been subject to the same, then culinary malpractice simply adds food to the equation” (p.103). Culinary malpractice is thus defined by Williams-Forson as a deliberate misrepresenting of African American foodways, a reduction of the rich variety in the black culinary tradition to a mere making do with “scraps” (p.107). Peasant peoples around the world often have a tradition of offering prize to individual cooks for being able to make a delicious much from a scant little, and certainly, the ways in which African American cookery is often described, except in the context of elite white kitchens, is one of frugal scrapping and making do with lesser-quality ingredients.

Contemporary examples of what is fine in the African American culinary tradition, especially those traditions kept alive by expert women cooks, are too often ignored in favor of portrayals of chicken-stealing coons in the early twentieth century and soul-food-obsessed black urbanites in the twenty-first. Left out is recognition of the rich traditions of vegetable gardening, the range of culinary diversity in rural and urban African American communities, and the famous black southern barbecue chefs, not to mention black bakers and pastry makers.

Williams-Forson’s ideas are fresh, intriguing, and thoughtful. She challenges recent fiction and film renderings of African American foodways—especially when they leave out or gloss over issues of health or fall back on mawkish, narrow, and sentimental portrayals of soul food meals with their ubiquitous collards, cornbread, and, of course, fried chicken. African Americans have always eaten from a much wider culinary palette, and Williams-Forson does a fine job reminding us of that fact.

—Leni Sorensen, Thomas Jefferson Foundation, Monticello

Fermented Fish Products in East Asia: IRMI Research Study 1
Kenneth Ruddle and Naomichi Ishige
Hong Kong: International Resources Management Institute, 2005
www.intresmanins.com/publications/irmistudy1.html

The cuisines of Northeast and Southeast Asia have traditionally been based on a combination of rice, fish, and vegetables. Since the consumption of animal meats was limited and the pastoral tradition lacking, fermented products of marine organisms have historically played a major role in food patterns throughout the region. Pastes and sauces obtained by intentionally fermenting fish, shellfish, and crustaceans not only constituted the major source of animal protein but also provided local cuisines of East Asia with their characteristic tastes. Nam plaa, nuoc mam, and terasi, emblematic for the cuisines of Thailand, Vietnam, and Indonesia, are merely the most well known among a rich variety of fermented fish products manufactured and consumed throughout East Asia today. The diversity of the produce was even greater in the past. For example, condiments obtained by fermenting soybeans pushed fermented fish pastes and sauces to the verge of extinction in China and Japan. Contemporary Japanese sushi, which stems from the ancient method of preserving fish through fermentation (so-called narezushi), resembles its forebear in name only. It remains to be seen whether the importance of fermented fish products might, as in the North, diminish in Southeast Asia as well. At any rate, the consumption of soy sauce—originally limited to communities of immigrant Chinese—has shown spectacular increase in the Philippines and Indonesia.

In Fermented Fish Products in East Asia, Kenneth Ruddle and Naomichi Ishige provide us with a clear-cut generic classification of fermented fish products that are found throughout East Asia, along with a very useful overview of their manufacture and use. Personally, I find it slightly problematic that in this comparative study published in English the Japanese terms shiokara and narezushi are used as generic categories of “fish fermented with salt” and “fish fermented with cooked grain,” respectively. Why not use the Thai terms pla raa and plaaw som?

The monograph is based on a comprehensive field survey conducted by the authors—and a team of overwhelmingly Japanese researchers—between 1982 and 1985 in Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. The results have been published over the years, mostly in Japanese, though a handful in English, as well.1 The fact that the survey is more than twenty years old is both an advantage and a disadvantage. On the one hand, one might say that this is old news and an update is necessary in order for this study to prove a valuable source. On the other, since the survey reflects the situation in the 1980s, it provides a perfect starting point for comparison with the current state of affairs.

The focus of Fermented Fish Products in East Asia is on resources and manufacturing methods, presented in six core chapters. The first two concentrate on the resources—the availability of seafood used for fermentation, its seasonal variations, and fishing gear and technologies utilized in different regions. The following four chapters meticulously describe the manufacturing processes of the four major categories of fermented seafood: fermented fish (referred to
here by its Japanese name, *shiokara*), fermented shrimp, fish sauce, and fish fermented with cooked grain (referred to here by its Japanese name, *narezushi*). Information concerning the dietary role of fermented fish products in East Asia is relatively limited, and the social and cultural significance of fermented fish products is mentioned only in passing.1

In short, this is a solid source on the availability and processing of marine and freshwater fish, shellfish, and crustaceans in Northeast and Southeast Asia. It can serve as a valuable reference book not only for seafood or fermentation fanatics but for all scholars interested in East Asian foodways. Like Huang’s monumental volume on fermentation in China,2 this study provides necessary background information that adds a much-needed macroperspective to our understanding of Asian cuisines. Unlike Huang’s volume, which sells for over two hundred dollars, the cost of downloading this e-book is only $5.99. With 97 figures, 21 tables, and 100 color photographs, this is a true bargain.

—Katarzyna J. Cwiertka, Leiden University

NOTES


2. Kevin McIntyre’s study on fish sauce in Vietnam would be perfect supplementation to our understanding of Asian cuisines. Unlike Huang’s volume, which sells for over two hundred dollars, the cost of downloading this e-book is only $5.99. With 97 figures, 21 tables, and 100 color photographs, this is a true bargain.

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Foodscapes: Toward a Deleuzian Ethics of Consumption

Rick Dolphijn

Delft, Netherlands: Eburon Publishers, 2004

115 pp. Illustrations. $26.00 (cloth)

Over the past few years food studies scholars and others have heartily embraced the term *foodscape*, incorporating it into academic and public discourse. It is an ambiguous but useful term that represents the marriage of landscape and food. For some the term is a logical extension of Arjun Appadurai’s deterritorialized, postmodern, transnational scapes.3 For Rick Dolphijn, a professor of cultural studies and philosophy at Erasmus University in Rotterdam, the term’s broad appeal and multivocality derive from combining food with the Dutch concepts *landschap* and *schap*. Although he neglects explicitly to define his titular concept, readers quickly come to understand that, for Dolphijn, foodscapes are processes by which food, through its diverse representations and consumption (or avoidance thereof), informs individual and global perceptions of identity, place, health, and power, among other concerns.

In this book, a revision of his doctoral thesis, Dolphijn presents a very modern intellectual bricolage: the book is part travelogue, part philosophical treatise, part ethnographic study of food and identity as lived in four disparate cities, and part cultural studies exposition on the micropolitics of capitalism as articulated through food. Dolphijn walks readers along his intellectual path by weaving into the text references to and quotes from scholars (among them Frederic Jameson, George Herbert Mead, Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, and Benedictus de Spinoza) and other influential voices (including a Chinese poet from the T’ang dynasty, James Joyce, Shankarcharya, and Sun Tzu). Primary among the thinkers who influence Dolphijn is French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925–1995), whose theories and concepts are the foundation for Dolphijn’s ruminations. Dolphijn also seasons his text with excerpts from conversations he had during travels to Bangalore, India; Boston, Massachusetts; Hangzhou, China; and Lyons, France, thereby peopling what might otherwise be an abstract philosophical essay.

The glossy, oversized book, rich with black-and-white photographs, consists of four sections organized around the concepts *state-food, revolutionary becomings, territoriality, and minor dietetics*. The politics of food interrogated in each section, and the sections themselves, map various relationships that people have with food. Throughout and within each section, the reader can reflect on “how [the] mutual symbiosis [of these relationships] unfold[s] the realities in which we live, the situations in which we end up, by proposing an immanent (re)creation of concepts” (p. 99). The cornerstone of Dolphijn’s ethics of consumption is based on the Deleuzian notion of *immanence*, the processes of mutual composition that encapsulate processes of creation, being, and understanding.

The book is unusual not because it is an interdisciplinary discourse on food, power, and place—as the reviews *Gastronomica* attest, such works appear with increasing frequency. What makes Dolphijn’s book unusual—in fact, initially uncomfortable—are his syntactic style and paratextual elements. Dolphijn’s prose, which sometimes defies syntactic convention, takes some getting used to, as do unconventional visual elements. For example, although the same font is used throughout the book, some passages command more attention because they are in a larger font size. Also, the layout varies from page to page: some pages have two columns of text, some have three, and some have both;