

## BOOK REVIEW

The Fifteenth Congress of the "Friends of Festivals" (*matsuri dôkôkai*),  
Nagoya, 20-21 March, 1976.

The Society of the Friends of Festivals understands itself as a society devoted to religious folklore (*shûkyô minzokugaku*). Perhaps instead of 'folklore' we better say folk customs and folk customs science, literally translating *minzokugaku*. 1976 the annual meeting of the society for the study of religious festivals was organized on a national scale, previously it had been more or less confined to the Nagoya and adjacent areas. We folklorists are happy to know that in Nagoya, one of the busiest industrial and commercial centers of Japan, a new center of folk customs studies came into existence fifteen years ago. The founder, leader and inspirator is Tanaka Yoshihiro, a medical doctor and surgeon on the staff of the University Hospital. In the introductory address to the assembly he stressed his guiding idea that religion is the foundation on which cultural life stands and that without this foundation neither material civilisation nor scientific accomplishments make sense.

On the concept and aim of the science of religious folklore, which is the chosen subject of research for the "Friends of Festivals", Gorai Shigeru, Professor at Otani University in Kyoto, had in his lecture before the Plenum the following to say. The professor has in the past, he himself said, devoted himself to the study of Buddhist folk customs, that is, how Buddhism was *in concreto* accepted by the people at large in the course of its religious history. This question he endeavored to answer by combining the working methods of Buddhist sciences, and of historical and folkloristic research. Buddhism, he said, is not only an ideology; it has made an impact on the life of man and society, especially on the common man. Buddhist customs shed light on the history of the population at large and on the history of its spirituality. The latter has to be found out from the relationship between rulers and ruled, from political, economic and social history. The speaker averred folklorists did Buddhist performances, Buddhist beliefs, and Buddhist dramatic art (*geinô*) not include in the scope of their science since the prevailing thinking was that Buddhism is something alien to Japan, namely Chinese or Indian. But now the insight is gaining ground that Buddhism in Japan has its own national features. These features are dependent on the ethnic individuality of the Japanese nation, and its geographical and cultural environment. Buddhism is different in every country which adopted it. Countries which had already their own advanced cultures, had also a well established native religion. When the ruling classes brought in a foreign culture and religion, the common people adapted it to the already existing culture and religion, adopting only the foreign forms. The basic religious structure remained the national faith. Therefore there is no reason why the science of folk customs should find the Buddhism of the common people as something outside its field. There is no essential difference between folk customs before and after the arrival of Buddhism. The religious phenomena are in both cases the object of folk customs research.

The Buddhist folk customs are in fact simply folk religion, in the same way

as Shintoistic folk customs. Be they Buddhist or Shintoist, popular beliefs are equally objects of the science of folk customs. This science studies all phenomena of Japanese religion. At the same time all aspects of Japanese culture, art and dramatic performance (*geinô*) are somehow related to religion. Thus we find folk religion not only in the Buddhist devotional literature (*shôdô-setsuwa*) of the Middle Ages but also in the *Manyôshû*, in the *Genji-monogatari* as well as in the *Jôruri* of recent times or in still living oral traditions (*densho*) and fairy tales (*mukashibanashi*). The art contained in Buddhist ikonography and paintings and picture scrolls has not only been produced as illustrations to Buddhist sutras, they are in fact also manifestations of folk beliefs, such as the various Buddhas we find as objects of worship on remote islands and in out of the way villages with their religious associations (*kô*) and picture scrolls on the often miraculous origin of temples (*enki-emaki*). In the so-called Mountain Religion (*shugendô*) Buddhas are worshipped as the true nature (*honchi*) of the mountain gods, so we have again folk religion under a Buddhist cloak. A folk-religious substratum we find also in the belief in Kannon, Jizô, Dainichi Nyorai and Fudô.

In popular dramatic art performances we find not only the element of entertainment, but also religious elements. They have their origin in popular religion of which traces are still noticeable. In the past such performances as *kagura*, *dengaku*, *shuhô-e* (temple rites at the beginning of New Year), *shuni-e* or *shunigatsu-e* (temple rites at the beginning of the second month) are interpreted as Shintoistic ceremonies, while dancing, such as *nembutsu-odori*, were considered to be exclusively Buddhist affairs. Nowadays all folk customs scientists agree that these dances are performed also for pacifying souls and as rites of ancestor worship or as agricultural rites. Such ritual performances were frequently refined by specialised artists and then became known as Nô, Kabuki, and puppet theater (*bungaku-ningyô*), dramatic performances representative of Japanese culture.

The science of religious folk customs cannot only bring additional light into Japanese religion, it can also grasp the basic culture of the people and see new aspects of it. As do also cultures of other countries, the Japanese culture finds itself at the present at a historic turning point. For further building up of our culture we have to start from a renewed concept and knowledge of our nation and its culture and history. Our science of religious folk customs must strive for the collection of material on folk religion, for this we have to get familiar with the life of the common people, at the same time start a movement for the revival of religion and faith. Our life in the twentieth century has lost its spirit and became materialistic. With the loss of its spiritual culture mankind is doomed. In this critical period the science of religious folk customs has the task of reviving the spirit of the common people and of strengthening of society by bringing back religion and by simplicity of life and the spirit of self-sacrifice. For getting such a movement afoot we need objective material and at the same time a body of theoretical guidelines. From this point of view we need a science of religious folk customs and associations of such scientists as organs of research.

To the above summary of Prof. Gorai's paper we wish to add a few words of our own. It is true that Japanese folklorists, beginning with Yanagita Kunio, have always by-passed Buddhist folk customs. This is somewhat surprising in view of the great interest which in Western countries was always and still is shown to folk Christianity. If one peruses any of the leading journals of European folk customs science (*Volkskunde*), he will be impressed by the great variety of topics discussed therein on Christian folk religion. We hope that Prof. Gorai's efforts to bring more folk Buddhism, or Buddhist folk religion, into the realm

of the science of Japanese folk customs will be crowned with success.

Shimaguchi Yoshiaki: Buddhist Performances and Folk Customs (*Bukkyô to minzoku*).

The history of Buddhism among the common people in Japan and the beliefs among them must be studied by collecting data about the annual practices still existing in big Buddhist temples and in small temples in the villages. A few examples of such practices are religious customs observed at New Year's, spring and autumn equinoxes (*higan*), flower festival, Bon (All Soul's Day), Daishi Festival (in honor of Kôbô Daishi), and others. Important are furthermore *nembutsu* (prayer) gatherings and funerals. In all these Buddhist performances we find the vulgarisation of Buddhism. At the same time if we take off the Buddhist coloring from the religious customs, we find that the common people has preserved many traces of original native beliefs. To bolster his statement Mr. Shimaguchi cites many examples of New Year customs as existing in Zenkôji, the old temple in Nagano City. He finds that the original forms and religious meaning of the customs differ with the various temples and their flocks, these differences going back to the activities of the lower ranks of the Buddhist clergy who were closest to the common people. We find here a close affinity between the line of thinking of Mr. Shimaguchi and Prof. Gorai, his teacher in the doctor course at Otani University.

Washino Masaaki: Lion Dances in Owari (*Owari ni okeru shishimai*)

Dances with lion masks are a Chinese tradition. As already Yanagita Kunio has said, in Japan this tradition was combined with other religious dances with masks of deer and wild boars. Concerning the significance of lion dances, the tradition varies with the region. There are places where the lions are considered to be animated higher beings (*reibutsu*) capable of driving evil spirits away. In other places such higher beings endanger the life of man and are themselves subdued by a good. It also frequently happened that both types are mixed. In the old province of Owari we have the following lion dances: the male lions (*otoko-shishi*) or the ladder lions (*hashigo-shishi*). The dance with these masks is performed by two men one of whom climbs up the shoulder of the other, or a ladder, and displays his acrobatic skill. In the other lion dance, called bride lion (*yome-shishi*) a *jôri* (kind of an epic song) is sung by a masked female dancer. Of these different types and their peculiarities in Owari a survey is presented. The lion dances in Owari have to be studied together with the great *kagura* which are specific of Owari.

Kodama Makoto: Mountain Belief and Shrines (*Sangaku-shinkô to Jinja*).

Early in the Meiji period Buddhism and national religion were separated. Mountains were no longer considered as sacred places of the Buddhists which they were before for the adherents of the Mountain Religion (*shugendô*). Much of the religion and culture of the common people was thus lost or suppressed, and together with it the origin of Shintô went out of sight. The author of this paper illustrates his statement with an example from Mino (Aichi-Pref.). There is a Minamimiya-jinja back in the mountains as an *oku-miya* (rear-shrine). In the

paper presented an attempt is made to clarify the position of the said shrine and of oral traditions and practices connected with it; in other words, to reconstruct the condition of the shrine as it was when it was still an object of mountain belief. By doing so, a contribution is made to the religious history of the common people and the history of *Shugendô*. Mr. Kodama Makoto graduated from the Postgraduate Section of Otani University with a Master thesis on "Mountain Religion of Ontake in Kiso" (*Kiso no Ontake-shugen no kenkyû*).

Suzuki Masataka: Yanagita Kunio's "*Nihon no matsuri*" (The Festivals of Japan), an Attempt at Its Reconstruction from the View-point of Religious Science.

A student of the Postgraduate Section of Keiô University looks at Yanagita's book and analyses it as a student of the Science of Religion.

Anne Marie Bouchy: *Kagura* and Mountain Religion (*Kagura to shugendô*).

No study is on record on the relationship between *kagura* and mountain religion. The opinion is prevailing that *kagura* belongs to Shintô and *shugendô* to Buddhism, but on close examination we find that the two are related in form, content, and function. Miss Bouchy did fieldwork on folk *kagura* and *yamabushi* (mountain ascetics) *kagura* as well. In her paper she discusses the connection between *chinkon-kagura* (soul pacifying *k.*) and *shugendô*. As material for this study are explored the *hana-matsuri* ("flower festival") in the Mikawa mountains, the *mi-kagura* of the Otani-Kumano Jinja, the *fuyu-matsuri* ("winter festival" of Sakanobe, and the *shimotsuki-matsuri* (festival of the frost month [November]) of Enzan, furthermore the *yamabushi-kagura* of Hayaikemine in Tôhoku and the *Reisan-yamabushi-kagura*. All these *kagura* are classified according to form, content, and function. It was found that to all of them the following elements are common: 1) the hot water cauldron and paper decorations, 2) the sprinkling around of hot water and the banners of the "Great Five Gods" (*godai-honzon*); 3) the dancing paraphernalia and the magic art of *shugendô*; 4) the elements of esoteric religion that are manifested in the ritual text of the *hana-matsuri*; 5) the magic nature of the heating water and sprinkling hot water over the by-standers to calm their spirits; 6) Dances for pacifying the souls and driving away evil spirits.—Demoiselle Anne Marie Bouchy is a student of Prof. Gorai Shigeru at Otani University in Kyoto.

Nakazawa Nariaki: The Stages of the Disintegration of Cult Organizations in Modern Times (*Gendai ni okeru miyaza no hôkai katei*).

With emphasis on "*okonai*" of Biwamachi, Kawamichi (Shiga-Pref.).

Kobayashi Kazushige: On the Cult Confraternities of the Three Mountains (*Sansan zentei-kô ni tsuite*).

The Three Mountains in question are Hakusan, Tateyama, and Fujisan.

Akada Mitsuo: The Burial System on Tsushima (*Tsushima no sôbo-sei*).

On the island of Tsushima earth burial in single graves is the norm. However re-burial with bone-washing also exists. There are local variations in burial rites and ancestor rites and beliefs.

Kikuchi Teruo: On the New Mountain Belief in the Mountains of Kitakami (Iwate-Pref.) (*Kitakami Sanchi no shin-yama-shinkô*).  
 Hirayanagi Misako: Festivals and God Possession (*Matsuri to kami-gakari*).

As it is found in the dramatic performances (*geinô*) of the matsuri (festivals), the practitioners of *shugendô* were instrumental in the formalisation of the god-possession. A *matsuri* is not only a human undertaking, a god in a changed form enters the stage.

Yamaji Kôzô: On the Dramatic Performances (*geinô*) in the Middle Ages (*Chûsei geinô ni tsuite*).

Many *geinô* became known in which Buddhist gods appear in Buddhist festivals. Their Buddhist affiliations however may have been lost out of sight or never have been fully known.

One item of the program of the Congress was a *kagura* performance enacted on the stage of the congress hall. Now something about this. In the northern part of Bingo (Hiroshima-Pref.) there exists a so-called *yumi-kagura* (bow *kagura*). A *kagura* is a dramatic performance with songs and music in honor of the gods. Tanaka Shigeo, shrine priest (*gûji*) of the Ienaga Hachimangû, Konu District, Kamishimo Town gave a recital of the *yumi-kagura* in full dress with all the required paraphernalia. A large bow was fastened to a shallow, half size wooden bucket on the floor, so that the bucket functions as a kind of resonance box when the string of the bow is beaten with a bamboo stick. While the priest beats the bow string with bamboo sticks, one in each hand, he recites a ritual text in consonance with the sound of the string. This kind of *kagura* is called *katari-kagura* ("narrating *kagura*") and is still performed in the districts Konu, Ashina and Sera of Bingo. It was originally performed by Shintô priests. Only after the Meiji time it became more of an entertainment and lay people began to perform it. Its real meaning however is strongly religious and the *kagura* was once a purely Shintoist cult ceremony. It was in essence an act of worship of the Hearth God and executed in individual households by a Shrine priest. Only towards the end of the Edo period (1600-1867) this worship of Kôjin became a community affair of the village. People of the age groups 33, 42, 61, and 88 expect special blessings from this *kagura*, strengthening of their vital energies and long life. Bad spirits dangerous to life are kept away by the magic force of the sound of the bow string, and the souls of the persons on whose behalf the rite is performed, are supposed to be calmed (*chinkon*). The god to whom the prayers are offered seems to be an ancestor spirit and at the same time the spirit of cereals (*kokurei*) and worshipped as a house god. The rites of worship take place in one of the inner rooms (*oku no ma*) before a great host of gods and spirits of Heaven and Earth; the clan god (*ujigami*), the Year God (*Saitokujin*), and all gods of the house are called down and invoked. The God of the Hearth (*kamado-gami*) is worshipped mid-January. If no priests are available at that time, then the ceremony is postponed and may take place as late as March. In the old times

two or three priests were in charge of the rite, they used cymbals and flutes to accompany their songs, nowadays only one priest is sufficient. He comes into the house early in the morning and decorates the worshipping place, using multi-colored stripes of paper. Three of five narrating *kagura* are enacted, each one lasting 45 minutes to one hour. Of greatest importance is the ceremonial text recited to the Hearth God (*dokô* "Lord Earth"). Other texts recited are prayers and purification rituals.

Until the years of the Taishô period (1912–1926) Shintô priests were in charge of the rites. Later also lay people could perform them. There were however only very few persons who could remember and recite the texts by heart. This kind of *matsuri* was officially declared as a cultural asset (*bunkasai*) in the field of folk customs.

M.E.

*Shidara*.—By *Shidara Minzoku Kenkyû-kai* [Society for the Study of the Folk Customs of Shidara]. Reproduced by *Aichi-ken Kyôdo-shiryô hakkôkai* [Society for the Publication of Material on Rural Districts], Nagoya, 1975, 610 pages, with a map of Kita-Shidara District, and a color reproduction of the covers of the seventeen issues of *Shidara*.

The journal *Shidara* was published in the district of Kita-Shidara (North Shidara) in Mikawa (Aichi-Pref.) from 1933–1940 by a local folk customs society with the encouragement of the late Yanagita Kunio, the great pioneer of Japanese folk customs research. The editorial office was in Shimoda, Shimokawa Village, Kita-Shidara District. The remote mountain district of North Shidara is considered by Japanese folklorists to be a true store house of old customs and beliefs. Best known is the Hanamatsuri ("Flower Festival"), a most interesting and ancient rural *kagura* (a religious dramatic performance with songs and music) which received much attention from scholars. The new book is a reproduction of the original seventeen issues, together with the table of contents of each and an Index of place names, authors, and topics presented. It was an excellent idea to reproduce *in toto* all numbers of the long defunct journal which would otherwise have been lost and their contents forgotten. The contributors were natives of Kita-Shidara who had grown up with the religious beliefs, lore and customs of their home territory. The German language has the word "Heimatkunde" which comes very close to the Japanese *kyôdô-kenkyû*, which is difficult to render adequately in English. In these fast changing times materials as those deposited in *Shidara* are becoming scarce. No wonder that such well known folklorists as Ariga Kisaemon, Sakurada Katsunori, Miyamoto Tsuneichi, and also the former publisher of the *Shidara Minzoku Kenkyû-kai*, Okada Matsusaburô have an introductory page to welcome the reproduction of the precious local journal.

M.Eder.

Barbara Sperl: Tradition und Moderne in einem koreanischen Dorf. Dissertationen der Universität Wien 107. Wien 1974, 168 pages, with 67 photographs.

The country of the "Morning Calm" is relatively little known. This doctoral thesis is therefore most welcome as a contribution to our ethnographic, sociological and historical knowledge of Korea. It is village Korea that is presented in this

book, the village of Yongsan in the district of Ch'angnyong, South-Kyongsang Province. This village has no railroad connection with the outside world. Pusan can be reached by bus in three hours; Taegu, a new industrial center on the way to Seoul, in two hours, and another city, Masan, in one hour. This village was selected for ethnographic fieldwork under the assumption that due to its comparative isolation from modern cities it has preserved a maximum of tradition in its way of life. The village has a population of 12,428 (1968) in 2,168 households, of which 78 percent are engaged in farming. One household consists on the average of 5.7 persons.

By "Tradition" the author understands the old social structure with its ancient foundations and the old religious outlook on the problems of life and death. By the German word "Moderne" she means mostly American pragmatism, introduced by the American presence in Korea during and after the Korean war, with the stress on family planning, birth control and modern school education. We need to know about all this if we want to get a clear picture of what life in a Korean village, half way between the past and present, is like. Especially interesting are the fieldworker's findings concerning the social stratification of the village population. There exists a village nobility, the *yangban*, competing in importance with the moneyed people of new professions and sources of income. The clan coherence is still strong. There are also many optional groupings (*kye*) with the purpose of mutual support in financial matters. In the religious field it seems things have not changed considerably in spite of modern education and village administration. Most yielding with regard to village religion is the detailed chapter on the annual life cycle (pp. 94-145). Many other things have been given careful attention, such as housing and food. Among the latter we know now what *kimch'i* is, the favorite pickled Chinese cabbage, and how it is made and preserved. For comparative folklore the reports on the tug-of-war and stone fights during the New Year period are important since related customs are known from China and Japan. Special credit is to be given to the 67 photographic illustrations in the appendix to which the reader is *passim* referred. We regret that folklore and folklife research have not been taken up to a much greater extent by native scholars as was and is the case in Japan, but the times were never favorable for it. We hope the situation will improve in the future. Dr. Riedl was engaged in her fieldwork from January to May 1971. She complemented her findings from existing literature, especially when historic background was to be explained. At the end of the book we find a good bibliography.

M.E.