REVIEW

CONCERNING the relationship between migrants and religions, students of Japanese religions have long focused on religious groups and traditions that have expanded *from* Japan into various overseas countries as a result of immigration or religious organizations' propagation into new frontiers. The last decade or so has in turn seen the rise of scholarship on religions that have expanded *to* Japan from other countries as a result of the changing landscape of migrants in contemporary Japanese society. Some important research has been published in edited volumes, including, among others, MIKI and SAKURAI (2012), which was reviewed in the 2014 issue of this journal; MIKI (2017); and most recently SHŪKYŌ JŌHŌ RISĀCHI SENTĀ (2019). These works have brought to light such themes as the historical background of immigrants to Japan, religious traditions that migrants have brought to Japan and how they interact with these traditions in the new cultural environment, and the roles that these religions play in the process of migrants' adaptation to the host society as well as of the maintenance and construction of their ethnicities.

Seen in this light, the volume being reviewed here can simply be seen as one of the many other contributions in this field. As the title of the volume suggests, however, it can be distinguished from other volumes in its focus on the nexus between immigrants, religious traditions/organizations, and local communities in contemporary Japan. As one of the editors, Takahashi Norihito, rightly points out in the introduction, the main focus of the earlier works was in one way or another to showcase a variety of religious traditions that have been brought to Japan by migrants, especially so-called newcomers whose numbers rapidly increased from around the 1980s (16–17). In this sense, studying the relationships between migrants and religions from the viewpoint of multicultural coexistence (*tabunka kyōsei*) can be seen as a new approach in this particular field of research.

The notion of multicultural coexistence serves as a key concept throughout this edited volume. Takahashi notes that, compared to terms that are more commonly used in Western contexts such as multiculturalism or social integration, the notion of multicultural coexistence is uniquely employed in the Japanese context (15–17). As briefly discussed in the introduction and further elaborated in chapter 9, this concept is both a social and analytical category that is pregnant with variable meanings. As a social category, it is a term that originally began to be used from around the 1990s in the context of social movements aiming to address social and political issues surrounding minorities, including foreign workers. However, it later came to be de-politicized when it was adopted as a keyword in the context of formulating the Japanese government's public policies under the banner of the internationalization of local communities (*chiiki kokusaika*) (208–15). While being aware of the politically loaded connotations of the term, Takahashi uses the notion of multicultural coexistence as an analytical category by introducing two ideal types that were developed in his earlier work: "'multicultural coexistence' pertaining to within religious organizations" (*shūkyō soshiki nai* "*tabunka kyōsei*") and "'multicultural coexistence' pertaining to outside religious organizations" (*shūkyō soshiki gai* "*tabunka kyōsei*") (17). The former refers to "multicultural coexistence that is developed in an organization in which people with different cultural backgrounds share the same faith" (17). The latter concerns "initiatives of multicultural coexistence that are promoted in the public sphere of a given society by using religious organizations and their members as resources" (17). As ideal types, these two modes of multicultural coexistence cannot be always clearly demarcated in the actual religious organizations, nor do these two modes necessarily develop concurrently (17). These two ideal types will be used in most of the subsequent chapters to analyze the state of multicultural coexistence in each specific case being studied.

It is against this theoretical and historical background that subsequent chapters in the volume discuss a wide range of case studies. Aside from chapter 9, each chapter is organized in a way that focuses on social groups of particular national origin such as Brazil, Vietnam, or the Philippines, or a specific group or organization related to a particular faith tradition such as Catholicism or Islam. Readers will notice that case studies introduced in this volume are disproportionately Catholic-related, a fact that, as Takahashi notes, attests to the prominence of the activities organized by this religious tradition (21).

The contributors of chapters 1 to 8 each shed light on variable themes relating to multicultural coexistence based on their research. In chapter 1, Shirahase Tatsuya discusses Catholic churches' multilayered initiatives to support immigrants in Japan as primarily informed by the Church's official policy toward migrants. He reports that Catholic churches in Japan are increasingly becoming multiethnic as a result of responding to the needs of migrants who follow the same faith, an initiative that has been made possible in part by the presence of priests from other countries. In this sense, the level of multicultural coexistence within religious organizations are

increasing within the circle of Catholic churches, but as Shirahase points out in the conclusion, there are several issues that need to be addressed if the churches are to advance multicultural coexistence with regards to local communities outside the churches.

In chapter 2, Hoshino Sō also discusses Catholic churches but with a specific focus on immigrants from Brazil, who had increased from around the 1990s largely due to the change in Japanese law concerning migrants of Japanese descent. Like Takahashi, Hoshino also touches upon the increasing ethnic diversity within Catholic churches. Through an analysis of a church event primarily intended for the Brazilian community, however, Hoshino sheds light on how the increasing proportion of one ethnic community within a church may at times lead to conflicts rather than integration. As far as the relationships with local communities are concerned, Hoshino reports that Catholic churches reached out to people from Brazil in the wake of the 2008 recession, which can show, albeit as a somewhat isolated example, how intra-organizational multicultural coexistence can extend to the wider local community in certain circumstances.

Chapter 3 features Takahashi's study on the roles religious organizations played in response to the refugees from mainland Southeast Asia in the aftermath of the Vietnam War. Religious organizations including Catholic churches and Rissho Kosei-kai provided shelters to fill in the vacuum of the lack of government-run facilities for the refugees. Moreover, some Catholic churches and Catholic-related organizations provided support for the refugees in the process of their settlement, including social support and mental care. Takahashi notes that the initiatives intended for the refugees who were not church members can be said to have been informed by the practice of intra-organizational multicultural coexistence, echoing Hoshino's analysis in the previous chapter. While positively appraising these initiatives, Takahashi is very careful not to overemphasize the role of religions by drawing attention to some of the limitations that religious organizations face in organizing support programs for refugees.

Chapter 4, authored by Nogami Emi, focuses on a microcosm of one Catholic church known as Takatori Kyōkai by focusing on one priest's role in promoting multicultural coexistence both within the religious organization and in relation to the local community. The former concerns the relationship between members from Japan and Vietnam, who comprise nearly half of the entire membership. The latter relates to an NPO based in the church, which served as a hub of volunteers in the wake of the 1995 Great Hanshin earthquake and has become a center for multicultural coexistence in the local area. Nogami emphasizes that much of these developments are owed to the priest's vision and actions in understanding the relationship with the local communities as being inseparable from his religious mission.

Chapter 5 changes the focus from newcomers to old-time immigrants by focusing on the actions taken by a Korean Christian church in Osaka and its social welfare activities for the aging population in the local area. Ogi Shōichi, the author of

this chapter, describes in detail how the social welfare organization known as Rōjin Daigaku (Institute for the Elderly) has served as a support center for aging foreign residents living in the local area, especially older ethnic Koreans, by providing various opportunities for these people with support from the local municipality. Ogi also notes that in this particular case, newcomers support the older residents as many of these younger residents had become devout Christians in their country of origin, that is, South Korea.

In chapter 6, Yamamoto Takanori discusses the process of what he calls *chiikika* (localization) and *naibuka* (internalization) of religious actors in a local community by focusing on a Catholic-based, faith-inspired social welfare organization known as Kibō no Ie (House of Hope). Operating in a Kyoto district that is historically known for its population of socially marginalized people including outcast groups (*burakumin*) and ethnic Koreans, this organization has become part of the local community by taking the initiative to address issues facing the community at different junctures of the organization's development since around the 1960s. One of the elements that has helped Christians to become part of the community are sharing the management of the organization with the community while refraining from bringing the religious mission to the fore.

Chapter 7 also focuses on the same organization, Kibō no Ie, but sheds light on different aspects concerning multicultural coexistence by focusing on the initiatives taken by Filipino communities based in Catholic churches. In this chapter, Nagata Atsumasa discusses how the Filipino communities' involvement in the initiatives for multicultural exchange taking place at the multicultural exchange network salon based in Kibō no Ie has facilitated their interaction with people of other ethnic backgrounds as well as the wider local society. Nagata's research is indicative of how Filipino communities' connection with Catholic churches has served as a catalyst to translate the multicultural coexistence within the religious community into the local community.

Chapter 8, by Okai Hirofumi, makes a distinctive contribution in this volume by focusing on Muslims, whose presence is increasingly becoming visible in Japan in recent years. In discussing their interaction with the wider Japanese society, Okai indicates the limitations of the overarching category of Muslim, which can at times overshadow the diversity within Muslim communities vis-à-vis their ethnicity, social status, level of commitment to faith practices, and their own self-identification. He then points to the need to pay attention to sub-groups and loosely connected networks among this social group. Based on this understanding, Okai discusses various ways in which Muslims in Japan interact with the local communities, with some Muslims based in a mosque conducting more organized social outreach programs and others engaging in more informal activities on an individual basis. In terms of addressing issues surrounding structural inequalities and negative public perceptions of Muslims, Okai suggests the possibility of cooperating with other minority groups by, for instance, forming associations aiming to remedy these social issues.

As briefly noted earlier, chapter 9 does not discuss a specific religious or ethnic group but instead draws a broad picture of unique roles that religious organizations can potentially play in supporting the initiatives of multicultural coexistence. Tokuda Tsuyoshi points out how the Japanese government's austerity and ensuing deregulation of the management of public facilities in the last two decades caused financial difficulty in running facilities and programs intended to advance multicultural coexistence. Tokuda argues that in these circumstances, the religious sector has some advantages compared to the public sector, whose budget is shrinking due to austerity, or the civil sector, whose organizational autonomy is limited because of its reliance on subsidies. Despite some setbacks experienced by religious organizations due to the separation of church and state as well as the negative public perception of religions in general, Tokuda notes that some of the organizations in the religious sector can effectively commit to these initiatives by employing their own resources without worrying about government restrictions.

The arguments and examples presented in this volume paint a picture of multidimensional realities facing immigrants, religious organizations, and the roles religious organizations play in the field of multicultural coexistence in contemporary Japan. As has been mentioned earlier, this area of research was not the main focus in earlier works. Despite the fact that the majority of the chapters focus on Catholic-related initiatives, this book sheds light on a wide range of issues that can be in one way or another made applicable in analyzing other groups, such as how the practice of multicultural coexistence within a religious organization by one particular ethnic group can translate into interaction with the wider local society through the mediation of a faith tradition that migrants had already been familiar with. In addition to this focus on the intersections of immigrants, religious actors, and local communities, this volume provides a detailed account of the very notion of multicultural coexistence as it relates to religious organizations. This discussion can be particularly useful as it provides a point of reference for comparing the official policies and social discourses surrounding the place of migrants, social minorities, and religious organizations with their counterparts in other social, cultural, and legal contexts. One example would be how the public policies and social discourses surrounding multicultural coexistence in Japan could compare with those of multiculturalism as adopted in Britain in the 1970s in terms of its impact on ethnic minorities and religious organizations. Another example can be a comparison of the extent to which religious organizations can be directly involved in social welfare activities by using their own resources and facilities, which, for example, can be very restricted in a country like France, where religious organizations can only be involved in religious activities as stipulated in the organization's statutes. These comparative analyses will in turn help elaborate the discussion presented in the introduction of this edited volume. In fact, this area of research may be addressed in the ongoing project known as "Religion and Minority: Lived Religion, Migration and Marginalities in Secular Societies," which is being jointly conducted by researchers based in Japan

and the U.K., including two of the editors of this volume. The research group's focus on how the notions of "marginality" and "minority" are constructed in the wider society and how marginalized groups use religions to negotiate their place in society and within the religious traditions in different sociocultural contexts can certainly provide useful comparative analyses.

Seen in this light, the insights delineated in *Gendai Nihon no shūkyō to tabunka kyōsei* usefully lay the groundwork for potential cross-cultural comparative studies, which adds value to this already important contribution. Researchers of religions in contemporary Japan and of migration and religions in general alike can certainly benefit from this excellent collection.

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