

REVIEW ARTICLE

Local Histories, Anthropological Interpretations,
and the Study of a Japanese Pilgrimage

Ian READER

Nathalie KOUAMÉ, *Pèlerinage et société dans le Japon des Tokugawa. Le pèlerinage de Shikoku entre 1598 et 1868*. Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 2001. Monographie 188, 317 pp. €38.00 paper, ISBN 2-85539-615-8.

HOSHINO Eiki 星野英紀, *Shikoku henro no shūkyōgakuteki kenkyū: Sono kōzō to kingendai no tenkai* 四国遍路の宗教学的的研究—その構造と近現代の展開. Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 2001. 417 pp. ¥9,500 cloth, ISBN 4-8318-5630-4.

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IN 1997 THIS JOURNAL produced a special issue on Pilgrimage in Japan which particularly drew attention to the work being done by younger Western scholars in this field and to the importance of Japanese scholarship in the study of pilgrimage. Two of those who contributed articles to that volume, Nathalie Kouamé from France, whose work is a representative example of the newly emerging scholarship in the field, and Hoshino Eiki, perhaps Japan's leading scholar in the comparative study of pilgrimage and an expert on pilgrimage in Japan, have recently published books on the same pilgrimage—the Shikoku *henro* 遍路 or pilgrimage, which has certainly become the most scrutinized and studied pilgrimage in Japan in present times. Their books, in different ways, illustrate the complexities of the *henro* in its multidimensional manifestations. Both, too, from rather different perspectives, will be essential reading for anyone researching on pilgrimage in Japan. While they also have much to contribute to the wider study of pilgrimage in general, as will be noted, it is only in the work of Hoshino that such comparative perspectives are given any airing.

The contents of neither volume are unfamiliar to me: Kouamé's is a revision of her 1998 doctoral thesis, while Hoshino's book draws on several of the influential articles that he has published over the past 20 years or so on Shikoku. Both draw on extensive historical resources as well as on the wealth of earlier work on the pilgrimage provided by Japanese scholars such as SHINJŌ Tsunezō 新城常三 (1982), MAEDA Takashi 前田卓 (1971), and KONDŌ Yoshihiro 近藤喜博 (1982), as well as of local historians in Shikoku. Kouamé is specifically focused on the Edo period and on pilgrimage in its local contexts, and makes use of a variety of local records, decrees, and resources through which to build a picture of pilgrim activity and of pilgrim-local relationships in this era. Hoshino, too, gives weight to the historical development of the pilgrimage, but is focused also on the modern era, where he examines the motives, experiences, and activities of pilgrims through a mixture of sociological studies, analyses of pilgrims' diaries, and interviews with contemporary practitioners. Also, while Kouamé is primarily (indeed, almost exclusively) concerned with a localized picture, Hoshino seeks to portray the *henro* as an example of a wider cultural and religious phenomenon about which it may be possible to develop some broader theories relevant not just to pilgrimage in Japan but more generally.

As a historian whose interests are centred in local societies, Kouamé defines her focus as being strictly limited to a specific place, Shikoku, and time period, from 1598 to 1868 (p. 19). While the latter date is, of course, obvious to scholars of Japan, the first is important in the context of her study, as it is the date when

the Awa fief in Shikoku ordered the construction of eight *ekiroji* (駅路寺 temple lodges for pilgrims)—the first historically verifiable evidence of formal support structures for pilgrims (pp. 206–8) and hence the logical starting point for a volume that focuses especially on the interactions between local people, regional authorities and pilgrims, and on the provision of support for pilgrims.

Kouamé examines how Shikoku's feudal society, as represented by the island's four feudal domains and the laws they developed, functioned in relation to the pilgrimage and its participants during the Edo period, and how one of the most distinguishing features of the pilgrimage, that of *settai* 接待, giving alms to pilgrims (and related to this, the soliciting of alms by pilgrims) operated within the structure of the pilgrimage and in the context of Shikoku society. In so doing Kouamé has consulted a host of documents and records, from legal pronouncements by feudal authorities, to a collection of *fuda* 札 (pilgrims' name/calling cards—often made of wood in Edo Japan) belonging to the Ochi household based in Agata village in Iyo (now Ehime prefecture). This household had, during the Edo period, provided *settai* to passing pilgrims by giving them alms and accommodation, and as a result had acquired a collection of 1308 such *fuda*, dated between 1799 and 1862, with 519 of the *fuda* bearing a year date. Through meticulous research into these *fuda*, Kouamé has managed to elucidate the flow of pilgrims during this period, one that indicates clearly that the first two decades of the nineteenth century (and especially the period between 1807–1810) were a peak period for the pilgrimage (p. 52). Her work indicates, too, the effects of economic change on pilgrimage flow (e.g., her research sources indicate a decline in the numbers of pilgrims staying at the Ochi household from around 1830–1844, a period in which famine and economic problems were rife). As such, her work provides us with valuable information about how changing economic conditions impacted on the practice of pilgrimage. Elsewhere her studies of local materials such as collections of pilgrims' "passports" (*ōraitegata* 往来手形) also help her discern the relatively high proportion of women (somewhere above 30 percent) in the pilgrimage population in Shikoku in Edo (pp. 70–72).

She then turns to a detailed account of how local and regional authorities dealt with the flow of pilgrims, through the legislation they passed, the duties they imposed on pilgrims, and the obligations they saw themselves as having in relation to the transients within their borders, and which they also expected local villagers to uphold. This makes for a fascinating study, partly because it informs us of how much attention the feudal authorities and local regimes in the island paid to pilgrims, with numerous decrees and injunctions establishing the various obligatory modes of behaviour for pilgrims (e.g., the need to carry appropriate travel documents and to keep to recognized pilgrimage routes and so on, pp. 98–115). Yet, as Kouamé shows, this does not necessarily mean that the authorities were draconian and punitively disposed to pilgrims (as many

Japanese accounts have suggested) for they also provided help to unfortunate pilgrims and recognized that the authorities and locals had obligations in return.

In this respect her work is especially useful in showing how the process of sending such indisposed pilgrims on their way, through a network of villages and intervillage co-operation, and also of dealing with the corpses of dead pilgrims, was handled (pp. 119–24). As she shows throughout the book, the pilgrimage played an important role in the development and establishment of a sense of regional identity in Shikoku, and the networks formed through these practices of sending pilgrims homewards were intrinsic to this process of transcending the boundaries of village society.

In her account Kouamé thus provides us with a wealth of information to indicate the often dual attitudes of regional authorities (particularly Tosa, often depicted in popular pilgrimage literature as being especially harsh on pilgrims) who passed strict laws regulating pilgrim movements but also showed a degree of concern and care for pilgrims when they became sick. The duality was based in part on the fact that pilgrims could be disruptive, carriers of disease, and drains on the local economy because of their poverty and habit of begging for alms. Yet the authorities also felt a responsibility for the travellers in their domains, and did much to alleviate the problems pilgrims might face: the establishment of the *ekiroji* in Awa was but the first of a number of actions and decrees throughout the four feudal domains of the island to this end.

That local and regional laws seemed both to restrict pilgrims and to help them, is a reflection of the often dualistic nature of the pilgrims themselves, who, at least in earlier times, had a highly ambivalent status in Shikoku. They were sanctified because of their association with Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師 who, in pilgrim lore, travels with each pilgrim. Numerous legends, stories, and miracle tales that originated among the pilgrim community and that were widely believed in Shikoku, described the rewards local people had received when they gave alms to pilgrims—and the retribution that followed when they did not. Thus, pilgrims needed to be cared for and given alms and other such support, because of their specially sacred nature and because, as various miracle tales spread about by the pilgrims suggested, those who helped them gained benefits and those who did not suffered. Yet they were also outsiders who were potential dangers to social order and stability, not least because they were transients with no ties to the places they passed through, and who might carry diseases (many pilgrims travelled in search of miraculous cures and blessings), steal to maintain themselves, or even try to stay forever on the route, begging for alms and living off the local populace, rather than return home again.

Certainly it was the case that while faith in Kōbō Daishi, the search for spiritual and material benefits (especially for such needs as healing), and the wish to memorialize one's dead kin were among the primary motivations for pilgrims

(pp. 35–39)—themes, I would note, that remain important to contemporary pilgrims—there were also those who donned the pilgrim robes in Shikoku with other motives in mind, seeing in the pilgrimage and the custom of almsgiving the chance to live off the donations they solicited. A text issued by the Tosa feudal authorities in 1810 indicates this problem: some pilgrims, it complains, did not respect local customs, feigned illness so as to solicit care and accommodation, hawked false medicines and cures, and even resorted to theft (p. 40). Such pilgrims were seen by the authorities (who bemoaned the naïve attitudes of the locals who nonetheless doled out alms to, and hence encouraged, such pilgrims) as evidence of the need to police and regulate the *henro*, and to try to weed out fraudulent pilgrims and punish those who broke the laws.

The problem of beggar-pilgrims was especially problematic for the southernmost feudal domain of Edo-era Shikoku, Tosa (now Kōchi prefecture), which is the warmest and most clement region of the island. Many pilgrims tried to spin out their time there, often seeking to winter there and avoid the harsher climes of northern Shikoku (similar patterns can be found among the permanent mendicants on the *henro* road today). The authorities in Tosa thus felt they needed to take measures to stop this happening and to move them along. As a result Tosa developed the strictest and most complex array of laws relating to pilgrims in Shikoku about where they could go and how long they had to cross the province—laws that sometimes caused pilgrims to complain about their complexity and restrictive nature. However, although Kouamé shows that the authorities could be very severe with miscreant pilgrims, and that relations between pilgrims and officials could at times be problematic, overall there was a degree of tolerance, equilibrium, and even mutual respect between them (pp. 124–39).

This is evident, too, in the practice of *settai* which, as Kouamé’s detailed research shows, was not simply (as is widely portrayed in much pilgrimage literature) spontaneous and based either in the piety or fear of the locals when faced with mendicant pilgrims. Rather, the practice and its organisation were also socially embedded in local Shikoku society and its villages. By a meticulous analysis of local records Kouamé shows that “donations” for alms were often assessed and based on wealth and land, and that the practice was often formalized and embedded in the social structure of villages and communities, and part, therefore, of the local identity of the island and its communities (pp. 161–75).

In such contexts Kouamé’s work provides us with a new voice to set alongside and at times challenge the assumptions about the pilgrimage in the Edo period made by Japanese scholars. The historical and social study of pilgrimage in Shikoku in the Edo period has long been dominated by SHINJŌ Tsunezō, whose comprehensive opus (first published in 1964 and then in an expanded version in 1982) has effectively become the source text for Japanese historical studies of pilgrimage, particularly in the context of their economic dimensions, and by MAEDA Takashi (1971), whose sociological analysis of Saikoku and

Shikoku pilgrims, based on evidence such as name plaques left behind at temples, has provided our main source of knowledge about who the pilgrims in Shikoku were and where they came from in the Tokugawa period. While recognising the importance of these different studies Kouamé also demonstrates that neither is free of historical inaccuracy and occasional misleading pronouncements. In this she also provides us with a reminder that “classic” sources themselves should never be taken for granted but need constantly to be subjected to scrutiny in the light of new evidence. Kouamé’s findings in local records certainly bring to light some problems with these hitherto classic texts. Thus, for example, both SHINJŌ (who at one point in his volume, p. 1066, asserts with scant evidence that 10 percent of all pilgrims were beggars) and MAEDA (who assumes, p. 251, that the relatively high numbers of female pilgrims must somehow indicate an impoverished pilgrimage community) have produced a picture which suggests that Edo-era pilgrims in Shikoku were impoverished, and that, hence, the pilgrimage was a socially disruptive drain on the local economy.

Kouamé’s work challenges this view. She accepts that some pilgrims were poor and in need of help, while her whole account of the structured patterns of almsgiving and of support structures for sick and deceased pilgrims indicates that many pilgrims were reliant on the kindness and help of local communities and authorities. Yet this is far from saying that all pilgrims were poor or a drain on the economy (or, indeed, that the presence of numerous women on the pilgrimage was similarly evidence of this point). Much of the evidence Kouamé marshals suggests a different picture. We learn that many pilgrims stayed overnight in lodges for which they paid and that as they travelled, they purchased all manner of foodstuffs, from lunchboxes and noodles, to tea and sweetmeats, as well as all manner of items related to their travels and their temple visits (e.g., sandals, medicines, incense). They also spent money in fees for ferries across rivers while incurring various other costs connected with their journeys (pp. 212–14). The temples profited, too, from their presence, as pilgrims made donations and offerings (pp. 214–16), while many pilgrims also engaged in tourist behaviour as well. Konpira 金毘羅 shrine, which was neither one of the pilgrimage sites nor on the route (although only a few kilometres away from one of the temple), was a popular place to visit, while many stopped over at Dōgo hot spring resort, through which the pilgrimage route passes, and sometimes even stayed several days there, relaxing and spending money (pp. 216–22). Thus Kouamé presents a rather different, less marginalized, picture of the pilgrims than is found in Shinjō and Maeda’s work, and she shows that in many respects the pilgrims contributed economically to the island. At the very least, enough pilgrims brought resources with them and spent them in Shikoku, to guarantee an income stream for the local economy that, while not necessarily steady or large, was nevertheless a welcome addition to it (pp. 224–28).

Overall, her study argues that the pilgrimage was a very important element

in the identity structure of the island. In so doing, she provides us with a rich and detailed account of the development of the pilgrimage in the context of its local setting, and of how that pilgrimage was embedded in, and part of, the local culture in social and economic terms. Such an approach is especially valuable when considered in the wider context of the study of pilgrimage, which has (perhaps not unnaturally) tended to focus largely on pilgrims, their experiences and their relationship with and behaviour at the sacred places they visit. By contrast local peoples barely get considered at all, and when they do, it is primarily as a somewhat static, background scenery for the “essence” of pilgrimage, that is, the pilgrims themselves. As one reads Kouamé, however, one gets a different picture, for her work leaves us in no doubt as to the importance of local peoples and authorities, and of local attitudes towards pilgrims, in the construction and shaping of pilgrimage routes and cultures. Kouamé, through her microscopic study of pilgrimage as a local phenomenon and as a practice in which local people and local economic, social and legal structures interact with (and support or control) pilgrims, thus throws much light on this less widely studied aspect of pilgrimage and provides ample evidence to show how influential local populations may be in the construction and development of pilgrimages and pilgrimage customs.

We are well aware that local histories and studies have thrown up a wealth of information and have helped shed new light on many areas of Japanese religious activity, and Kouamé’s is a fine addition to this literature. Hers is also an example of a growing move among Western scholars towards focusing on the local as a means of assessing (and perhaps challenging) prevailing orthodoxies and generalisations about the patterns of religion in Edo (and other eras) Japan: the work being done by Helen Hardacre, Duncan Williams, Barbara Ambros and others on Tokugawa local religion (see, for example, AMBROS and WILLIAMS 2001) also comes to mind here in the production of new understandings of religion at microlevels in the Tokugawa period.

Yet, while lauding Kouamé’s microscopic approach and noting how much it adds to our knowledge of the field, I also see it, perhaps ironically, as the main shortcoming of the book. Kouamé’s work is very much more centered on local relationships, and of the legal and social interactions between regional authorities, local inhabitants, and transients, than it is about pilgrimage *per se*. Thus, while Kouamé examines in detail the localized provision of alms for pilgrims, she never really opens the discussion out into something that extends beyond Shikoku or, indeed, beyond an intense examination of a localized issue relating to Shikoku society in Edo period Japan. Kouamé’s source of reference barely extends beyond the localized framework of Edo period Shikoku pilgrimage, while pilgrimage is effectively treated only within the context of local histories. While I have no problems with the lack of mention of any of the “usual suspects” in the wider study of pilgrimage such as Victor TURNER (1974, and TURNER and

TURNER 1978), John EADE and Michael SALLNOW (2000) and so on, I still felt that the rich materials she has uncovered in Shikoku in any wider context, could have been used to say more about, for example, the more general issue of relationships between locals and pilgrims (or to comment on the absence of such studies and therefore to stake out some grounds for the comparative value of her work). In essence, Kouamé's work has remained a highly Japanological study, intensely focused on a local society in a particular era, and drawn on local sources, and in this sense it is illustrative of both the strengths and weaknesses of Japanology as a branch of academic endeavour both rich in detail and depth knowledge of Japanese sources and contexts, and somewhat lacking in any other perspective or in the possibility of any wider contextualisation. Despite this reservation, along with a few minor queries (I was, for instance, slightly surprised to hear of the suicide of Oda Nobunaga, p. 76), the book is to be recommended both as a valuable account of life in Shikoku in the Edo period and as a striking insight into the customs and local practices centered around one of Japan's most prominent pilgrimages.

Hoshino Eiki: Pilgrims, Modernization, Individualism, and Anti-structure

Hoshino Eiki, who has devoted many years to studying pilgrimage from a variety of angles, ranging from anthropological research centered on fieldwork studies of modern pilgrims, to detailed historical and sociological studies, has woven together many of his articles of the past few years into a book that provides perhaps the most comprehensive study thus far available of the *henro* in historical and contemporary settings. While he approaches the pilgrimage primarily from an anthropological perspective, his study goes beyond the limitations of the anthropological approach, which tends towards simplifications of the past, and to an over-heavy emphasis on the synchronic dimensions of pilgrimage. As Hoshino is deeply aware, the *henro*'s complex history has had a massive imprint on its nature in the present day, and hence he is aware that one needs to look in detail also at its past, and at the imprints and shadows that the past has on the present, if one is to make proper sense of the pilgrimage as it is today.

Thus his work embraces also historical studies, making use both of the extensive Japanese historical work that has been done on the *henro*, and of local records, drawn from temples and especially from pilgrims' lodges. In an early chapter in the book, too, he provides a valuable and extensive overview of academic studies of pilgrimage in English that will certainly be of value to a Japanese audience (pp. 17–80), while also drawing on the extensive Japanese literature of pilgrimage. He pays attention both to the social processes and group dynamics of pilgrimage and to its individualising dimensions. Hoshino initially studied with Victor Turner, one of the seminal analysts of pilgrimage, and especially draws on TURNER's ideas, notably on group dynamics, *communitas* and limi-

nalinity (1974, and TURNER and TURNER 1978) in discussing the Shikoku *henro* not simply in an enclosed Japanese sphere, but in the context of the wider realm of comparative and theoretical studies of pilgrimage. For instance, he considers that pilgrims in Shikoku, through the special pilgrim's clothing they wear, are able to enter a special realm distinct from the mundane, and in this he sees parallels with Turner's notions of *communitas* (p. 343).

Hoshino pays attention to a variety of factors that have helped frame and shape the pilgrimage, ranging from physical landscape to local religious traditions. The importance of the physical landscape as a framing device in the structure and nature of pilgrimage, which was rather neglected in earlier anthropological studies of pilgrimage, has become increasingly prevalent in recent analyses of the topic (see COLEMAN and ELSNER 1995) and Hoshino takes up this issue, noting the ways in which mountains and rivers have provided the geographical context for pilgrimage in Asia in general, and in Shikoku in particular, and specifically discussing the prevalence of a number of *reizan* 霊山—mountains where the souls of the dead are believed to congregate (pp. 110–11). In this context, too, he discusses the symbolic images of death that are central to the pilgrimage, along with the actual and commonplace incidence of death among pilgrims in premodern times when (as has been shown also by Kouamé) many pilgrims went to Shikoku sick and in search of a miracle cure—tales of which abound in the *henro*—or a meritorious death (pp. 111–12).

Hoshino also discusses—albeit not to the same extent as Kouamé—themes central to the structure of the *henro* in earlier times, such as the practice of *settai*, the numbers of sick pilgrims (especially sufferers from leprosy, an illness that made them outcasts and forced many to turn to pilgrimage and begging for alms as a means of subsistence, pp. 118–21), and the ambivalent nature of Tokugawa pilgrims and the dualistic attitudes of regional authorities towards them (pp. 96–98). On *settai* he suggests, also, that one of the reasons that locals sometimes gave alms to pilgrims was as a form of quiet protest against their feudal lords who had tried to ban the practice (p. 107). He also deals with a variety of strands and themes less prevalent in Kouamé's work, notably the figure of Kōbō Daishi and the importance of the cult of Daishi, especially in his guise as a wandering miracle worker, in the formation and development of the pilgrimage (pp. 126–51).

His historical focus extends beyond that of Kouamé, for he continues the story beyond the Meiji Restoration, showing how modernization processes impacted on the pilgrimage, with the development of both bus and taxi services, and even car rental services, in the 1920s, to enable pilgrims with funds to spare to move more quickly from temple to temple (p. 190)—developments that led to a “Taishō boom” in pilgrimage on the island, and also gave rise to a tide of criticism from those who considered that those who used cars, buses, and the like were not “real” pilgrims (pp. 190–204). Such criticisms have not, of

course, abated, and remain an element in the discourse of modern pilgrimage as well.

Hoshino's work on the pilgrimage in the first half of the twentieth century is especially valuable, for very little has thus far been written on the *henro* between the Meiji and the late twentieth century, and hence his work is valuable in covering this gap. Hoshino is adept not just at tracing the impact of modernization and of mass transportation in the pilgrimage, but also in providing detailed evidence of the make-up of the pilgrimage community during the 1930s. He does this based on his own historical studies of the records of pilgrims' lodges in Ehime prefecture, which provide us with a comprehensive sociological account of pilgrim activity in this period. Thus we learn that pilgrims from within Shikoku made up a sizeable amount of the pilgrimage population, that farming was the main occupation of pilgrims, and that the main age groups of pilgrims were those in their 20s and those in their 60s: the latter group accounted for close to 20 percent of the pilgrims in the 1930s—a figure that indicates that the pilgrimage was seen by many as a means of acquiring spiritual merit so as to gain other-worldly benefits (pp. 258–92).

In the postwar period he traces the seemingly inexorable rise of organized bus pilgrimages and the ways in which postwar economic growth, coupled with the growing sense of nostalgia for tradition that has been produced by urbanisation and the pace of modern life, and a desire for temporary escape from such pressures, have stimulated massive growth in pilgrim numbers. Shikoku, in the postwar period, has come to be seen as the most “traditional” of all Japanese pilgrimages—largely, as Hoshino is aware, because of the endurance of various customs, such as *settai*, and external symbols, such as the traditional pilgrim's clothing, that have fallen largely into abeyance elsewhere. This “boom”—which has seen new peaks in the late twentieth century—has been fuelled by the rise of mass transportation, and has occurred virtually in parallel with the rise of the Shikoku Reijōkai 四国霊場会 (the Association of Shikoku Pilgrimage Temples), which only developed in the postwar period after the increased levels of communication brought about by modernity made it possible for the temples to work together in a coordinated fashion.

This development, as becomes clear, has led to attempts to provide the pilgrimage with a normative framework of symbols, images and beliefs that emanate from the orthodoxy of Shingon Buddhism—the sectarian tradition to which the large majority of the pilgrimage temples belong. Thus, Hoshino shows that the Reijōkai has promoted certain “uniform” agendas that have attempted to impart a clearly Shingon Buddhist tenor to the pilgrimage in the postwar era: for example, the notion of the pilgrimage as a symbolic four-fold path leading to enlightenment—a notion embedded in Shingon doctrine—which is widely considered to be a basic element in the pilgrimage's symbolic

structure, is a modern development closely associated with the advancement of a Shingon-oriented agenda (pp. 329–31).

Yet, he also argues that such attempts have not really had that much impact on pilgrims, who have consistently over the centuries found in the pilgrimage immense scope for the advancement of their personal agendas. This, indeed, is a recurrent theme in his book, which consistently emphasizes how the pilgrimage is an arena for individual interpretation and practice—and hence is not something to be primarily explained or interpreted through social or group-community related theories. To take one example, although there is a normative style of pilgrimage in Shikoku, in terms of the clothing pilgrims normally wear, this does not mean that there is a standard mode of practice, nor that there can be any single explanation or set of explanations and interpretations that can fit the pilgrimage. Indeed, one of his key arguments is that the pilgrimage itself—because of its very structure, covering a large geographical area, comprising so many sites of a variety of sectarian affiliations, and with no one place having final authority over the pilgrimage—cannot be readily organized or controlled by single authorities (pp. 91–92).

Hence the attempts by the Reijōkai to develop certain normative values and meanings within the pilgrimage run up against, and doubtless will continue to be stymied by, the orientations of individual pilgrims. This, too, has been a continuing historical theme in the pilgrimage. Hoshino, for instance, notes that even in Tokugawa times, pilgrims did not seem to need specific motives or religious beliefs to set out, and that some of them simply did the *henro* because it was there and for the sake of experience (p. 90). Such themes are especially evident in the present day, a point that comes through repeatedly in the fascinating series of interviews Hoshino has conducted with contemporary pilgrims. These show that Reijōkai attempts to structuralize and organize the pilgrimage around particular agendas may not work all that well in the context of Shikoku. What comes through most strikingly in these interviews is that many contemporary pilgrims are more interested in concepts of challenge and personal development than they are in faith in Kōbō Daishi or in any specific Buddhist understandings of the practice (pp. 361–65). In fact, Hoshino views the motives and views of such modern, late-twentieth-century pilgrims as evidence of a form of “New Age” thought that has become manifest in the *henro* as in other areas of Japanese religious behaviour. Certainly the pilgrims he cites are very much focused on issues of experientialism, personal challenge and growth, the search for personal and individual freedom, and the like. Such patterns indicate the underlying individualistic nature of the *henro*, a point that is central to Hoshino’s conclusion, in which he returns again to the idea of the pilgrimage as transcending any potential structural, organizational, or fixed doctrinal elements. To that extent he affirms that the *henro* is in effect a populist, anti-structural

practice that fits in, in many respects, with Turnerian theories that emphasize the importance of *communitas* and anti-structure (pp. 383–84).

In the above summary, I have only been able to touch on a small number of themes that run through this richly documented volume. I do not necessarily concur with all Hoshino has to say: for example, I tend to find his emphasis on Turner, especially in terms of the pilgrimage as a manifestation of anti-structure, to be somewhat problematic for two reasons. First, while Shikoku is certainly a striking example of the individualizing potentialities within pilgrimage, and while it clearly offers immense scope for self-determination and for individual choice (in modes of performance, belief and so on), it at times appears as if Hoshino is indicating that this is a special feature of Shikoku, when one could suggest that this is quite common in pilgrimages in general. More pertinently, I felt that Hoshino's account placed more emphasis on the individualized and anti-structural dimensions of the pilgrimage—ideas which lead to his reaffirmation of Turnerian analyses—than is perhaps exact in the modern context. After all, as he indicates, there are a number of widely held “normative” notions now operative in Shikoku, ranging from the patterns of group tours which produce standardized patterns of behaviour at the temples, to various widely accepted symbolic structures that have come to be seen as “official” aspects of the pilgrimage. These suggest that while pilgrims may well follow their own minds and continue to perform individual(ized) pilgrimages, these are also framed or enacted within a context of normative structures and patterns. Hoshino, for instance, does not really pay much attention to the group tours that are, for the vast majority of pilgrims in Shikoku, *the* means of performing the pilgrimage nowadays. While it is true, as he notes (pp. 25–26), that pilgrims even in group settings have their own individual motives, prayers and the like, they also enact them within the ordained structures of group tours that tend to replicate or function within preordained formats. In this context, too, one might note that many of the injunctions that the Reijōkai has helped promote in postwar Shikoku have become so much part of the pilgrims' behaviour that they now appear to be accepted norms. One such example is that—as has been shown by studies done by a survey team based at Waseda University—pilgrims nowadays tend to assume that the best and most appropriate place to stay overnight is at temple lodges (WASEDA DAIGAKU DŌKŪKAN KENKYŪKAI 1997 pp. 78–80). Staying at such lodges means that pilgrims will attend morning services at the temple, and will hear sermons—sometimes both at the evening meal and at the morning service—from the temple priests that usually affirm specific orthodoxies of behaviour in the pilgrimage. Yet such practices are themselves relatively recent: before the war, there were very few temple lodges, and they have really come into their own only since the rise, from the 1950s onwards, of bus pilgrimage tours. That they now have come to be seen as the most appropriate places to stay, is at least partly a result of the activities of the Reijōkai, which

may, through such means, wield more of an influence over the pilgrimage and the attitudes and behaviour of pilgrims than Hoshino suggests.

Concluding Comments

While I have, above, made a small number of criticisms of both books, these are, I stress, minor compared to their positive aspects. As I have indicated, these two books add immeasurably to our knowledge of the pilgrimage in a variety of contexts, showing both the importance of detailed localized studies and of the integration of historical, sociological and anthropological methods in the study of pilgrimage. I am, as some readers will be aware, working on the Shikoku pilgrimage myself and hence both volumes have been especially valuable to me: rather than feeling that these two books, published on the same topic that I am working on, may have undercut my ground at all, I feel the reverse. They have not only given me new information but have helped enrich the ways I am approaching and thinking about the *henro*. Together they inform us of the deep complexities inherent in any one pilgrimage, and of the importance of paying attention to a variety of players and forces within a phenomenon such as pilgrimage. If Kouamé reminds us that, along with the pilgrims, one needs to consider the influence of local people and regional authorities, Hoshino (who also provides plentiful information and analysis of the pilgrims) tells us of the need to pay attention to actors such as the priests and authorities in charge of pilgrimage sites, and at the ways they may shape the pilgrimage environment and create symbolic universes through which pilgrims travel. Together they provide a very fascinating cross-section of approaches to the study of pilgrimage, from the microcosmic attention to detail as a pilgrimage is examined in relation to local populaces, to the wider attempt to use Shikoku as a means of testing and developing academic theories. Both, too, point to a major problem in the study of the Shikoku pilgrimage: a lack of coherent historical materials through which one can trace the origins and early development of a practice that, it is evident, emerged gradually and coalesced over a number of centuries, and both go some way towards filling many of the gaps that still exist in its history. In their historical depths combined with perceptive analyses of pilgrims' experiences and the like, they—and especially Hoshino—inform us of the importance of multi-disciplinary approaches to the study of pilgrimage. While both books will be essential reading for scholars interested in the study of Japanese pilgrimage and in Edo and later religious history, they can also inform us about pilgrimage in wider contexts as well. They are, in effect, good examples of the point made by Paul Swanson and myself in our Introduction to the JJRS special edition on pilgrimage (READER and SWANSON 1997) to which Kouamé and Hoshino contributed: that the Japanese situation has much to offer to scholars beyond Japan interested in the study of pilgrimage in comparative and theoretical perspectives.

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