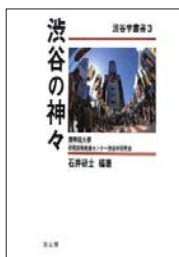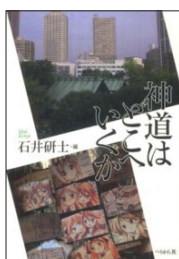# REVIEW

Ishii Kenji 石井研士, ed., *Shibuya no kamigami* 渋谷の神々
[The deities of Shibuya]

Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 2013. 342 pages. Cloth, ¥3570. ISBN 978-4-639-02261-9.

Ishii Kenji, ed., *Shintō wa doko e iku ka* 神道はどこへいくか
[Where is Shinto going?]

Tokyo: Perikansha, 2010. 278 pages. Cloth, ¥2520. ISBN 978-4-831-51276-5.

THE TWO BOOKS under review here, *Shibuya no kamigami* and *Shintō wa doko e iku ka* have been edited by Ishii Kenji, a professor at Kokugakuin University, and their main focus is religion, particularly Shinto, in urban spaces. Both books draw on survey data and interviews, and most of the articles are based on fieldwork, although a historical perspective is also offered. Due to space limitations, I will only be able to provide an overview of the topics analyzed in these publications. I will start with the most recent one, *Shibuya no kamigami*. This book is the third volume of a project by Shibuyagaku Kenkyūkai at Kokugakuin University and is divided into eight chapters, two of which have been written by the editor himself. The book analyzes Tokyo's famous and busy city area of Shibuya from a religious studies perspective, in particular taking into account its historical development (3). Shibuya is a mecca for fashion, popular culture, and entertainment (see, for example, the use of the expression "sacred place," *seichi*, 193), and although religion is not the first thing that comes to one's mind when thinking of this area, the religious dimension is present throughout the area by way of Shinto shrines, Buddhist temples, and the facilities of new religious movements. Shibuya is one of the symbols of contemporary Japan—the department store Shibuya 109 and the overcrowded scramble crossing outside

the Hachiko exit of Shibuya station being emblematic in this sense—and this study explores what kind of "religiosity," if any, the area holds. The chapters are varied in length and depth, with the first one entitled "Jinja kara mita Shibuya" (Shibuya seen from Shinto shrines), by Fujita Hiromasa, occupying one third of the whole volume. Taking into account the topography of the area, Fujita's chapter offers a historical excursus—from the Edo period onwards—on the development and transformation of Shinto shrines such as Kinnō Hachimangū, Hikawa Shrine, Toyosaka Inari Shrine, and Meiji Jingū; and analyzes how structural urban and economic changes linked to modernization, including the expansion of the transportation network, have had an impact on Shibuya's transformation into a popular entertainment spot (*sakariba*; see, for example, 71) and subsequently on the Shinto shrines in the area.

The second chapter, entitled "Shibuya no jūtakuchi to jinja sairei" (Shibuya's residential area and Shinto festivals) is by Kurosaki Hiroyuki and focuses on Shinto festivals and the local neighborhood associations, which in Shibuya are called *chōkai* instead of the usual *chōnaikai*. Currently, 150 *chōkai* belong to the Federation of Shibuya Chōkai (Shibuya-ku Chōkai Rengōkai, established in 1962; 124). After providing data regarding the *chōkai* and their history, such as those *chōkai* that are also *ujiko*, or shrine members (67.1 percent), the author analyzes two neighborhood associations/*ujiko* linked to Kinnō Hachimangū and Hikawa Shrine and their activities in relation to their festivals (see 132–40). The results are based on the author's fieldwork (2009–2011) and his analysis is carried out by bearing in mind the question of whether, due to changes within the *chōkai* themselves (for example, the increasing number of people living alone and demographic shifts), festivals will maintain the same characteristics they display today and whether the dynamics linked to the collaboration between *chōkai* and *ujiko* will witness changes in the future.

The third chapter, by Akino Jun'ichi, focuses on festivals and is titled "Matsuri kara miete kuru 'Shibuya': Shibuya 109 mae ni tsudou mikoshi—Kinnō Hachimangū no matsuri" (Shibuya from the perspective of festivals: The *mikoshi* [portable shrines] parade in front of Shibuya 109—The Kinnō Hachimangū festival). The area in front of the fashionable department store Shibuya 109 is where the *mikoshi* parade of the Kinnō Hachimangū matsuri takes place. Akino is keen to point out that this is not one of the so-called events (*ibento*) that are popular in Shibuya, but it is a proper Shinto festival. He aims to analyze this bustling area in relation to the Kinnō Hachimangū matsuri in order to offer an image of Shibuya that is different from the "popular" one symbolized by *gyaru* (Shibuya girls), youngster fashion, and consumerism. On another level, his interest is in the people involved in carrying the *mikoshi* (146). As is common in other festivals in big cities, such as the Sannō Festival in the area around Tokyo station, many of the participants are volunteers from the business and commercial enterprises operating there. This is also due to the decreasing number of families living in business districts. This happens also in the case of the festival analyzed in this chapter. Moreover, another aspect that emerges here is the disjunction between people who head off to Shibuya for shopping, such as young women who visit Shibuya 109,

and the locals. Although the former can, to some extent, be involved in the festival mainly as passersby and spectators, they have no real communication or interaction with the local people living in the area (see, for example, 93). This chapter ends Part 1 specifically dedicated to Shinto and its festivals.

The second part of the book is dedicated to Buddhism, Christianity, and new religious movements. It includes chapter 4 by Endō Jun, "Shibuya no jiin: Kinsei o chūshin to shite" (Temples in Shibuya in the modern period); and two authored by Ishii Kenji, chapter 5 "Shibuya no kirisutokyō" (Christianity in Shibuya), and chapter 6, "Shinshūkyō to Shibuya" (New religious movements and Shibuya). These three chapters offer a survey on different temples and churches in the area from historical (chapter 4) and sociological (chapters 5 and 6) perspectives and with a focus on the modern and contemporary periods. As a common pattern in this book, changes in the urban structure of Shibuya and historical and economic developments are taken into account to provide a multifaceted view of one of the busiest parts of Tokyo. For example, the transformation of the space occupied by the Yamate Kyōkai to accommodate a larger number of followers and due to the restructuring of the building itself over the years (231) is a good example of how sacred spaces within highly urbanized environments need to be adapted and sometimes reinvented to face changes in the neighborhood. In addition to Buddhism and Christianity, new religious movements such as Tenrikyō, Konkōkyō, Reiyūkai, PL Kyōdan, and Risshō Kōseikai are discussed in chapter 6. Moreover, the article touches upon new spirituality and healing activities that are often found on the streets of Shibuya. This chapter leaves space for the third and last part of the volume dedicated to the fascinating topic of sacred spaces in the urban environment.

Chapter 7 by Akino Jun'ichi is entitled "'Shibuya' no chiisana kamigami" (Shibuya's small deities), and reveals the presence of various small shrines (shōshi), temples, and deities, such as dōsojin (deities of roads) near department stores (Loft dōsojin, 275) and the bodhisattva Jizō embedded in the urban fabric of Shibuya. One can find them amidst skyscrapers, on the roofs of high buildings (274, 281, 288), and in small streets. Similar to other chapters, a good number of pictures have been provided to support this article. Akino also takes into account the religious aspect related to famous monuments such as the Hachiko dog monument just outside Shibuya station and its annual memorial service (ireisai, 270–274). Takahisa Mai's "Shibuya no 'shukusai': Sukuranburu kōsaten ni tsudō hitobito" (Celebrations at Shibuya: People at the scramble crossing), is the last chapter in this volume and explores annual events such as New Year's celebrations (countdown) and sports events such as the soccer World Cup watched by people on the big screens placed at the famous intersection. While this chapter may be interesting per se, the religious aspect of these events remain somehow unclear and the chapter seems to diverge from the structure of the book.

The other volume under review here is *Shintō wa doko e iku ka*. As stated in the prologue by the editor Ishii Kenji, this book aims to explore changes and contem-

porary developments in the relationship between *ujigami* (tutelary kami) and local communities in Japan that has progressively weakened due to a series of socioeconomic and demographic changes. Furthermore, the authors address two other main topics: *kamidana* rituals and annual events at Shinto shrines (11–12). In this regard, Ishii identifies a few aspects deriving from the emphasis on consumerism in contemporary society: for example, the retail of religious items such as *o-mamori* (amulets) at shrines in the same guise as the selling of other commodities (28), and the recent interest in Shinto shrines due to their presence in famous anime series or in the media, and their link to new spiritual attractions such as "power spots." All this, the editor highlights, has increased the visibility of shrines but at the same time weakened the belief in *ujigami* (*ujigami shinkō*) and its link with the local community (29).

The book is divided into three main parts: "Girei to ninau mono no yukue" (On rituals and their bearers), "Chiiki shakai to jinja no atarashii kakawari" (New developments in the relationship between local communities and shrines), and "Jōhōka shakai no naka de" (In an information society), which focuses on Shinto within the information society. Each part contains four chapters. Part one offers a variety of topics. The first shrine visit of a newborn baby is analyzed in chapter 1 on *hatsumiya mairi*, while the visit to shrines in "unlucky" years is explored in "Yakudoshi no ima to korekara" (Unlucky years: Present and future), both written by Taguchi Yūko. Drawing on survey data and interviews, the latter reveals the popularity of this practice among urban dwellers. New developments in Shinto funerals and funerary sites are explored in "Shin shinsōsai bochi no tanjō" (Establishing new cemeteries for Shinto funerals) authored by Shibata Ryōichi, who provides a fresh outlook on a topic usually linked to Buddhism and shows how Shinto deals with the issue of impurity (*kegare*) related in this case to death. Gender issues in Shinto are the subject of the chapter on *joshi shinshoku* (women priests) by Ochi Miwa. This chapter aims to expand the image of women working at shrines as exclusively linked to *miko* and analyzes the role of women priests. From the author's reflections, it emerges that the number of women priests have increased in local shrines but not at grand shrines (*taisha*) and that they still remain somehow confined to their "traditional" roles within a family, that is, as priests' wives and daughters and as a support for their husbands/fathers. In addition, the author points out that working in a shrine is usually not a woman's deliberate professional choice; rather, it is a consequence of her belonging to a shrine family (*shake*; 102, 110, 111).

The second part of the book is dedicated to the development of Shinto shrines at the community level, and begins with the article by Kobayashi Norihiko entitled "Gyōsei, chiiki shakai, jinja" (Public administration, local communities and shrines). It describes the efforts to restore better connections and collaboration between shrines, local administrations, and the community, such as in the case of the Hana matsuri ("flower festival"—not to be confused with the Buddhist *Hana* matsuri that occurs on 8 April every year) in Tokyo Bunkyōku. This collaboration, however, proves to be difficult because of the separation of religion and state (*seikyō*

bunri, as sanctioned by the postwar Japanese Constitution), but the author seems inclined to point out that shrines still play a relevant role in society at the community level. Similarly, the subsequent chapter written by Suzuki Yoshihiko entitled "Toshi no ujigami sama no sengo" (Urban *ujigami* in the postwar period) examines the influence of postwar urbanization and societal changes on Hikawa Jinja and its *ujiko* area in Tokyo. Another issue related to urbanization that is worthy of interest here is the depopulation of rural areas. This is analyzed in Fuyutsuki Ritsu's chapter "Kasoka to jinja" (Depopulation and shrines) in relation to the difficulties faced by Shinto shrines on the island of Shōdoshima, which is taken here as a case study. The author shows the endeavor of the island's (few) inhabitants to revive the tradition of festivals, in particular Azukishima *saishi* (ritual) and Natsu matsuri—interestingly, the latter is held at the cultural hall rather than at the local shrine. The last chapter in this second part of *Shintō wa doko e iku ka*, "Bariafurīka to Jinja: Seinaru kūkan no henyō" (Accessibility and shrines: The transformation of sacred spaces) by Matsumura Shimaho draws attention to the necessity of building barrier-free access in sacred spaces and their impact on visits to shrines.

The third and last part of the book is dedicated to the role Shinto plays in media and this is examined from various perspectives. A survey on popular books on Shinto, mostly published in the years 2003–2008, along with the presentation of data in connection to customer reviews (for example, on the Amazon website), constitute the topic of "'Shintō' no ninki bon" (Popular books on Shinto) by Sakamoto Naoko. The use of media for proselytization purposes, such as in the case of radio programs broadcast by the Jinja Honchō and the Fukushima division of Shinto shrines (Fukushima Ken Jinjachō) is analyzed in Inoue Takashi's chapter "Rajio hōsō to Shintō" (Radio broadcasting and Shinto). Suga Naoko examines so-called "power spots" related to Shinto in her chapter "Pawā supotto to shite no Jinja" (Shrines as power spots). The term "power spot" has notably gained popularity in the Japanese mass media since 2005 (233, 235), and the author analyzes it in connection with women's magazines such as *FRau* and *An-an* (234). The use of the Internet by Shinto shrines is explored in the last chapter entitled "Jinja to Intānetto no musubitsuki no shinsō" (The close link between shrines and the Internet) by Kurosaki Hiroyuki. The association of Japanese religions with the Internet is a well-established topic of study, both within and outside of Japan, and several articles and books have been written by Japanese and non-Japanese scholars. Here, the author provides further reflections on this field and takes into account the problems that may arise which have also been highlighted by other scholars. One of these problems is the "virtual visit to a shrine" (*bācharu sanpai*), which, on several occasions, has brought the Jinja Honchō (Association of Shinto Shrines) and other Shinto-related institutions to publicly express their concerns and warnings against the improper use of the Internet (261–62).

Another interesting aspect mentioned in this final part of the book refers to the recent phenomenon of *seichi junrei*. This term refers to pilgrimages to the locations

of famous movies, anime, and manga, which include also sacred spaces, such as shrines and temples that have become settings of popular productions—a famous example being Washinomiya Jinja and the anime *Lucky Star* (see also 274). While this is briefly mentioned here, a full chapter on this topic would have been a welcome addition to the book.

These two books are informative and provide considerable data on the different aspects of religion—mainly Shinto—in contemporary urban Japan. The inclusion of pictures, maps, and charts, adds value to both these volumes. *Shibuya no kamigami* and *Shintō wa doko e iku ka* will prove to be useful resources to scholars interested in the contemporary development of religion in Japan.

Elisabetta Porcu
International Research Center for Japanese Studies, Kyoto
University of Leipzig, Germany