

REVIEWS

NAKAMAKI Hirochika 中牧弘允, ed. *Kamigami no sōkoku: Bunka-sesshoku to dochakushugi* 神々の相克—文化接触と土着主義 [Rivalry among the gods: Culture contact and nativism]. Tokyo: Shinsensha, 1982. 290 + xxxv pp. ¥2,500.

The book under review is a collection of essays resulting from study meetings held at the National Museum for Ethnology in Osaka from April 1978 till March 1980 on the general theme “Comparative study of nativistic religious movements.” Nine of the participants—members of the National Museum as well as non-members—contributed a paper to this volume.

Let us first have a look at the contents. The book starts with an introductory essay by its editor Nakamaki Hirochika on “Unknown gods, universal gods, and gods of affinity,” followed by Part One that deals with Japan and consists of two essays. The first one by Inoue Nobutaka deals with “Coping with foreign ideas in the formation process of Revival Shinto: Christianity in the thought of [Hirata] Atsutane and [Ōkuni] Takamasa.” The second one by Shimazono Susumu on “The transformation of charisma and myths on the high god as seen in the formative period of early new religions” compares the founders of Konkōkyō and Tenrikyō with leaders of nativistic religions in the Third World.

Part Two, on Southeast Asia, again contains two essays. The first, by Yoshihara Kazuo on “A popular religious organization in the Sarawak Chinese community: Adaptation and identity,” deals with the relationship between immigrants from mainland China in Malaysia and the new religion Zi Xia Ge Moral Uplifting Society, which originated in their native country (for details, see the article by Yoshihara in this issue). The second essay, by Sekimoto Teruo on “Thoughts on pilgrimages to sacred graves in Java: Islam and native traditionalism,” takes up the problem of the grave pilgrimages, conducted on a nationwide scale in Indonesia, and Islam in relation to the formation of a nation-state.

The two essays in Part Three are both focused on India. In “The popular religion of Sufism in Southern Asia: The veneration of saints,” Kagaya Hiroshi writes about the reasons why in Islamic societies new religions do not arise, by focusing upon the double structure of fundamentalist, orthodox Islam versus non-Islamic popular Sufism. The other essay by Ikari Yasuke on “Bhakti thought in Southern Asia: From ancient times until the middle ages,” traces the process whereby Hinduism entered Tamil society in opposition to Brahmanism, Jainism, and Buddhism, and how Tamil Hinduism was incorporated into orthodox teachings.

Part Four contains two essays on Christianity on the American continent. Analyzing Messianism as it appears in popular pamphlets (“chapbooks”) in Brazil, Arai Yoshihiro attempts to elucidate the nature of folk Catholicism in an essay entitled

“Messianism in popular pamphlets: Religious ideology in North-Eastern Brazil.” Nakamaki Hirochika, on the other hand, writes on “The Rastafarian Movement in Jamaica: A blend of universalism and nativism.”

Part Five, on Oceania, contains only one essay, that by Ishimori Shūzō on “The nationalistic Maori movements in New Zealand: Detribalization and Christianity,” in which he shows how Christianity plays a critical role in the detribalization process and in the integration of the Maori tribes.

Finally, in the “Bibliographical Notes” at the end of the book, a total of 75 essays and books on the problem under discussion, including in areas not specifically treated in the present volume, are presented and summarized, offering very valuable guidelines for further study to those interested in this field.

Since the subject area of the various essays in this book is extremely wide and, moreover, their content very bountiful, it is impossible to comment on each of them. I will, therefore, focus on the introductory essay, which in fact summarizes all of them, with particular attention to recent theories about folk religion.

The present volume is the result of an interdisciplinary endeavor, with contributions by scholars working in the different fields of the science of religion, sociology, anthropology, history, and other disciplines. One would expect, then, that it is not more than a collection of essays written from different viewpoints, to which somehow a common theme is affixed. Yet, this is not the case. The analytical frames are manifold—theories on charisma, identity, adaptation, ethnicity, popular religion, etc. This too is overcome, however, by sustaining throughout the whole volume the angle of “culture contact and nativism,” which acts as the main factor creating a sense of unity. Moreover, we should not overlook the point that, by employing the models of “native religion,” “universalistic religion,” and “nativistic religion,” the individual essays are located in one single system.

In this threefold model, native religion is defined as “religious culture which in a given society is unconsciously understood as being traditional,” universalistic religion as a religion which “claims to properly transcend native religious culture and excessively emphasizes its universal character,” and nativistic religion as a religion which “excessively emphasizes a specific native tradition as peculiar and stands in direct opposition to universalistic religion.”

As a concept resembling those of “native” and “nativistic” religions, we could refer to that of “folk religion.” Their common object is defined as a faith system peculiar to a certain people. There are certainly many definitions of “folk religion,” but we can understand it as a concept that designates the totality of a faith that has arisen from a direct hope for salvation from the part of the masses and which forms the basis of and is opposed to established religion or the religion of the elite and of the State. When Nakamaki points to “traditional culture carried by the common people” as an example of what “native” means, one gets the impression that, in practice, “native religion” and “nativistic religion” overlap.

Folk religion, native religion, and nativistic religion, all have a similar object. But

the angle of approach differs. Especially in theories on folk religion there is a tendency to treat on a similar level both indigenized (nativized), customary forms of religiosity and religious movements born in reaction against State and established religions. But a distinction based upon consciousness, as seen in the threefold model, might be more appropriate for indicating the direction in which the religious movements might develop. This is because, as Nakamaki points out, in the traditional theories on folk religion there is a tendency to reduce all those phenomena to syncretism. By distinguishing nativistic religion one can attain a fairly balanced view between both universalistic religion and native religion. This might sound rather simplistic, but it is in fact a quite complicated problem. It is a useful model to prove, for example, the statement of Ikari that "culture contact surely causes transformations on both sides meeting each other."

What we certainly have to take into consideration in this context is that native religion itself is partly understood only by conscious nativistic religion. Theories on folk religion, whether consciously or not, aim at acquiring a systematical understanding of the totality of a people's religion, as seen in the (Japanese) theories on *hare*, *ke*, and *kegare*.^{*} In this respect, these theories certainly are greatly different from the threefold model proposed in this book.

I have only pointed out here the difference of viewpoint with theories on folk religion, not particularly in a critical way, because I think that the cross-cultural approach taken in this book opens new theoretical horizons for dealing with this and other problems. Therefore, I think that this book will prove to be an indispensable tool for those who want to study the theme of "religion and native traditions" from a comparative viewpoint.

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* These concepts arose among mainly among Japanese scholars of folk religion to analyze the rules for daily life among the Japanese. They are also used by cultural anthropologists and sociologists, and are recognized to be relevant also outside the Japanese cultural sphere. Although definitions vary somewhat according to various scholars, *ke* refers to the state of daily life of the individual or community, or the energy which supports this daily life. *Kegare* refers to the "drying up" (*hareru* 枯れる) of the *ke*, or the state in which the *ke* has "dried up." This concept is the basis for the idea of impurity, which is one of the central religious concepts of the Japanese. *Hare*, as seen in festivals and rites of passage, refers to a situation which is not part of daily life, or a time when the *ke* is replenished through a visit by *kami* or extraordinary beings. For details see the works listed in the References.

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