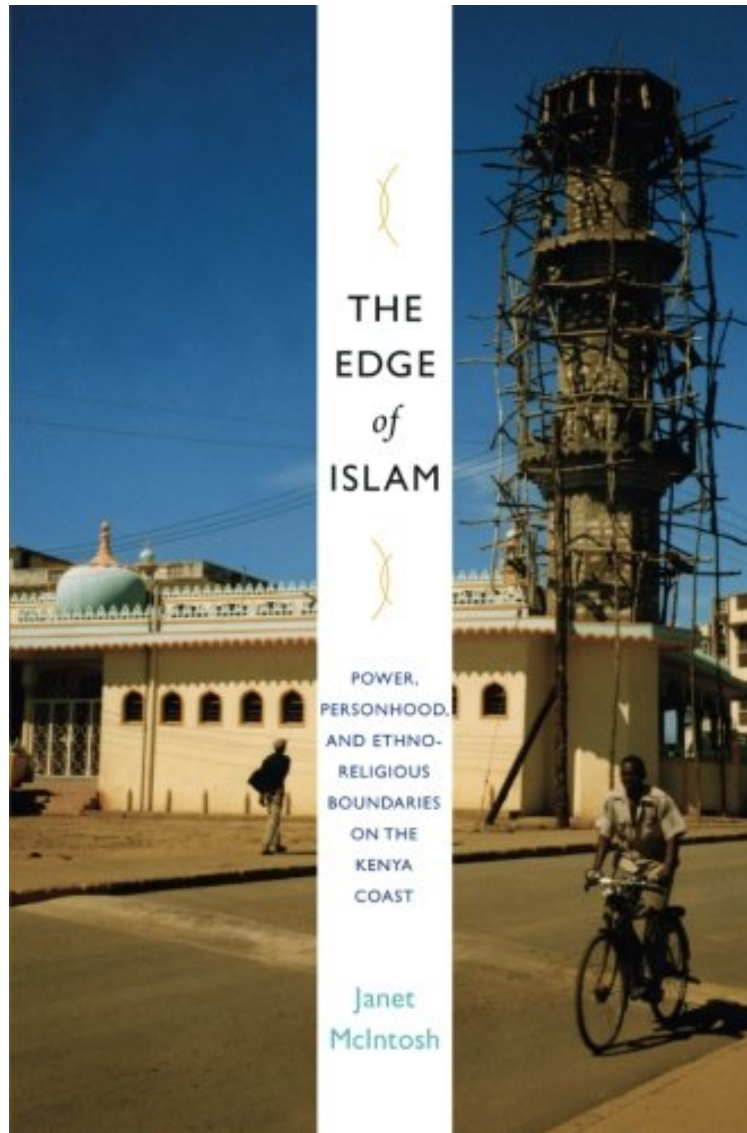


The Edge of Islam: Power, Personhood, and Ethnoreligious Boundaries on the Kenya Coast

Janet McIntosh

ebooks | Download PDF | *ePub | DOC | audiobook



 Download

 Read Online

#579111 in Books Duke University Press Books 2009-07-29 2009-07-29 Original language: English PDF # 1
9.25 x .85 x 6.13l, .95 #File Name: 0822345099344 pages | File size: 31.Mb

Janet McIntosh : The Edge of Islam: Power, Personhood, and Ethnoreligious Boundaries on the Kenya Coast
before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Edge of Islam:
Power, Personhood, and Ethnoreligious Boundaries on the Kenya Coast:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A wonderful view of cultural tensions By George Mason
After spending time in small towns like Mamburi and more diverse ones like Malindi, this book opened my eyes to some of

the dynamics I could not explain on the ground. If you are a visitor or worker on the Coast anywhere from Lamu to Gazi, this book will open a window on a world that you would not normally notice. The author dives well and deeply on the socio-religious segregation that is prevalent along the coast. Similar to the tensions between the Western tribes in Sudan and Nile Arabs, this book is vibrant in its analysis of the attitudes of the marginalized Giriama and their self-styled superiors in the "Swahili" community. While envious of the socially superior Swahili, the Giriama still manage to show disdain with the culture they want to emulate. Great effort and hopefully Janet McIntosh has more to come. Caution: most people either like cultural anthropology or they hate it with not many in between; this book is for cultural anthropology fanatics! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. McIntosh has a wonderful ability to let her subjects speak for themselves. By Andrew Borden A fascinating, fluid, and tightly reasoned look at faith and identity. McIntosh has a wonderful ability to let her subjects speak for themselves, and leaves you with a question I hope she will answer in her future work--what does it take to be a true believer, and to be accepted by the other members of a religion or a community? What happens to someone if being faithful in their speech, in their heart, and in their observances, is still not enough?

In this theoretically rich exploration of ethnic and religious tensions, Janet McIntosh demonstrates how the relationship between two ethnic groups in the bustling Kenyan town of Malindi is reflected in and shaped by the different ways the two groups relate to Islam. While Swahili and Giriama peoples are historically interdependent, today Giriama find themselves literally and metaphorically on the margins, peering in at a Swahili life of greater social and economic privilege. Giriama are frustrated to find their ethnic identity disparaged and their versions of Islam sometimes rejected by Swahili. *The Edge of Islam* explores themes as wide-ranging as spirit possession, divination, healing rituals, madness, symbolic pollution, ideologies of money, linguistic code-switching, and syncretism and its alternatives. McIntosh shows how the differing versions of Islam practiced by Swahili and Giriama, and their differing understandings of personhood, have figured in the growing divisions between the two groups. Her ethnographic analysis helps to explain why Giriama view Islam, a supposedly universal religion, as belonging more deeply to certain ethnic groups than to others; why Giriama use Islam in their rituals despite the fact that so many do not consider the religion their own; and how Giriama appropriations of Islam subtly reinforce a distance between the religion and themselves. *The Edge of Islam* advances understanding of ethnic essentialism, religious plurality, spirit possession, local conceptions of personhood, and the many meanings of Islam across cultures.

The Edge of Islam offers rare appreciation of the ways Islam, as a faith and practice, coheres across deeply fraught ethnic boundaries that inform the daily lives of Swahili and Giriama communities. . . . *The Edge of Islam* deftly navigates questions of Islamic authority, including distinctions between scripturalism and bodily practice, virtuous inwardness and pragmatic communalism, rationalism and madness.