of the natural environment, such as raw materials, fuel, temperature, and moisture. This traditional concept of technology rests on the idea that individual potters have different *aani*, which means “hand” and refers to the shaping techniques or quality of pots, according to the social context.

Kaneko then illustrates how a change in the living environment, such as relocation due to marriage, affects pottery making, and how a potter’s life history is thus connected with her pottery making in a techno-life history. Immigrant potters are obliged to change the kinds of pots and procedures used according to the quality of clay. They are also affected by external influences through relationships with family members, relatives, and pottery users.

Such new social relationships can spark creativity in Ari pottery making. Pots are evaluated by potential buyers at local markets, and users prefer to build fixed relationships, called *jaala*, with potters who make desirable pots that have *malki*. Hence, to please their regular clients, potters make new kinds and different sizes of pots as they are requested via *jaala* relationships. For example, earthen charcoal braziers and roof ornaments have recently been developed to meet the needs of day laborers and Protestants, whose numbers have increased in the study area.

The conclusion summarizes the following characteristics of Ari pottery making: 1) it is strongly linked to locality, 2) it has changed through interactions with external events, 3) it embodies individual differences in shaping technologies, 4) it has undergone a continuous creative process through users’ evaluations of the practical utility of pots, and 5) it employs tacit knowledge that cannot be expressed verbally.

Recent anthropological studies of material culture have explored a new direction. Previous studies tended to regard tools and products as objects under human control, reflecting the modern dichotomy of subject and object. In contrast, new approaches influenced by the actor-network theory proposed by Latour aim to understand the dynamic relationship constructed through mutual dialogue and interaction between humans and materials, viewing both humans and objects as actors in a relational web (Tokoro and Kawai 2011). Although this book describes how Ari potters have created new kinds of earthenware through the medium of social networks such as *jaala* relationships, the way in which the link between Ari earthenware and CBT affects communities remains open to discussion. In addition, Kaneko does not sufficiently examine external and modern agents, such as electric materials and new infrastructure. This book, however, provides a new direction for studies of material culture in that it successfully reveals the interrelationships between humans and materials and between techniques and

society through a detailed analysis of the transmission, transformation, and creation of techniques of the body.

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Reconstructing Public Spheres in Contemporary Africa: Communities, Development and Political Practices in Ethiopian Society (*Gendai Afurika no Kōkyōsei: Echiopia Shakai ni miru Komyuniti, Kaibatsu, Seiji Jissen*). Makoto Nishi, Kyoto: Showado, 2009, pp. 289 (in Japanese).

Since the publication of Habermas’s “The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere,” the “public sphere” concept has become a central topic of contemporary philosophy. “Publicness” has similarly become a key concept when discussing contemporary civil society. After much turbulence, many despotic African governments were dismantled during the 1990s, with some states taking new steps to establish democracies based on the idea of civil society. Analyzing contemporary African societies thus has interesting prospects for this discussion. However, the concept of civil society is based on a model derived from the particular historical experience of Western Europe, and thus lacks sufficient abstractness for a theoretical analysis of society in general. The concept also contains normativeness, such as free access to the space of discussion, and unoppressiveness of expressed opinions. This normativeness often hinders empirical data analysis. In this book, Nishi tackles these difficult issues by focusing on the activities of Gurage people who crossed over traditional ethnic domains and metropolitan society, and multi-ethnic funeral associations organized in Addis Ababa. By analyzing these organizations, he seeks to describe the emergence of civil society in Ethiopia.

Nishi’s analysis relies on two previously published discussions: one, Nancy Fraser’s discussion of counter publics, and the other, Mahmood Mamdani’s discussion of movements that tie civil society to ethnicity. The concept of the public sphere presupposes free access to discussion, and freedom of expression. But these conditions are often difficult to realize when there is inequality among constituent social groups. According to Fraser, subordinated groups make an

alternative public space which she refers to as counter publics, and this public space is connected dominant public space in that it has the possibility of changing the relationship between social groups. This concept makes it possible to imagine a public space where subalterns are encouraged, and able to entertain changes in social inequality.

In Africa, ethnicity has always been described as a stumbling block. The poverty of African societies has often been attributed to ethnic social divisions and the weakness of civil society. Mamdani criticizes this opposition between ethnicity and civil society, and proposes the prospect of movements that would cross over this opposition to connect them in a creative way.

Both scholars emphasize the plurality of public spheres, and the importance of their interconnectedness. Focusing on practices that attempted to tie traditional ethnicity to emerging metropolitan civil society to create a new counter public sphere, Nishi tries to evaluate their potential for changing society.

The Gurage Road Construction Organization was established in Addis Ababa in the 1960s. The Gurage are a group constituted from ethnic groups with different religions and languages. At the end of 19th century, the Ethiopian empire conquered them. Thereafter, some immigrated to Addis Ababa, and engaged in small-scale retail businesses. Gradually, they took on an important role in commercial business in Addis Ababa. The name Gurage originally connoted vulgar pagans, but as it changed to mean industrious merchants, those who came from the area started to call themselves Gurage, and asserted their ethnicity.

In the 1960s, aristocrats from the north owned large estates in southern Ethiopia, and occupied district governmental posts. A new class of bureaucrats and merchants emerged in Addis Ababa. People from Sabat Bet, in Gurage, who belonged to this class, established the Gurage Road Construction Organization. Among members, those who became bureaucrats succeeded in drawing assistance from the government. The Gurage Road Construction Organization also gained support from residents of Addis Ababa and the countryside in the Gurage land, by establishing branches named after different groups constituting the Gurage.

Until the end of 1980s, the Gurage Road Construction Organization built main roads in the Sabat Bet area. Cash crop cultivation prospered in these areas, which previously had been isolated from the economic activities in Addis Ababa. However, young people from the countryside criticized the activities of the Gurage Road Construction Organization, for levying a road toll. The Gurage Road Construction Organization members were

also criticized as "the conservatives" under the new EPRDF government, and their activities subsequently stagnated. However, some branches tried to rebuild the organization, starting new activities. The Ezha Development Committee was one such group.

With the assistance of foreign development aid, the Ezha Development Committee built a high school in the Ezha area of the Gurage zone. The introduction of development projects in this area had previously been delayed. They attempted to gain support not only from foreign aid, but also among citizens of Ezha living in Addis Ababa.

Nishi noted that the EPRDF, who empowered people based on the principle of self-determination by ethnicity, faces a serious dilemma as it pursues ethnic autonomy and equality, because it inevitably invites strong state measures against local people who claim their autonomy and try to secede from the dominant group. The idea of self-determination risks making ethnicity monolithic, and thus oppressing diverse viewpoints. In contrast, the activities of the Gurage Road Construction Organization lack well-defined philosophy, though, connecting civil society in Addis Ababa to traditional society in the countryside, and setting up a public space for negotiation. Such flexibility of organization realizes, Nishi argues, a democratic redistribution of social resources.

In the final chapter, Nishi turns to another example, which asserts and represents counter publics in Ethiopia, namely funeral associations in Addis Ababa. These associations were organized by immigrants from the country side. They consisted of members isolated from their source communities, among whom avoiding a lonely death was a keen anxiety. Associations first organized around those who had come from the same area, had a common mother tongue. Today, however, most of the associations consist of a diverse membership.

Within associations, funeral expenses are paid from the accumulated member fund. Thus, how to secure funds, and on whose funeral the funds should be spent, are always topics that provoke argument. In fact, membership in an association is not so clear. For example, it was a matter of argument whether or not funeral expenses should be paid for an old man who was a member of the association, but had been unable to contribute because his properties had been misappropriated. Nishi points out that social institutions like a welfare state, maintain that they take care for all the people, but in fact exclude some of them under their measures. In contrast, funeral associations undertake the work of inclusion and seclusion of membership by considering the individual situation of each member. In fact, the public sphere has its own inside/outside divide, and Nishi argues, that the work of defining its borders should be done by

its members, as in the funeral associations in Addis Ababa.

This book is a fascinating and challenging ethnography of contemporary Ethiopian society. I want to make two comments on this work, both stemming from the uniqueness of this book, and that I hope highlight the relevance of this investigation.

Of particular note is the level of detail provided in describing Gurage society. Since the publication of "Southern Marches of Imperial Ethiopia" by Donham and James (1986) the importance of describing the ethnicities of Ethiopia and framing them against the background of the larger political economy of the time has been widely recognized. Many ethnographers have tried to write ethnographies interpreting the cultures and societies they observed. After the collapse of the Derg regime and the adoption of federalism by EPRDF, describing its impact and consequence from the people's point of view also became more important. This book is an excellent new ethnography of the Gurage people, incorporating the most current theoretical insights into ethnography of Ethiopian peoples. Considering the important role the Gurage people have been playing in Ethiopia, this book is essential reading for scholars of Ethiopian studies. For students interested in constructionist aspects of ethnicity, it offers interesting and valuable examples.

At the same time, as an ethnography of the Gurage, I feel more specific details should have been referred to in some instances. For example, why did the members of Sabat Bet establish the Gurage Road Construction Organization, when others did not? What kind of ties did people who moved from Sabat Bet into Addis Ababa have with their home community? Didn't other groups from other areas of Gurage follow the movement started by the Gurage Road Construction Organization? Because descriptions of the activities of Gurage Road Construction Organization members are so interesting, I found myself wanting to know more individual background details.

My second comment is about the analytical appropriateness of the publicness concept. Nishi attempts to analyze the activities of the Gurage Road Construction Organization specifically, and funeral associations in general, based on this concept. But he is not entirely successful on this point. As I have indicated, the publicness concept is derived from models of western European societies, and contains a specific normativeness. In some African states where the oppression of human rights has prevailed, this concept may provide a useful framework by which one can predict the prospective future of a society. It is thus very useful for such a normative discourse. But this concept lacks the abstractness needed to

analyze the present state of Ethiopian society, and there is a risk of distortion.

As Nishi points out, the activities of the Gurage Road Construction Organization were a new type of social movement, which connected traditional society centered in the countryside with civil society in Addis Ababa, resulting in the opportunity to create a new social space. In funeral societies in Addis Ababa, as Nishi suggests, the members have tried to maintain control of the boundary between inside and outside by concern for the members. Yet, while I acknowledge all these excellent aspects of his analysis, the idea that such activities demonstrate the prospects for the establishment of civil society, and an impartial public sphere, in Ethiopia remains an open question.

Nishi suggests that the movement of subordinated groups, which constitute "counter publics," may change the relationship between the public sphere of dominants and that of subordinates. The activities of the Gurage Road Construction Organization may appropriate the social resources of the state, but it is not clear whether this has changed the relationship between the public sphere of dominants and that of the Gurage. The effects of funeral associations' activities on the public sphere of the state, which Nishi studied, are not well described. The substantial membership and boundaries of groups such as the Gurage Road Construction Organization, and of funeral associations are clear, but defining the public sphere of dominants is difficult.

This is partly due to the difficulty of directly applying the publicness concept to an empirical field study. As Habermas described, publicness has been derived from the particular context of western Europe. While it might seem to be sufficiently abstract, it presupposes many specific social conditions of the European societies. It is thus difficult to apply directly to other societies that lack similar social conditions. To make the analysis more substantial for anthropological field research, some other more empirically analytical concepts are necessary. Analytical concepts from theories of social movement and social capital (Tarrow 1994, Putnam 1993), for example, may be useful for this kind of research.

This book is the first anthropological study on Ethiopian society that investigates the emergence of public spheres constructed and maintained by private constituencies. The theme is contemporary, and the analysis is very stimulating. Although I point out some theoretical difficulties, they are not serious defects, but rather are a result of the ambitious nature of the enterprise. This is a "must read" not only for students of Ethiopian studies, but of African studies in general.

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Collectiveness among Youth and Their Individualization: Recent Transformation of the Age System of the Samburu in Kenya (Kenia Sanburu Syakai ni okeru Nenreitaikei no Henyô dôtai ni kansuru Kenkyû). Kyoko Nakamura, Kyoto: Shokado, 2011, pp. 293 (in Japanese).

This book compiles Kyoko Nakamura's findings from fieldwork on the Samburu in Kenya, based on her doctoral thesis, which was submitted to the Graduate School of Asian and African Area Studies, Kyoto University, in 2008. It describes unmarried male youths, who are called "morán (warrior)". The author describes a transformation in this book, with special reference to the tendency for collaboration among members of an age group who share both common cognition and behaviors and a contrasting tendency, one that emphasizes mutual differences among members. The author says, in the introduction, "among the other age categories, most of their experiences with diverse values come from being migrant workers to the capital city and tourist spots, and by obtaining a school education and joining the market economy. Through these experiences, they adopt different values that they encounter, make new values and review their past practices, which continues to redefine the lives of the Samburu, including their age system. This study focuses on 'morán' as the main subject because they are at, what we call, 'the frontier of transformation.'" (p3)

The author tries to describe dynamics in the transforming age system by observing "personal decisions" that are liberated from the traditional restrictions of social norms in the midst of a macro system and order, such as modernization and globalization. It is only the collective active choices of individuals that make detachment from social self-evident tradition. The author writes, "I want to make clear which apparatus

works in which way to analyze the process by which collectiveness that is shown by the age category is maintained and strengthened (or reduced), by paying attention to external relations. [...] differences are found among regions, among generations and among individuals. This study seeks to demonstrate dynamics in the age system that is being transformed by people making active choices based on their interpretations of and assigned meanings to these differences." (pp. 16–17)

From this viewpoint, an argument is developed through the following organization.

- Chapter One: Introduction
- Chapter Two: A man's life and *Imuget* ritual
- Chapter Three: "A lover of beads": a morán's love
- Chapter Four: A woman's life and bead ornaments
- Chapter Five: individualized "moránhood"
- Chapter Six: Diversified values: ambivalence and decision
- Chapter Seven: A woman's new life choice
- Chapter Eight: Eyes of tourism and bead ornaments
- Chapter Nine: Conclusion

Following this outline, this review examines the contents of the book.

Chapter one clarifies the problem of consciousness with regard to academic discussions in which the morán have been marginalized by the structural functionalism of anthropology, which focuses on the political and economic sphere, and by gastro-politics, which focuses on the domestic sphere. The author also raises concern that the age system is in danger of disappearing because of the dissemination of modern education, the development of capitalism, and state inclusion. The need for a "new perspective" to understand transformation in the age system is highlighted centered on two mutually conflicting situations: "situations under which the morán anchor themselves firmly to loyalty and obedience as associates of an age set and emotional affinity", and "situations under which they, as individuals, must develop collaborative relationships of mutual support with many people".

Chapter two analyzes changes in status by initiation (*Imuget*) and food rules, called *lminong*. Immediately after the *Imuget* of bird, morán start *lminong*, which prohibits the eating of meat and foods that married women, including their mothers, see and cook. Morán are separated from one-on-one bonds with their mothers and maintain group cohesiveness among other morán at all times, far from the family domain. The author indicates that a peak of collective consciousness is created at this stage and that men, after initiation that frees them

from *lminong*, become individuals and are allowed to drink alone, leaving the group of moran who are bound by *lminong*.

Chapter three reveals that the collective character of moranhood is strongly supported by "love relations of beads", which involve moran giving girls large quantities of beads; these gifts, however, do not lead to marriage or reproduction. In moranhood, when each unit becomes a collective and is called a "club", which, in turn, is based on clan, collectivity among an age group is strengthened by the violence and excitement that are associated with clashes between clans, which, in turn, arise from the seduction of one's lover.

Chapter four compares between the sexuality of moran and that of elders and considers that a man's age system is ordered and linked with separation, which is based on sexual codes, and a woman's life is divided into "the sexuality that does not bear children" and "the sexuality that bears children".

Chapter five discusses the transformation of the meaning of being moran. The author indicates that a new feeling prevails in which people feel that moranhood, which is regulated by *lminong* as a code of conduct and group living, is too long. As a result, people have begun controlling the duration of moran individually by being circumcised, thus disregarding the codes, and freely getting married and finishing moranhood. The author indicates that people actively choose their own life among various value systems.

In chapter six, the author describes transformations in the relationships between moran and 'fire stick' elders, called *lpiroi*, and between moran and their fathers, noting that they are initially in conflict with each other, then avoid conflict and build consensus. According to the author, a man has an identity problem with regard to fixing himself, regardless of whether the undeveloped or the developed world affects his decisions, regarding the timing and place of circumcision and the choice of surgeon.

In chapter seven, transformations in a woman's life are illuminated by focusing on the age category called *surumelei*, unmarried circumcised women. The author discovered that an increasing number of women are being circumcised before marriage, although, traditionally, the form of a woman's sexuality changes drastically after circumcision is performed on her wedding day. The author notes that an increasing number of educated girls are aggressively choosing to become *surumelei*, while, previously, there used to be exceptions only when older sisters became *surumelei* when marriages occurred in reverse order. She indicates that being *surumelei* is accepted as having a new and positive meaning because it can set women free from suffering events such as abor-

tion and infanticide, which are actions taken against pre-circumcision pregnancies.

Chapter eight reveals the meaning and process of self-commoditization by moran who earn a living in beach resorts by being stereotype "warriors". According to the author, the moran begin to objectify themselves (hair, bodily movements in dance, adornments) when they learn different values by encountering tourists from western countries.

In chapter nine, the author summarizes the above discussion from the viewpoint of collectiveness in age categories, the recent tendency for individualization, and dynamics in, and the meaning of, the contemporary age system.

This book is an attempt to encompass people's daily activities to identify the conflicts and shocks that are experienced by every individual through clashes that arise between different values and a plurality of wills, in order to perceive people actively deciding actions to be taken while differentiating self from others based on newly created differences that are dependent on the social context. It goes without saying that these viewpoints are based on the intimate interrelation between the author and the Samburu people, and the author's sensibility. The interest of this book is found not only in each point of the argument, summarized above, but also in the brilliant entrainment of the richly detailed descriptions. Having carried out anthropological field research in pastoral societies of the Eastern Nilotes, I found that the writing embodied my own experience. I found myself nodding at each event that the author encountered and sometimes smiling sympathetically at the admirable way of life of the Samburu people. This was because the author provided an insight into the contingencies of dialogue and action, and outlined the dynamic field in which they emerge, by choosing methods that detailed not only "explanations" reported to the author but also non-verbal interactions and daily conversations.

As the author indicates, the accumulation of ethnographic information on East African pastoral societies has enriched our understanding of social systems that are based on age and a set of principles. Regarding the age system, the discussion opens with a dichotomy that emphasizes the importance of the political and military apparatus, on the one hand, and a framework of cognition and structure based on a worldview, on the other. Then, as "*Conflict, age and power in North East Africa*" (Kurimoto and Simonse eds. 1998) has elucidated, we can now come to an understanding that the order of inter-ethnic relationships in the real world and that of religious and ritual orders depend on interpenetration. The author's original, meticulous, and individually targeted approach of focusing on our contemporaries'

volitions is promising for further elucidation of the real situation of the Samburu people, who are not necessarily complacent regarding their status on the periphery of globalization, despite the “primitive warrior” stereotype with which they are often labeled.

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Life-world of Banana Cultivators in Uganda: An Ethnoscience Approach. (*Uganda, Banana no Tami no Seikatsusekai: Esunosaiensu no Shiza kara*). Yasuaki Sato, Kyoto: Shokado, 2011, pp. 148 (in Japanese).

This book, published as the 5th volume of the Kyoto University African Studies Series, is a revised version of the author’s doctoral thesis in Area Studies of Africa and Asia (ASAFAS), Kyoto University, 2009. The author is now an assistant professor at Osaka Sangyo University. This work is largely based on fieldwork conducted in the central part of Uganda over a period of about ten months between 2005 and 2007. It is not well known that Uganda is the world’s second largest banana producer and has, in fact, been called the ‘Country of Bananas’ or the ‘Banana Republic’. Using an ethnoscience approach, the study examined relationships between a Bantu-speaking people (Baganda), the largest ethnic group in the country, and bananas (*Musa* spp.). The author considered both visible and invisible relationships, terming them “life-worlds”, and addresses 4 topics: cultivation and use, cognition and expression, and maintenance of landraces, and homegardens. The book contains six chapters in addition to the foreword and afterword.

The 1st chapter, titled “The life-worlds of African cultivators”, defines the aims of the study following a review of previous related studies, and provides essential information on the basic characteristics of banana plants, the dispersal and cultivation of bananas in the Great Lakes region of East Africa, a regional survey that includes the physical environment, livelihoods, language and society, and the research methods and sites. The author notes that one of the three types of banana that are found in Africa, classified as AAA-EA by its genome, is widespread in the Great Lakes region and is a local staple crop.

The 2nd chapter, “The crop, cultivation and utilized

forms for staple food culture”, describes cultivation techniques, cooking methods and non-food uses of bananas, as well as the classification of, and preferences for, local foods. Because banana fruits cannot be preserved for long periods, they have to be consumed within a short period after harvest. Therefore, the local people have established a unique banana cultivation system that allows crops to be harvested throughout the year by planting different types and stages of plants in their gardens. However, because banana harvests vary within a year, people are not completely dependent on these crops and they also cultivate other staple crops, such as sweet potato and maize. Regarding local foods, *matooke* is a significant dish that is comprised of steamed and mashed bananas, as well as boiled bananas. People generally prefer paste-based dishes that are made by mashing steamed or boiled staple crops. This preference is compatible with both bananas and other staple crops. It has been argued that, although bananas are the most highly valued crop, the diversity of staple crops is also aimed at both available cultivation and cooking methods.

The 3rd chapter, “Diversity of cognition associated with bananas”, describes local knowledge about banana classifications, some of which is shared widely and some that is not. Through the analysis of identification tests of banana landraces, it appears that individuals tend to accumulate their knowledge about banana landraces throughout their life. The results also suggest that local knowledge of banana classifications can overlap; it can also be ambiguous or elastic in nature, which allows for cognitive incompatibility.

The 4th chapter, “A society that accumulates landraces—the mechanism of cultivation and exchange”, discusses how banana landrace diversity is maintained by analyzing specific landrace holdings in sample households (n=28), the processes by which new landraces are obtained, and people’s motives with respect to banana landrace diversity. It turns out that, on average, individual households hold about 10 banana landraces and that, although some landraces are held by most of the local households, many others are held by only a few households. Two distinct patterns were found with regard to the processes by which new landraces are obtained. One involves sons obtaining young shoots from their parents when they form separate households and the other occurs when people get young shoots while visiting their close friends.

The 5th chapter, “The home garden *lusuku* as a living space”, considers the multiple meanings of the home garden *lusuku*, centered on bananas, by examining the folk classification of landscapes, the division of labor in managing the home garden between

the sexes, the composition and uses of plants in home gardens, and ritual uses and the ideal image of the home garden. It is argued that the garden is not only a place where staple food crops are grown but that it is also an important part of the total living space within which people work, both for food and cash, collect diverse plant materials for medicinal and other uses, and practice magico-religious rituals.

The final chapter summarizes and synthesizes the above discussions. It concludes that the study has provided a new understanding of cultures and societies that are flexibly formed by mutualistic relationships between people and plants.

Large amounts of original data are provided in this book, and a number of commentaries are offered in relation to these data. In chapter 3, landrace groups are discussed. Based on their usages, two groups are distinguished: *matooke* for staple foods and *mbidde* for alcoholic drinks. However, later in chapter 5 (p. 106), three groups are mentioned: *ndiizi* for raw eating, besides *matooke* and *mbidde*. Why is *ndiizi* not explained earlier, in chapter 3? Related to this point, in chapter 2, *matooke* is described in detail as constituting the most important banana food uses, but what about *mbidde*? No description is given for *mbidde*.

As was noted above, from the discussion in chapter 4, although some landraces are held by most of the local households, many others are held by only

a few households. Two patterns were found with regard to the processes by which new landraces are obtained: one involved parents and the other involved friends. However, no combined analysis of the two discussions is provided. According to Appendix 1, common landraces that are held by most of the local households are generally obtained from parents, but minor landraces that are held by only a few households are often obtained from friends. This has important implications for the maintenance of landrace diversity.

In Figure 5.3 (p. 106), the spatial distributions of three landrace groups within a home garden are shown in the case of an MW household. Although a brief statement is provided in the text, this result may also have larger implications. In the figure, *matooke* landraces occupied the largest and central area, whereas *mbidde* and *ndiizi* landraces were distributed narrowly in peripheral areas. If this spatial pattern that is centered on *matooke* landraces is typical in the society, it represents a cultural expression that *matooke* have the highest value.

This monograph on the "People of the Bananas" is an important contribution to ethnobotanical studies in the area. Further studies by the author are eagerly anticipated.

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