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## Book Reviews Vol 5(iii)

Carlos Fernandes

[cfernandes@estg.ipvc.pt](mailto:cfernandes@estg.ipvc.pt)

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## Book Reviews

Jepson, A. & Clarke, A. (Eds.) (2016) *Managing and Developing Communities, Festivals and Events*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York (NY), 241p, \$115.00 (hardcover) at Palgrave Macmillan, ISBN 978-1-137-50853-9.



‘Festivals and events are the lifeblood of society’ – these first words by editors Allan Jepson and Alan Clarke, included in the introduction to their new book *Managing and developing communities, festivals and events* point to the enormous (often underestimated) significance of festivals and community events, not only to build the tourist attractiveness of the place but also in creating mutual bonds and sense of local or regional identity. This phenomenon is particularly important in contemporary times when communities, cultures and ways of life are constantly being bombarded with globalization and unification. Festivals hold then a unique ability to entertain, educate and provide a platform for escapism through the creation of event experience.

While their impact on shaping the sense of identity within the community is obvious and indisputable, all activities related to responsible management and planning of events, in the context of sustainable development, are becoming a phenomenon requiring increased research and detailed case studies. In response to the above demand, there is certainly this book, which perfectly addresses all the mentioned socio-cultural problems. Additionally, it is one of the few research publications of this kind.

The book is a continuation of the highly successful previous publication of the authors (editors): *Exploring community festivals and events* (2015). This time the

editors have managed to bring together a group of almost 30 authors, enthusiasts and researchers of social, art, tourism and socio-cultural studies (mainly related to festivals and major events). They have made a cross section analysis of the relationship between local communities, their identity and heritage. Building on the works of Getz (1997, 2010), Clarke & Jepson (2011) and Frisby *et al.* (1989) the book presents case studies from ten different regions (countries) around the world to assist in understanding the true value of events and ensuring they are used to enhance socialization and cohesion within societies. The volume skillfully combines areas of research within event studies – those related to the meanings and impacts of festivals in society with management which impacts upon event creation (i.a. volunteerism, finance, politics and policy). It is worth emphasizing that the publication to a large extent explores the importance and the role of local events, festivals and even sites, spaces and places as points of convergence and divergence for tourists (including pilgrims – chapter 10 and 11 or gourmets of local food – chapters 13 and 15).

The book is organized into sixteen chapters and divided into two key sections. The first includes eight chapters (2-9) and applies management philosophies, ideas and principles in the context of festivals, events and communities. Authors take readers on a cultural journey around the world, among others to the Finnish Lapland (Walburgis Day Party), Australia (Sport and Fashion Festivals) or Thailand (art events in Ratchaburi). The very popular phenomenon of Museum Night is also mentioned in the context of the organisational structure of smaller museums in St. Petersburg (Russia), and how they are influenced by the event.

The second part of the book includes seven chapters (10-16) and analyses the planning and managing of the impacts of festivals, events and communities. It presents six case studies (i.e. from Italy – chapter 10, Lithuania – chapter 11, England – chapter 13 and Spain – chapter 15) of different areas of research like place identity, religion, pilgrimage, gastronomy or social and cultural impacts. As the editors note, all of these chapters are ‘about people, and moreover the positive relationships between them and the sharing of cultural values which are fundamental to the development of communities’ (p.231).

In conclusion, this book is a logical, very comprehensive and contemporary choice not only for a clear overview of festival and event studies and scholarship, but also for a critical exploration of the topic. It opens further discussions, research problems and questions related to communities' sustainable development, their cultural identity and value.

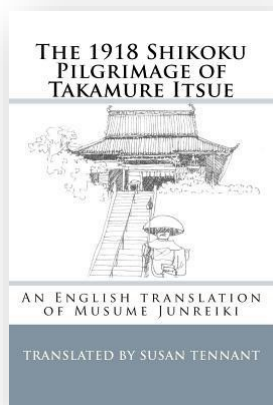
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- By: Tomasz Duda. Researcher in Tourism & Recreation Unit, University of Szczecin, Poland.

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Tennant, S. (2010) *The 1918 Shikoku Pilgrimage of Takamure Itsue. An English translation of Musume Junreiki*. Bowen Publishing, Bowen Island (Canada), 269 pp., \$10 (paperback), ISBN 1450540759

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Takamure Itsue was born in the late 19th century to a humble family. The fact that her father was a school teacher granted her and her siblings a good education. At the time, it was uncommon for a woman to be knowledgeable not only of Japanese literature but Chinese and Western as well. Notwithstanding this, she was of a conservative mind. Self-described as passionate and (over)sensitive, she went on to become a feminist, anarchist, historian and a magazine editor later in life.

*The 1918 Shikoku Pilgrimage of Takamure Itsue* is divided into two main sections: the English translation of the *Musume Junreiki* (compilation of newspaper articles published by Takamure Itsue in 1918 during her pilgrimage) and additional information added by the author: an explanation of the Shikoku Pilgrimage, a short biography of Takamure Itsue and a note on the translation of her poetry throughout the book.

In the first part, *Musume Junreiki*, narrates the pilgrimage to around eighty-eight Temples of Shikoku which Takamure undertakes alone - although she later finds a companion - when she was twenty-four years old. The account is an interesting document for contemporary scholars working in different fields: from anthropology and feminism to hospitality and literature.

Taking the perspective of a pilgrim, Takamure's compilation of articles help to understand the inner dimension of a real pilgrimage, be it physical or mental. The text is dotted with profound reflections that arise from the combination of stimuli received from the external reality and her own worldview:

*For human beings, vanity is the most intolerable thing; worrying about causing others offense is the most complicated. Existent and non-existent, visible and invisible, audible and inaudible, how joyful is the artlessly pure and independent mind. In such a mind, a most precious and abundant love arises. Life exists within the vastness of the universe. (...).*

*It has been pretty hard for me to abandon arrogance and abstain from frivolous pride. Elatedly, I have done calligraphy in front of others. How disgraceful was my mind; how deplorable it was. If I have to write, I'll write; if I have to read aloud, I'll read. Just let me be as I am (p. 29).*

As presented in this passage, often the chronicle leaves the travel plot itself when an everyday situation sparks her meditative mind towards philosophical and spiritual topics. Her careful observations of individuals and human groups construct a cultural picture of Japanese society of the moment, with its virtues, faults and even sins. Even so, it serves not only as an historic-sociological account but it also helps to create a peace in the narrative.

Although references to physical demands and other problems around such a journey appear frequently in the book, the narrator manages to connect these with emotions, memories, reflections and regrets. Thus, her

naïve and honest writing makes it clear how emotional and corporeal pain can sublimate into some degree of self-perceived spiritual enlightenment.

This type of rhythm is for the most part unconventional in the Western spheres but engages with the inner dimension of a pilgrimage better than any geographical or cultural description could. Parts of the way that would seem most relevant to modern travellers are almost entirely skipped while her attention is focused on quotidian situations: house chores, fishing or conversations with children that either calm or stir her sensibility towards transcendental matters. In this vein, it is also interesting to note how she navigates the tension of her own feelings of connection with the divine, yet remaining rational and helpful when asked about miracle-making by commoners.

In the second, much briefer part, Tennant sheds light on some questions that will certainly have crossed the reader's mind along the pilgrimage. A short biography of the traveller helps us frame her efforts culturally and socially, but also personally. A question that she faces time and time again all along the way, and that seems to bother her the most during the first weeks, is 'why would a young and beautiful girl such yourself take on a pilgrimage?' - pilgrimage being culturally associated with disease of the body or spirit.

But the biography also provides insight into the aftermath of the pilgrimage. The life she leads after returning to Kumamoto happens to be very different to that she declares in the final article, making it easy for the reader to realise how a physical journey is often considered a metaphor for the path of life.

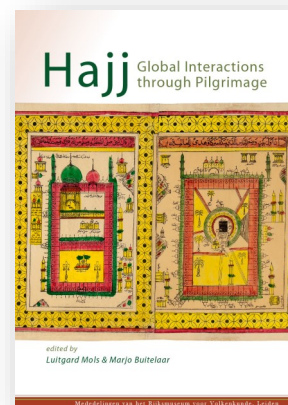
While one may think that it would be better to provide this information beforehand, and indeed the one-page preface gives some cues, the lack of a comprehensive background offers the possibility of enjoying the travel without bias, placing no influence on the reading process or preconceptions shaping the experience in a certain way - at least not coming from the author's hand.

In the final part, Tennant deals with the ever present problems of translation, especially when it comes to poetry. Like any poetry Takamura's has deep cultural roots and is filled with linguistic wordplays. Thus, most of its wit and beauty is lost when written in a language other than Japanese and read by an audience largely ignorant of culturally charged senses. On the other hand, this cultural aspect of expression and specific words is addressed throughout the book (for poetry and regular prose) by means of explanatory footnotes and a glossary added at the end of the book.

As a final word, this book is a remarkable source for researchers and educators in the field of religious tourism and pilgrimage from a cross-cultural and experiential point of view. Contrary to the majority of present-day promotional campaigns and travel accounts that focus on the external aspects of pilgrimage, this book offers insight into a pilgrimage of a distant time frame, carried out by a very special young woman of the age, whose thoughts, nonetheless, bear testimonial to what is meant by 'inner dimension' of pilgrimage.

By: Neus Crous Costa. Lecturer and researcher at the Faculty of Tourism, Department of History and Art History, at the University of Girona (Spain)

Mois, L. and Buitelaar, M. (Eds.) (2015), *Hajj: Global Interactions through Pilgrimage*, Sidestone Press, Leiden (Netherlands), 275 pp., \$55.00 (paperback) at Amazon, ISBN 978-9088902857.



Pilgrimage does not lend itself to an easy definition or one comprehensive term in spite of the fact that so much has been said about this unique human experience. Pilgrimage has now been linked to most of the anthropological sciences. However, originally, pilgrimage was about a pure spiritual transformation and related to those concepts of worship, forgiveness, love, peace, and perseverance.

In the present book, all of the above themes have been tackled. In fact it is a superb journey through the multifaceted phases of pilgrimage and its varied shades of meanings. The start was with the anthropological study of pilgrimage, the return to the sacred and a growing trend of routinization and commodification and the emergence of new categories of pilgrims as a result of improved transportation and economic circumstances.



What makes this special edition an outstanding one is the scope of ideas and the geographical and political outlook: for example, British Muslims actively shape their own self-identities, spiritually and emotional lives, while at the same time reproducing authoritative Islamic scripts. Here is a mixed vision of scripted and unscripted uncertainties and ambivalences. In the same vein, increasing pressures for Haji services have elicited paradoxical responses from politicians in Turkey and Indonesia. The paradoxical images of corruption and favouritism have found their way to the sacred.

Richard van Leeuwen takes us back to the hajj of Rashid Rida in 1916 where the political interweaves with the sacred, and the reformist interacts with religious. The travelogue of Rashid Rida is a kind of buffer between the conventional, the traditional and the modern especially when it comes to transport. Right up until the present, reformers and politicians exploit the hajj occasion for promoting personal themes and schemes. The change in transportation facilitates the ease of current day hajj participants which contrasts with the previous hardships endured by hajjis in the past.

Nowadays we leave the deep spiritual meaning of hajj and the impact of juries and reformers on the mass of hajjis to the superficial crux of it. In other words, the commodification of hajj as spiritual religious rituals represented in gifts and souvenirs to and from Mecca. The emergence of Mecca as a centre of gravitation encourages scholars and artists from all walks of life to bring with them the styles of their native countries and that makes the hajj season a prosperous market for all - Hajj has become a unique cosmopolitan mosaic of worldly interactions of many cultures. In the same juncture, Moore in chapter seven displays different aspects of the visual and material configurations of the Chinese hajj experience. Moore states that visual devices do not make full sense without the authentication of acts and the accumulation of those acts as the hajj's historical memory.

The book depicts the changes in the traditions, conventions, and local celebrations, certificates of hajj testimony, paintings, and works of art with the religious and sacred rituals of hajj in a very vivid, and picturesque way which adds special value to the significance of the content of this pilgrimage edition.

By: Tariq Elhadary. Acting Head of Admission and University Preparation Unit & Academic Advisor-ESL at the Scholarships Office/ Ministry of Presidential Affairs, Abu Dhabi (UAE).

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Carlos Fernandes, Book Review Editor for the *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* welcomes offers of books for review. Please contact Carlos at:

<cfernandes@estg.ipvvc.pt>

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