
Reviewed by Virginia DeLancey

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This book is part of "The Way People Live" series which focuses on cultures throughout the world and attempts to eliminate stereotypes of these cultures. It begins with a discussion of pre-colonial Ibo society (indicating that "Ibo" is also spelled "Igbo"), including sections on the geography and climate, clothing and physical appearance, language, village life, food, and religion. The author provides an entire chapter on the positions of power which Ibo women formerly held and another on women's work, as well as chapters on marriage and motherhood. She then discusses the arrival of Europeans in Nigeria, followed by the impact of economic colonization, including the slave trade, as well as the impact of religious and cultural colonization, and political colonization. The discussion emphasizes the impact on women, especially the changes in Ibo women's lives and their loss of power. The author concludes with a very short chapter on the "modern" Ibo woman and one on the future.

Nnoromele is successful in providing much in-depth information on women in Ibo society to help eliminate the typical stereotypes held by students at this level of education. However, it is not as clear as it should be that Ibo women are not representative of all African women, nor even of all Nigerian women. Also, although the author's name and background information suggest that she may be an Ibo woman, she seems to write from outside rather than from inside the culture. While she cites many scholarly writings, she seems to bring little insight of her own, and it is difficult to evaluate the strength of information from the few personal interviews she includes. She occasionally uses out-of-date references, beginning with a 1940s reference to substantiate current land tenure legislation (p. 12), provides a photo of a man supposedly dressed in only a short loin cloth (although it is not possible to see it in his seated position) and with hair in disarray and suggests that it is an Ibo man dressed in "traditional attire" (p. 15), calls geographer Barry Floyd an anthropologist (p. 35) and misspells the name of Ibo sociologist Kamene Okonjo throughout the book, as well as the university town of Nsukka (p. 41). In the chapter on marriage, she refers to the groom being expected to pay a "dowry" for his wife, and discusses the practice of "brideprice" rather than bridewealth" (p. 44). She also uses oth-
er terms such as "native" and "hut" throughout the book.

In sum, this book provides much valuable information not previously available for this educational level, but it should be used with care.

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