

## REFERENCE CITED:

HUIZINGA, Johan

1955 *Homo ludens: a study of the play-element in culture*. Boston: Beacon Press.  
 John K. Gillespie  
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## JAPAN

FUKUDA AJIO 福田アジオ and MIYATA NOBORU 宮田 登, eds. *Nihon Minzokugaku Gairon* 日本民俗学概論 [A Survey of Japanese Folklore]. Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1983. Xiv+291 pp. Index, glossary, list of contributors, chapter bibliographies. Photographs and illustrations. Paper Yen 2,300. (In Japanese)

There are no folklore departments in Japanese colleges and universities, no schools of folklore. Such courses as are offered take the form of 'special lectures' or 'special topics' rather than standard program courses. Survey courses in Japanese folklore, or in general folklore for that matter, are conspicuously lacking. For a land so wealthy in folklore materials as Japan, it is embarrassing that there has been no native *discipline* of folklore.

All that is changing, however. For various reasons interest in Japanese folklore is now surging; it is even becoming fashionable. To meet the new demand at the secondary schools, junior colleges, colleges, and universities, a need exists to produce on the one hand a corps of teachers trained in folkloristics and on the other a suitable array of quality text and reference books that the teachers may use in and out of the classroom.

As I look over my book dealer's printouts of books on Japanese folklore studies currently available, I am saddened by the obvious dearth of books that might be suitable for introductory courses at any level. A few reference books in encyclopaedia formats exist; the rest tend to be local or regional studies or studies on specialized topics. The introductory works of Yanagita Kunio 柳田国男, Yanagita and Seki Keigo 関敬吾, and Wakamori Tarō 和歌森太郎 have long been out of date; the only introductory work of recent date to my knowledge, *Nihon minzoku no kenkyū shiryō* 日本民俗の研究資料 [Research Materials for Japanese Folklore], which was done by Tsuboi Hirofumi 坪井洋文, is not listed on the printouts (the publisher appears to have folded).

That leaves the compendious works. Heibonsha's thirteen volume series *Nihon minzokugaku taikei* 日本民俗学大系 [Compendium of Japanese Folkloristics] is currently out of stock at the publisher's. The planned ten volume series *Nihon minzokugaku kenkyū taikei* 日本民俗学研究大系 [Compendium of Studies in Japanese Folklore] being produced by Kokugakuin Daigaku, is only forty percent complete at present; and Shōgakkan's planned fourteen-volume set, *Nihon minzoku bunka taikei* 日本民俗文化大系 [Compendium of Japanese Folk Culture], is a little over half complete.

Such is the context in which the book under review was happily introduced and such is the problem it addresses. It is of no small interest that the articles, or chapters, in the book were contributed largely by young scholars—more than half of them were born after World War II—for, as I believe, their generation will be the one to bring Japanese folklore studies out as a proper discipline. The contributors are almost all graduates of Tsukuba Daigaku and all are ardent folklorists.

Over the past couple of decades Japanese folklore studies has branched out to cover virtually every aspect of traditional life. The structure of *Nihon minzokugaku gairon* reflects this widened interest. The range of topics and subtopics is almost breathtaking.

The book contains twenty-five eleven-page articles loosely organized into four sections. The first section, on the folk uses of "space," subsumes articles dealing with concepts of *ie* 家 and household, family life, village organization, and food production. The second section, on folk practices relating to "time," contains articles on the agricultural cycles and rites of passage. The third section is a hodgepodge of folk "beliefs" and their related practices that includes a mistitled article on "folktales and legends" (the only article on oral traditions, it also includes proverbs and riddles). The last section contains assorted "special topics." A full list of these is as follows: "Rural Depopulation and its Effect on Folkways," "Urban Folklore," "Folklore of Okinawa," "Collecting and Documenting Folklore Materials," and "Methods of Research in Folklore."

While the range of topics is indeed broad and seems at first glance to include almost every current topic, in fact one can think of other topics that might have warranted treatment in separate chapters; to name a few, folk architecture, costume, folk medicine, arts and crafts, folk dance, *minyo* 民謡 (traditional songs and ballads), and musical instruments. I say that they *might* have warranted fuller treatment, but by no means that the editors were remiss in not including them as chapter topics. A short survey of this nature is necessarily incomplete and packing such a broad range of topics into just under 275 pages of text is of course spreading it pretty thin. A fairer way to judge the book is by its balance or representativeness, or by its success in meeting its intended objectives. If these criteria were to be chosen, how would the book measure up?

I would suggest that since the book is clearly "about" traditional Japanese folk-life the articles on research methods and collecting and documenting should be reserved for an introduction to folkloristics. Here they detract from the already sagging unity of the volume. The space might better be given to topics on ethnomusicology, arts and crafts, or other related areas. Also, I should prefer to see the article on Okinawan folklore balanced by one on Ainu folklore. And the inter-relatedness of the many folklore materials presented in the different chapters might be made clearer if there were an introductory chapter characterizing Japanese folklore as a whole. But these are personal preferences; others might disagree with them. The overall organization of the book, if not in complete balance, certainly is representative of work in the field.

The disquieting problems are met within the individual articles. The article on folktales and legends, for example, makes no reference to distributional variations or to what makes Japanese oral traditions uniquely Japanese. Nor does this article refer to theories of oral narratives, nor, though referring to Stith Thompson (who influenced Seki Keigo's classificatory works), does it make any reference at all—not even in the bibliography—to Vladimir Propp! But since Propp's *The Structure of the Folktale* appeared belatedly in Japanese translation only a month before *Nihon minzokugaku gairon* was published, this may be regarded rather as a reflection of the general condition of folklore studies in Japan than as an oversight of the writer.

Another article that exemplifies the survey's unevenness is the one on Okinawan folklore. This article, in my opinion, wasted space introducing "Okinawa" before it put its toes into the pool of Okinawan folklore. What good is it to mention the American occupation of Okinawa and neglect mentioning the great wealth of folktales and legends that have been and still are being transmitted there? Or what good is it

to mention the unification of the three kingdoms, Nanzan 南山, Chūzan 中山, and Hokuzan 北山, under the first Shō 尚 dynasty and neglect mentioning the illustrious legendary figure of Minamoto no Tametomo 源為朝? Further, this article pretermits a number of important historical documents. One is the *Omoro Sōshi* おもろさうし [Book of Omoro], a large collection of poems and songs of islands and villages, composed between the 12th and 17th centuries, that might be compared to the *Manyōshū* 万葉集 and *Norito* 祝詞 of mainland Japan; it is readily available in Iwanami's Nihon Shisō Taikai series. Another is the *Kyūyō Gaikan Irōsetsuden* 球陽外卷遺老説伝 [Traditional Narratives Bequeathed by the Aged, Supplement to the *Kyūyō* 球陽], a collection of 142 folk tales collected in the first half of the 18th century. Lastly, this article fails to reference any works of native Okinawan Scholars, such as Iha Fuyu 伊波晋猷, a pioneer in the linguistic and cultural history of the Ryukyus. The several volumes in the Tōyō Bunko 東洋文庫 Series written by Okinawan scholars might have appeared in the bibliography.

Such minor problems as these crop up throughout the book, more with some authors than with others as might be expected for a book of multiple authorship, but since it is intended to be an introductory survey of Japanese folklife the problems might perhaps be considered venial. By and large the articles are clear, to the point, and make interesting reading, which is impressive considering the severe space restrictions; moreover, they are well spangled with examples and display sound historical consciousness.

The book is not without some shortcomings, however. Stylistic matters and typographical errors I shall ignore. More serious are the few mistranslations (e.g., p. 91, l. 3 文化化 for enculturation; p. 92, l. 4 擬産 for couvade). But most regretful of all is that the bibliographies are inadequate; they are much too skimpy and they are not annotated. A serious newcomer to Japanese folklore deserves more in an introductory text.

The illustrations are clear and easy to understand. The silk screen photos relieve the text as much as amplify it; they are clearer than many I have seen, though still a bit contrasty. The glossary and index are remarkably progressive for an introductory text in Japan. The articles are of suitable length for class assignments in the Japanese curriculum, or for reading between a busy schedule.

As to whether this survey meets its intended objectives, I should answer in the affirmative. In spite of the problems I have mentioned, it will serve as a fair introduction to the facets of Japanese folklife for specialists who want to broaden their perspective, for secondary school and junior college teachers who need background knowledge for their courses, for college freshmen who are just beginning to discover their own roots (so long as a text introducing folkloristics is also assigned), and for anyone who might like to have an assortment of topics on Japanese folklife to rummage through—including the ever inquisitive foreign Japanologist.

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#### KOREA

GUILLEMOZ, ALEXANDRE. *Les algues, les anciens, les dieux. La vie et la religion d'un village de pêcheurs-agriculteurs coréens* [Algae, elders and gods. Life and religion in a Korean village of fishermen and farmers]. Paris: Le