

Book Reviews

The Aged in Africa: Ethnography on the Institutions and Powers of Aging (*Africa no Rojin: Oi no Seido to Chikara o meguru Minzokushi*). Gen Tagawa, Katsuhiko Keida and Keiya Hanabuchi (eds.), Fukuoka: Kyusyu Daigaku Shuppankai, 2016, pp. 246 (in Japanese).

The youth in Africa have been represented as a symbol of the hope or a difficulty for the future of the continent. In contrast, topics on the aged in Africa have received insufficient attention. However, it is predicted that many African countries will have a declining birthrate and aging society by the late 21st century. In addition, the situation of the aged and aging in Africa has been transformed in an era of globalization. This book, which consists of an introduction, eight chapters, and three columns, is a pioneering work focusing on various aspects of the aged and aging in Africa from an anthropological point of view.

In the Introduction, Gen Tagawa, one of the editors, presents the purpose of this book as investigating “the powers of aging” in Africa to pursue their various possibilities. He defines these as “the powers which are achieved through the process of aging and are exercised by the aged.” Tagawa calls our attention to the importance of not essentializing the life of the aged in Africa such as “the traditional resourceful person.” The powers of aging partly stem from magical-religious knowledge and social institutions, which ensure the elder’s political and economic superiority to the youth. This book tries to capture the reality and change of these powers, contextualizing them in each social and historical setting.

In Chapter 1, Toshiharu Abe explains the basic social system surrounding the life of the aged in African societies, such as the age system and joking/avoidance relationships. Reflecting on his fieldwork in Africa and his own aging process, Abe notes that the aged see the community from the point of view of the semi-outsider and “watch over” the social activities of the youth, hoping for the happiness of next generations.

In Chapter 2, Katsuhiko Keida explores the dignity, sorrow, and laughter of the aged among the Giriama of Kenya. He clarifies that there are two types of powers in aging. One is using negative and destructive powers against the members of the com-

munity by curses and witchcraft. Another is the positive powers that untangle tense social situations through not only blessings but also the laughter and humor embedded in joking relationships.

In Chapter 3, Hideo Fukazawa addresses the blessings and curses by the aged in the Merina and other groups in Madagascar. He carefully argues the gaps between the ideal and the reality of the powers of aging in daily life and ritual time.

In Chapter 4, Gen Tagawa analyzes the complex process of becoming one of “the aged” grade and their social position in the generation set (*gada*) system among the Borana of Ethiopia. The “aged” grade has a structural superiority to the youth and their blessing is indispensable to reproducing and perpetuating the community.

In Chapter 5, Kyoko Nakamura shows the life of women after the menopause (*ntasat*) in the Samburu of Kenya. While the Samburu are often characterized as a male-centered gerontocratic society, *ntasat* take many important social roles offstage. Nakamura states that “the Samburu women experience the process of aging more lightly and proudly than us.”

In Chapter 6, Keiya Hanabuchi focuses on the age grade system (*anda*) in the Comoros. Men in Comoros need to perform a “big wedding ceremony” to be recognized as social elders. Required funds for the ceremony have recently increased because migrant workers to France remit money for the ceremony to the members of their home village. As a result, while many men in their fifties cannot perform the ceremony, younger and wealthier men have finished it at an early age.

In Chapter 7, Wakana Shiino presents the diversity of social life of males among the Luo of Kenya. She shows the life of two contrasting old men; one is a famous person who married over 40 women and had about 500 children, and another is a single old man who does not have children. Shiino emphasizes that irrespective of such a difference, both men enjoyed an active love life in their old age.

In Chapter 8, Ken Masuda clarifies the mechanism on how the aging population, combined with a diminishing number of children, will progress in Africa. He insists that it is necessary for the future of the aged in Africa to reduce the distance between the “big story” produced by states and international organizations, and the “small story,” which reflects the

reality of local life, through using an ethnographic approach.

Three brief columns introduce the everyday life of the aged in Africa. Katsuhiko Keida examines the imagination that connects witchcraft to the aged with gray-haired heads in the Giriama of Kenya. Tetsuya Kamei describes old women who are begged by their children among the Ndebele of South Africa. Mariko Noguchi focuses on the care of the aged through trial and error among the Aari of Ethiopia.

Every author of this book is a proficient field-worker and their ethnographic descriptions are thick and reliable. It is impressive that each chapter vividly describes the various lives of the aged with joy and sorrow. Many chapters show that although the social environment surrounding the aging and the aged has drastically changed, the positive value in them has not wavered in many African societies. I can feel sympathy with the lives of the aged in Africa and relativize the negative image on the aging and the aged in Japan. This stimulating book will surely open and promote discussion on the aged and aging in Africa and Japan.

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Citizenship for Migrants and Refugees: A Comparative Study of Institutions and Practices of Inclusion and Exclusion from Nation-States (*Imin/Nanmin no Sbitizunshippu*). Aiko Nishikida (ed.), Tokyo: Research Institute for Language and Cultures of Asia and Africa (Tōkyō Gaikokugo Daigaku Ajia Afurika Gengo Bunka Kenkyūjo), 2016, pp. 258 + vi (in Japanese).

Why do we need to consider citizenship now? For review picking up this book, *Citizenship for Migrants and Refugees*, this question came into my mind. Of course, we are in a moment of history that crucially challenges the idea and the concept of “citizenship,” especially after the IS threat in Iraq and Syria, and millions of refugees and asylum seekers rushing toward the border of EU countries in 2015. The idea of citizenship must be considered. However, looking back to the year 2016, in which Brexit was decided by the UK national referendum and Donald Trump was elected as the next President of the United States, the idea of citizenship seems to be at risk. Because, it implies, migrants and refugees are emotionally rejected by “natives” and locals.

The idea and the concept of citizenship, therefore, are now problematic; it is even a dilemma whether to accept them. It is not very useful only to argue on the grounds of philanthropy; we need to focus on actual aspects, such as economics, politics, legal theories,

and social relations, on citizenship for migrants and refugees, in order to consider the theoretical framework of citizenship as an actual political concept for future generations.

This book is on the citizenship for “migrants-refugees,” edited by Nishikida Aiko, who is one of the leading scholars on this topic. It consists of eleven chapters, including the editor’s introduction, and the chapters are divided into four sections. It also covers a range of topics from the theoretical framework, mainly on legal studies, to detailed case studies that are based on anthropological fieldwork. In this review, owing to its length, I would like to describe only the outlines of four sections, and pick up particularly on Chapters 3 and 4 in Part 2, both related to issues in East African countries.

Firstly, the book started by questioning the concept of “migrants-refugees” in Nishikida’s Introduction. In Japanese, it spelled out “Imin/Nanmin” (migrants/refugees) which, with a slash (/), implies the category of migrants that is contiguously connected to refugees. Referring to Malkki’s discussion of the “externalization of the refugees from the national order of things” (p. 4, and Malkki 1995: 9), migrants and refugees, in essence, are entities who lost national sovereignty. Thus, the two of them are inevitably combined, sometimes seamlessly, as people without nations, and the slash (or the hyphen in English) between two words connotes something blurred.

With the dilemma of these entities of “migrants-refugees,” the concept of citizenship, however, has been historically framed. In Part 1, including Chapters 1 and 2, the authors critically grasp the legal status of migrants-refugees using a method of constitutional comparison and historical analysis. Both chapters focus mainly on analyzing the institutions and legal cases. In contrast, in Part 2—cases of “collapsed states” in Africa in which human rights to secure nationals dramatically fail to be addressed and insurgencies frequently arise—internally displaced people and dilemmas over dual citizenship are created.

The book also tries to explore the notion of nation-state itself. In Chapters 5 and 6, Part 3, GCC Arabic countries are mentioned as an exceptional case of modern “migrant” nation-states, in which minor groups of the population dominate as the main power-holders; the majority groups, nearly 90 percent of the population, are immigrants from other countries. Furthermore, Part 4 (Chapters 7 and 8) depicts the phenomena of repeat refugees in Palestine and Philippines, caused by the nature of migrants-refugees’ dynamic mobility in both countries. These two sections suggest that bounded nation states do not correspond to the nature of peoples’ mobility nor does citizenship.

In the final section, Chapters 9 and 10, theoretical aspects of citizenship among migrants-refugees are addressed. Especially in Chapter 10, Yamazaki has tried to provide a rigid frame to the theory, quoting the work of Negri and Hardt's "*Empire*," and successfully clarified the logic of inclusion and exclusion of migrants-refugee in international history.

In the book, researchers of the African region need to particularly pay attention to Chapters 3 and 4, by Shin'ya Konaka and Yūko Tobinai, respectively. Although Konaka's article is concerned with anonymous pastoral societies in East Africa, he describes its tragic incidents of recent armed conflicts. Therefore, to consider the security of pastoral ethnic groups, given their vulnerable social status in domestic politics, he insists on the necessity of the concept of "multiple citizenship" as an initial phase of creating a more civil society in Africa.

In contrast, Tobinai's focus is more familial, or literally more personal and individualistic, with respect to the identities and nationalities of two countries, Sudan and South Sudan, which separated recently in 2011. What she draws from familial dilemmas in Khartoum, among those who were originally born in the South but decided to remain in the city, is the fundamental question expressed in the title, *Who will they become? Do nation-states determine who or what they are?* As Konaka suggests, in Africa, the people's identity or belonging is always multi-layered and stratified regionally. Thus, *the* citizenship is not simple, but is seemingly plural—*citizenships*—complicated and full of dilemmas.

Issues of citizenships that this book raises present fundamental questions concerning nation states and the social status of humans. Although it is subtle, the book does not refer to deeper philosophical insights toward the nature of citizenship and nation-states, the theme of sovereignty that Agamben and Benhabib explored (Agamben 1998, Benhabib 2004). However, it contributes a wide range of case studies and clues regarding the mystery of current national politics on migrants-refugees within a social sciences focus. This is a good beginning for collaborative work among Japanese and Italian researchers of regional studies, legal studies, and international politics, and also practical studies on the current dilemma of whether to accept immigrants, and of citizenship, which promises us something essential in time.

References

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African Potentials Series, Vol. 4: Subsistence Practices for Avoiding Conflict: Relationships between Eco-Resources and Peoples (*Afurika Senzairyoku Siriizu: Arasowanai tameno Seigyōjissen: Seitaisbigen to Hitobito tono Kakawari*). Masayoshi Shigeta & Juichi Itani (eds.), Kyoto: Kyoto University Press, 2016, pp. 360 (in Japanese).

This book is one of the achievements of the research project titled "Comprehensive Area Studies on Coexistence and Conflict Resolution: Realizing the African Potentials" funded by JSPS Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (S) between 2011 and 2016. This is the fourth of a five-volume series addressing several topics, including conciliation systems for settling conflict, the equal re-distribution of eco-resources, and the social mechanisms facilitating peaceful coexistence. The book reveals the process of convivial relationships emerging and being maintained among different peoples and between humans and nature through subsistence practices in the midst of an expanding market economy and widening economic disparity. In the following discussion, I summarize each chapter and identify the common cross-cutting concepts.

The subsistence economy of African societies where agriculture and herding played major roles is heavily dependent on natural vegetation. There is apprehension that environmental degradation and social change will cause a decline in subsistence and increase conflicts over resources. Itani, however, makes the objective of the book clear by showing how people reconstruct their livelihoods, adapt to changing ecological environments, and achieve shared use and management of the commons through dialogue.

In Part One, migration and the relationship of ethnic groups engaged with different modes of subsistence are analyzed. Chapters 1 and 2 consider examples of conflict and coexistence between agro-pastoral immigrants and indigenous farmers. Izumi discusses the economic gaps and the social role played by wealthy agro-pastoral people from his research around Lake Rukwa (Chapter 1). Subsequently, Kato describes the process of conflict resolution between the Sukuma and the agricultural Pogoro and analyses the social requirements for real-

izing coexistence from both peoples' perspectives (Chapter 2). Kirikoshi illustrates the multicultural relationships fostered by the long-distance trade of kola nuts in West Africa (Chapter 3).

In Part Two, the use and recycling of eco-resources to adjust to recent social changes is discussed. Yamamoto describes the inhabitants' negotiations over land disputes in Tanzania's uplands (Chapter 4). Sato illustrates intensive agriculture and farmers' flexible responses in banana cultivation areas in Uganda (Chapter 5). Kondo points out that the social mechanisms that widen and reduce social disparity are concurrent by focusing on the rise of modern forestry in rural Tanzania (Chapter 6). Meanwhile, taking the example of piecework in Zambia, Yoshimura and Oyama argue that piecework has both positive and negative aspects (Chapter 7). Among the Bemba, maize farming has replaced slash-and-burn cultivation since the introduction of modern agricultural policy. Piecework in maize fields contributes to returning cash to the local community, while it also expands private land for rich farmers.

In Part Three, new relationships between humans and the environment that facilitate the sustainable use of eco-resources are discussed. Fujioka considers the symbiotic relationship between farmers and plants in "farmland forest" in Namibia (Chapter 8). The *marula* trees typical of farmland forest are sustained by locals who inherited the making and drinking of *marula* wine socially and culturally. Shikata argues that shifting cultivation in Cameroon's cacao fields can realize the sustainable use of resources by adjusting agricultural methods to mimic tropical vegetation succession (Chapter 9). In the cacao field, biodiversity has been preserved through farming methods fostering shade trees for cacao, and planting bananas and tubers. Finally, Kurosaki argues that a small hydro-electronic power generation project creates opportunities for gaining income and raising awareness of environmental protection in the local community (Chapter 10).

In the final chapter, Shigeta objects to the widely accepted idea of the relationships between people and nature that the vicious cycle of population growth and overuse of eco-resources causes devastating destruction of the natural environment in Africa.

This book shows the varied and intriguing subsistence practices in several countries. Kakeya (1994) pointed out that social leveling mechanisms reduce inequalities when uneven accumulation and distribution of the wealth occur in African agrarian societies. A leveling mechanism does not mean averaging the amount of resources or capital, but the dynamics realized by the forces working interactively such that they cannot be calculated on external criteria (p. 345).

Specifically, this is true in Chapter 1 where a mutual relationship was built by the wealthy Sukuma people who distribute their wealth through giving employment opportunities or means of production to impoverished farmers. It also applies in Chapter 2 where the Sukuma and the Pogoro became more tolerant by avoiding unnecessary integration but working together against national environment policy.

Kakeya suggests another characteristic of leveling mechanisms. They work well to sustain a certain standard of living in a village, and allow for tolerating disparities as long as rural development can be seen as in Chapter 6 where disparity rooted in leveling gained broad acceptance locally. Certainly leveling mechanisms can still function despite market economy penetration into rural areas. However, labor exchanges of piecework can result in widening disparity and establishment of hierarchies.

Some African countries have adopted government resettlement projects, introduced modern farming methods, and accepted structural adjustment programs since the 1970s. Currently, rural African communities are witnessing the widening economic and social disparities that cause problems such as land disputes, resource contention, and "ethnic" conflicts. The discourse often seen in poverty eradication and peace building tends to conclude that Africans suffer because they do not foster methods to respond to unprecedented changes. It is also assumed that African societies were not subject to the market economy and did not need to consider environmental preservation much. On the contrary, this book provides good examples of how Africans construct and reconstruct mutualistic and symbiotic relationships, applying the knowledge, skills, and social systems accumulated among local communities to respond to change. This book demonstrates the possibility of realizing endogenous rural development through community initiatives, provided that leveling mechanisms work well in the community. Finally, the book can lead to further reflection on the prolonged conflicts that appear difficult to solve in Africa. Why and how do leveling mechanisms lose their functions in such cases? This question still remains to be answered.

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