The Spring Prayer (*Toshigoi*) Ceremony of the Heian Court

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The Japanese Court during the Heian period (794–1185 A.D.) spent a great part of its time in the performance of religious rites. They were a vast unassimilated plethora of Buddhist, Taoist, Confucian, and Shinto observances.[1] The Court Shinto rituals, although the oldest, may also have been the most tedious, unable to match the glamorous splendor of esoteric Buddhism. But they alone are featured as part of the policy of the state in the constitutional documents, and they alone were held to express the inherent spiritual meaning of the throne itself.

So far as this Court Shinto ritual code is concerned, these fundamental documents are the Taihô Code of 701–02 (extant in the form of the Yôrô Code of 718, which in turn is extant only in the official commentary *Ryô no Gige* of 854, and the unofficial commentary *Ryô no Shûge* of 880–920), and three *shiki* or codes of procedure of implementation, the Kônin (819), the Jôgan (872) and the Engi (927). The last, the *Engishiki*, gives by far the fullest description of the *Toshigoi* and of most of the other usages of Court Shinto and will be the basis of the present study.

This Court Shinto was of a piece with the reform and rationalization of Japanese government effected by these documents, on the model of T'ang China. While some major motifs of prehistoric Shinto were preserved, as in amber, by the new framework, Court

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**The surnames of authors of books in Japanese are given first.

1. For a listing of the court ritual calendar in brief, see Ivan Morris, *The World of the Shining Prince* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963), pp. 156–65. The sample of annual court activities that Professor Morris is able to give is but a small fraction of the total, yet reveals the fantastic variety of spiritual orientations that followed each other day after day.

Shinto should not be confused indiscriminately with archaic, shrine, or popular Shinto. It was a set of quite formal rituals dedicated in one way or another to the affirmation of the imperial ideology presented by the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* (compiled in the same period, 712 and 720 respectively). The rituals are based to a greater or less degree on the Chinese T'ang ritual, the *Tz'u Ling*. Some, including the *Toshigoi*, seem to be newly-contrived in their court form on a Chinese pattern, others are very Japanese, fitted only roughly into the rationalized format of the Codes. These performances were mounted by the *Jingi-kan* or Ministry of Official Shinto—a bureau of the highest rank newly formed by the Taihô Code of 701, but dominated by the ancient priestly Nakatomi and Imbe families.

The main pillars of this official Shinto were the *Daijô-sai*, or imperial accession first-fruits; the special role of the Grand Shrine of Ise; and a series of annual rites centering around the *Toshigoi* in the spring and the *Niiname* or harvest first-fruits in the fall. Partly because it is first in the *Engishiki* ritual, the *Toshigoi* has a special importance. It serves as a model for several other rites too, and its prayer or *norito* sets a pattern for several others. Thus its description is the longest and most detailed.

Although ostensibly a service of praying for good crops in order that the harvest festival may be joyfully offered—the theme of the *Toshigoi norito*—the real crux of the *Toshigoi* was the division of imperial offerings among the representatives of a remarkably large number of shrines, to be returned to these shrines and there offered. Thus the central significance of the *Toshigoi* lies in its assertion of the sacred primacy of the Emperor (represented by the Ministry of Official Shinto). It is the sovereign, the ritual demonstrates, who assigns rank and privilege to shrines by indicating which receive what offerings from the throne, and which must be content with a *Toshigoi* administered by the throne's delegate, the *Kokushi* or provincial governor.

Even more significant, by making it precisely the spring festival at which the most impressive list of imperial offerings is sent to the greatest number of shrines, the ceremony affirms that it is the sovereign who is the ultimate source of that fructifying power which must, at the beginning of the growing season, be sacramentally injected into all the fields of the Empire. This is achieved by a union between the celestial male power, personified since the descent of the heavenly grandchild by the Emperor, and the female *kami* or the land.

Here, if the *Toshigoi* is interpreted in this way, one catches a glimpse of the archaic pattern of faith—the belief that the *ta no kami*, the deities of the ricefields, descend into the fields in the spring, marry the maidens of the field, dwell therein over the summer to help the

rice to grow as a child, until they are seen off again with harvest festivity in the autumn. Anciently, there was no new years' festival distinct from this pattern, but the whole period from harvest to planting comprised a period of crisis and renewal. The motif of the god descending in the spring has a parallel in the imperial ideology, for the sovereign is likewise descended from above. The first of the imperial line were sent down from heaven and married the daughters of earthly *kami*, and at the Harvest Festivals, such as the *Daijô-sai*, the renewal of kingship is one with the renewal of the crops in the offered first fruits.

Finally, it is significant that the *Toshigoi*, formally based on the Chinese court spring rite, is first set apart only in the Taihô period (c. 701), at about the same time the establishment of a permanent bureaucratic capital changed the nature of the old sacral kingship. The introduction of the Chinese New Year's led to the practical limitation of the Harvest Festival to the role of a Thanksgiving, requiring a separate statement of the spring rites of bringing divine power to the fields.

What we really see in the *Toshigoi* of the Heian period, then is the conveying of this divine power from the sacred person of the Emperor, the heavenly *kami* on earth, under the sacramental guise of the imperial offerings to the *kami* of the many fields. In effect, a symbolical sex union is thus achieved by these offerings between Heaven and Earth. This is the reason for the relative lack of humility with which the Emperor is made to address the *kami* in the *norito*: he comes to them not as mortal flesh trembling before divine omnipotence, but with the merely respectful salutation of a bridegroom towards his bride, each necessary to the other in the mystery of the creation of new life in the cosmos.

The *Toshigoi*, then, was celebrated by the Ministry of Official Shinto (*Jingi-Kan*) in the Palace and a few days later in the Grand Shrine of Ise and the other shrines to which the offerings are sent. The Ministry of Official Shinto *Toshigoi* ceremony as such was entirely an artificial contrivance of the Taihô period, but its ideology has profound links with both popular and imperial Shinto. Very archaic elements have been incorporated into both the *norito* and the ritual. The *Toshigoi*, together with the two Tsukinami festivals and the fall Harvest Festival, were the four most important annual Shinto rituals of the Heian Palace according to the Taihô Code and the *Engishiki*. It is still performed in the Palace and the *Kampei* (imperial offering) shrines, but now must share attention with other New Year and spring rites and has very limited importance.

We now present a translation of the *Engishiki* material on the

Toshigoi, excepting the *norito.*[2] This *Toshigoi* rite was enacted in an enclosure 370 feet (*shaku*) by 230 called the Sacred or Western Hall (*Sai-in* or *Sei-in*). It was located in the southeast corner of the Imperial Palace enclosure. It had gates on the north, east (the "central" gate, leading to the Ministry of Official Shinto offices), and south walls. Against the west wall were the shrines of the Eight Gods, eight *kami* who protected the palace; they were worshipped by the Ministry of Official Shinto, and their honor was especially the responsibility of the priestesses (*mikannagi*) attached to the Ministry and of the Empresses. The Sacred Hall was paved with white gravel and open to the sky. Within it was a large area toward the center where tables for offerings were set up. Near it, and at two or three othre locations, were temporary *chô* or "officers," here rendered "shelters," indicated by direction from the center. The Sacred Hall also contained permanent treasuries for imperial offerings, and a cryptomeria tree. The *Toshigoi* text is the first presented in the *Engishiki* after the prefaces. The heading reads Volume I, Ministry of Official Shinto section 1, and a subheading reads "Seasonal Rites," First Part. A brief introduction calls the Accession *Daijô-sai* the Great Rite, and *Toshigoi, Tsukinami, Kanname,* the Kamo festival and so forth middle rites, and Ôimi, *Kaze no kami,* and a number of others small rites. The dates of some are given. *Toshigoi* was held on the 4th day of the 2nd month. Then, translating:

> Second month rites:
> The *Toshigoi* Festival. 3,132 places.
> Major shrines: 492. Of these, 304 receive imperial offerings, at 188 the provincial governor celebrates.
> Minor shrines: 2,640. Of these, 433 receive imperial offerings, at 2,207 the provincial governor celebrates.

[These distinctions among shrines are reflected in the shrine tables of the *Engishiki.*]

> The Ministry of Official Shinto celebrates it in 737 places.

2. Text, Okura Seishin Bunka Kenkyûjo, *Shinten.* (Rev. ed., Yokohama: by the compilers, 1962, pp. 1006–11. For parentheses in the text above refer to pages in *Shinten.*

The norito has been translated by Ernest Satow "Ancient Japanese Rituals, N. 1," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan,* Vol. VII (1878), pp. 109–112; and by Donald L. Philippi, *Norito: A New Translation of the Ancient Japanese Ritual Prayers* (Tokyo: Kokugakuin University, 1959), pp. 17–22. It is not given in full here. The ritual action sections translated in this study are briefly summarized by Satow,, *op. cit.,* pp. 106–07, and by W. G. Aston, *Shinto: The Way of the Gods* (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1905), pp. 280–81.

[This number is obviously the total of the major and minor shrines receiving imperial offerings. It really means that the Ministry of Official Shinto was responsible for distributing the offerings to representatives of those shrines who came to the capital for the rite given below, and took them back to their shrines—which meant that the *Toshigoi* would actually happen some days later at shrines outside the capital. Ministry of Official Shinto emissaries themselves took imperial offerings only to Ise.]

[A list of the number of shrines receiving imperial offerings by provinces follows. Those listed are the "major" shrines totalling 304. The distribution is very uneven: 30 are within the Palace, and most of the rest are in the home provinces, Yamato alone accounting for 128. Fourteen other provinces in western and central Honshû and Shikoku list one or two each; there are none in Kyushu.]

Yashiro: 198 places.

[Apparently this term meaning shrine is to distinguish separate shrine edifices from *za*, the term used as "counter" previously, which actually could be rendered "altar" of which there might be two or three at which offerings were presented in one shrine building or complex.]

[Then follows the list of offerings presented at *each* of the 198 *yashiro* among the 304 places receiving imperial offerings. As stated all of this material was divided among representatives at the Palace *Toshigoi*, the following amounts going to each. For the American equivalents of the units of measurement, see the table at the end.

Silk cloth, 5 *shaku*. 1 each of the five colors.
Cloth of mixed red and blue thread [*shizu*], 1 *shaku*.
Paper-mulberry cloth [yû], 2 rolls.
Flax, 5 rolls.
Ordinary cloth, 1 *jô* 5 *shaku*.
Shizu sword-case, 3 *sun* wide.
Silk sword-case, 3 *sun* wide.
Cotton sword-case, 3 *sun* wide.
1 bundle of four offering sticks.
1 bundle of eight offering sticks.

[These last two items are *yokuraoki* and *yakuraoki*. Their manufacture is described in the *Mokuryô* or Carpenters' Office section of the *Engishiki* (1605). They were simply smooth round sticks a little over a foot in length tied in bundles length-wise and used as offerings, especially as *agamono* or expiation for sin and impurity at purifications. Susanoo, at the time of his expulsion from Heaven, was required

to heap up a thousand such *kuraoki*, or perhaps a thousand bundles or piles of them, or a thousand offering tables. The Kojiki expression, *Haya-Susanoo no Mikoto ni chi-kuraoki-do o ôse*, is difficult, but extablishes some connection between these items and the myth. Whether the same object is meant, or whether the word originally meant offering tables, as Satow, Chamberlain, and Aston translated it, and came to be transferred to the atonement sticks of the *Engishiki*, seems to be unclear.]

1 shield
1 spear
1 blow

[On p. 1103, it is stated that the bows for the *Toshigoi*, in number 180, were to be produced by Kai and Shinano provinces, and sent before the 12th month. The difference between this figure and the number of shrines above allegedly receiving imperial offerings, suggests that these precise figures probably should not be taken too seriously. One can well imagine that, in those days of very poor transportation, representatives especially from more distant places did not actually appear every year.]

1 quiver
1 deer antler
1 hoe

[*Suwa* is rendered "hoe" by Satow and "mattock" by Aston. This item had great importance in the spring rites of the Grand Shrine of Ise.]

Sake, 1 shô
Abalone and bonito, 5 each
Dried fish, 2 shô
Seaweed, smooth and mixed, 6 stalks each
Salt, 1 shô
1 sake bottle
Rolled matting, 5 *shaku*

[Next follows a list of 106 secondary shrines which also receive imperial offerings; these 106 plus the 198 *yashiro* above equals 304, the number of "major" places which receive the imperial offerings. Below are the offerings presented at each of the secondary shrines. These were what are now called *aidono*, side altars or detached shrines within the complex of an important shrine.]

Silk, 5 *shaku*, 1 each of the five colors.

Paper-mulberry cloth (*yû*), 2 rolls.
Flax, 5 rolls.
Cloth of mixed red and blue thread (*shizu*), 1 *shaku*.
Shizu sword-case.
Silk sword-case.
Cotton sword-case.
1 bundle each of four and eight offering sticks.
1 shield.
1 spear-head.
Rolled matting, 5 *shaku*.

[Then follows a list of 433 shrines at which the *Toshigoi* imperial offerings are not put "on the table." Imperial offerings at major shrines, the 304 above, were formerly placed on top of the offering table. At minor shrines receiving imperial offerings it was placed under the offering table. A parenthetical note follows saying "all small" and listing the number of shrines in this category by province.)

Yashiro: 375.
Silk cloth, 3 *shaku*.
Mulberry-paper cloth (*yû*), 2 rolls.
Flax, 5 rolls.
1 bundle each of four and eight offering sticks.
1 shield.
1 spear-head.
Ordinary cloth, 1 *jô* 4 *shaku*.
Rolled matting 3 *shaku*.

Among these, at 65 shrines 1 hoe and 1 quiver are added. At 30 a hoe [only] is added. At 3 a quiver [only] is added. Names are given in the register.

Secondary shrines: 58.
Silk, 3 *shaku*.
Paper-mulberry cloth (*yû*), 2 rolls.
Flax, 5 rolls.
1 bundle each of four and eight offering sticks.
1 shield.
1 spear-head.
Rolled matting, 3 *shaku*.

At places where the Ministry of Official Shinto celebrates the offerings in prepared in the number stated above. The eight shrines where the three empresses and the imperial prince celebrate all receive offerings "on the table."

[The three empresses would be the sovereign's mother, wife, and daughter-in-law.]

However, on occasional feasts they are increased or decreased, and the number is not always the same.

At the Grand Shrine and Watarai Shrine [the "Inner" and "Outer" shrines of the Grand Shrine of Ise] a horse is added, 1 *tan* of cotton material for the harness.

At the Mitoshi shrine a white horse, white bear, and white cock are added.

At 19 shrines named a horse is added.

[The first indicates the special place of the Ise shrines. To this day "divine horses" are led around the shrines on certain feast-days. The second confirms the special role of *Toshigoi* of the Mitoshi shrine and its three white animals, discussed below, which offering is also mentioned in the *norito*. The shrines receiving a horse offering (color not specified) are an interesting assortment. First names are two of the Eight God shrines, *Takamimusubi* and *Ômiyanome*, the Heavenly and Palace deities. Then follow thirteen shrines called "mountain gates," this list containing four or the six listed as such in the *Toshigoi norito*, and several more as well. Finally there are four "water partings" identical with the four given in the *norito*. One of these is Katsuragi in Yamato, not far from Nara, the site of the Motoshi shrine discussed later in this chapter.]

1 *kin* of Aki cotton material for headpieces (*kazura*) for officials from the Ministry of Official Shinto on down, 5 *tan*, of paper-mulberry cloth for material for the Nakatomi who recites the *norito*, and a small *tatami* mat. The material for the Tsukinami and Harvest Festival headpieces, the *norito* vestment, and the *tatami* mat is similar to this.

Fifteen days before the festival, eight Imbe and one carpenter have prepared the materials for the offerings. However the quivers are prepared by the Quiver-plaiting Clan, the spears are gathered from Sanuki province, and five days before the festival the carpenter arrives at the office and is received.

The preparation is overseen by the head of the Imbe, and if there is no official of the Imbe in this office, or there lack nine Imbe among the shrine serfs, simultaneous duties shall be taken by various other officials.

The cotton material for the pure garments, 2 *jô* 7 *shaku* for each. The officials [of the Ministry of Official Shinto] have 1 *tan* of broad cotton.

To each person per day: 2 *shô* of rice, 6 *gô* of sake (5th rank: 1 *shô*), 3 lengths of *sushi* (5th rank: 5 lengths of an Azuma abalone, a kite, a boiled bonito, 2 each, may be added), 2 *shaku* of salt (5th rang: 5 *shaku*), seaweed, 2 lengths. However to the carpenter pure clothing and foodstuffs are not given.

At dawn of the day of strict abstinence, they present the offerings "on the table" and "under the table" in the Western Hall.

[Here begins the order of the Ministry of Official Shinto service in the Western Hall of Ministry of Official Shinto chapel in the Palace. It started at dawn. The abstinence mentioned is *ma-imi*, strict abstinence. There were two grades of abstinence, *ara-imi* or "rough abstinence and *ma-imi* or "strict abstinence." The details of what is required for each abstinence, which is usually undergone in some form by Shinto clergy

everywhere before a festival, vary somewhat, but usually require retiring to a special residence, dietary restrictions, and cooking over a special fire. For feasts of the class of *Toshigoi*, the Ministry of Official Shinto kept three days of "rough Abstinence" and one, the day of the service, of "strict." Elsewhere in the *Engishiki* (1101), we read, "Always, before and after the *Toshigoi, Kamo, Tsukinami,* and *Niiname* festivals, on the days of Rough Abstinence, monks and nuns and those in heavy vows and associates of those in mourning are not allowed to visit within the Palace enclosure. However persons in minor vows are allowed to enter on days of Rough and Strict Abstinence."[3]]

The Palace Servants spread the matting under the table of custody. The Preparations Office [Kamori-be] prepares the shrines. The preparation of the shrines for the various festivals is alotted to them.

[The duties of this office are outlined in Chapter 38 of the *Engishiki*, which begins with a section on the *Toshigoi*, amounting to little more than a list of the buildings of the Ministry of Official Shinto chapel with instructions to "prepare them," in order of the rank of the users.]

The Ministry of Official Shinto officials leading the Mikannagi enter

3. The Taihô Code law concerning the abstinences, as translated by Sir George Sansom, "Early Japanese Law and Administration," *Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. XI (December, 1934), pp. 124–25, provides the following information on "Rough" and "Strict" abstinence.

"Article 11. During partial abstinence (*ara-imi*) all government offices shall carry on their work as usual. But (officials) shall not pay visits of condolence upon a death, or call upon the sick, or eat flesh. Nor shall death sentences be pronounced or criminal cases judged. No music shall be played, and no unclean or inauspicious tasks be performed.

"During complete abstinence (*ma-imi*) no duties may be performed except those to do with the ceremonial observances. All other work shall be suspended.

"Article 12. When there is one month's abstinence the festival is a great festival, when there is three days', a middle festival, when there is one day, a small festival.

"Article 15. On the occasions of festivals, the proper authority (i.e., the Dept. of Religion [Ministry of Official Shinto] shall inform the Government (i.e., the Chancellor's Office) of the date from which abstinence begins, and the Government shall notify the other offices."

Sansom adds the following note: "Partial abstinence is *ara-imi*. Complete abstinence is *ma-imi*. This took place in the 11th month, for reasons connected with the great food festival (Daijô-e), which must be celebrated upon an emperor's accession." However it appears from the ritual text above that on a "middle festival" like *Toshigoi* in addition to the three days of *ara-imi* the day of the ceremony itself was *ma-imi*, though perhaps only until after the service, since very many Shinto services are followed by a feast which breaks the fast.

from the Central Gate and proceed to the shelter in the west. They face the east, the north being to the upper end of their rank.

[This is the official entry of the participants in the ceremony which marks the actual beginning of solemnities. The Mikannagi are the female "priestesses," daughters of the Nakatomi. By the Engi period they are but a pale memory of the palace shamanesses of old. It is not clear whether they are singular or plural in the *Toshigoi*. The word is believed to come from *kamu*, deity, and *nagi*, to pacify. Several are mentioned in the *Toshigoi norito* as having special responsibility for the shrines of the various guardian *kami* of the palace, the "high priestess," Ômikannagi, being responsible for the Eight Gods. As indicated, whether she only or all these palace priestesses mentioned in the *norito* were present at the *Toshiogi* is not clear.[4] One's "upper" side is considered more honorable, and in the positioning given here is toward the Eight Gods. The positioning means the higher ranks were to the north.]

The Prince Minister and his subordinates enter from the North Gate and take places at the shelter to the north. The Prince Minister faces south, the Sangi and his subordinates proceed to the shelter to the east and face west, and the Imperial Prince and Taifu proceed to the seats in the west shelter and face east.

[The Prime Minister was in charge of the government departments, parallel to the Ministry of Official Shinto, although the latter had precedence of honor, even if its Chief Minister was only of fourth rank. Here we see the two, the spiritual and civil arms, as it were, entering by separate gates and facing each other. The Sangi and Taifu were fourth rank civil officials.]

The Priestess takes a seat below the shelter of the north, and a group of official enters from the South Gate and proceeds to seats in the shelter of the south. They face north with east on their upper side. The Shrine Serfs (*Kambe*) and Hafuri having withdrawn stand in the courtyard on the shelter to the west.

[The Kambe were members of hereditary corporations devoted to more menial tasks connected with shrines. The Hafuri were apparently priests who took secondary roles in services, and perhaps took charge of lesser religious functions, or functions for lower levels of society. According to Philippi, the etymology is unclear, but has been "variously interpreted as 'slaughterers,' 'those who bury the dead,' 'prophets,' 'sleeve-flutterers,' and 'exorcists.' The first two seem most plausible."[5]

4. See the discussion of the *mikannagi* in Philippi, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
5. *Ibid.*, u. 92.

They were present from the various shrines to which the imperial offerings would be delivered to carry them. Judging from their mention in the *norito*, the *Kannushi* or incumbent priests of the receiving shrines were also present to accept the offerings.

> Now the Ministry of Official Shinto personnel go down and proceed to seats in front of their shelter, and the Prime Minister and his subordinates go down and proceed to seats in front of the main shelter.
>
> The Nakatomi advances, goes to the central seat, and recites the *norito*. Each time he pauses the Hafuri say "O-o-o" and when he has stopped reciting the Nakatomi withdraws, and the Prime Minister and his subordinates, and the other officials, show reverence by clapping their hands. They do not say "O-o-o." However afterwards they all return to the original place, and the Chief Minister of the Ministry of Official Shinto [the *Haku*] gives the command to divide the offerings.
>
> The Sakan say "O-o-o" and two of the Imbe advance and stand on either side of the table; the Sakan calls the priestess and the Hafuri of the shrines with the rest of the officials. The Hafuri saying "O-o-o" advance, and the Imbe divide the offerings. The offering for the Grand Shrine of Ise is put on a separate table, and is taken by emissaries.

[Here is the division of the imperial offerings to the representatives of the many shrines which receive it. Note the special status of the Ise shrine. There is a special *norito* provided in the *Engishiki* for the presentation of the *Toshigoi* and *Tsukinami* imperial offerings by the *Nakatomi* and *Imbe* at the two Ise shrines. Sakan is the fourth rank of officials in the Ministry of Official Shinto. The *Imbe* were a family of priests in the Ministry of Official Shinto especially responsible for the offering of material offerings.]

> The Sakan returns to his place and announces: division of the offerings is finished, and the various officials withdraw. The rite of the Tsukinami festival [a festival held in the 6th or 12th month; a major rite for which *Toshigoi* was a model] is like this.
>
> The *Toshigoi* celebrated by provincial governors: 2,395 places. Major shrines: 186. [Listed in number by region.] For each separate shrine, 2 rolls of silk, 2 rolls of cotton.
>
> The provincial governors and their subordinates follow the example above. Three days of Rough Abstinence, one of Strict, and then they meet together to celebrate. The day of the festival and the rite for dividing the offerings all follow the example of the Ministry of Official Shinto. For all the offerings the direct tax is used.

[Here we see that the provincial governors, appointed by the Crown, functioned toward a class of lesser shrines by their provinces not receiving imperial offerings from the capital in a way imitative of the Palace rite.]

This concludes the *Toshigoi* rite as given by the *Engishiki*. A few

other references to it in the *Engishiki* may supplement the above on a few points. For example, in the *Saigû* section we see that the *Toshigoi* was celebrated in the princess' establishment at Ise, in a way imitative on a smaller scale of the Palace ritual, including the sending of offerings to a list of other shrines. This illustrates the fact that the *Saigû* represented a Ministry of Official Shinto foothold at Ise, and was meant to reduplicate the Palace there in miniature. There is also a note in the *Saigû* section to present a horse to *Ômiyanome* at *Toshigoi*, and to prepare garments for the *Nakatomi* and three *Imbe* who will arrive to recite the *norito* and present the offerings at Ise (1170).

To return to the Palace, we find that in the instructions for other officials there are reminders of the *Toshigoi* function. A parenthetical note in the *Daijô-sai* section sets a precedent for other occasions by saying that offerings are made to the same major and minor shrines which participate in the *Toshigoi* (1236). In the *Matsurigoto* section, we see that "Always, on the 4th day of the 2nd month, the Prime Minister and Sangi and the subordinates go down to the Ministry of Official Shinto to present the *Toshigoi* offerings, and assemble . . . with various officials of above fifth and below sixth rank." (1482) They are all officials of the *matsurigoto* or civil line. In another place we read that "The various officials who visit at the two feasts of *Toshigoi* and *Tsukinami* cannot attend until after the Prime Minister has first proceeded to his place" (1548).

Finally, in the section of the *Engishiki* devoted to the Bureau of Ranking (*Shikubu*) is a fairly long passage concerning the announcing of the *Toshigoi* and *Tsukinami* rites to the officials. It must be paraphrased rather than translated because of the large number of names of offices and ranks. The gist of it is that one day before the Rough Abstinence leading up to the festival, the Ministry of the Left summons the various officials and commands to them the days of abstinence. They appear in groups in sequence of their ranks on the position signs, and as each group receives the command it responds "O-o-o." On the day of the festival they assemble in the same order outside the Western Hall of the Ministry of Official Shinto (1555). The instructions for certain other offices as well contain somewhere a brief notice to have two or three middle-grade officers put in an appearance at the Ministry of Official Shinto on *Toshigoi* to represent the bureau.

The ancient *Toshigoi* was celebrated on the 4th day of the 2nd month. The earliest reference to it in the chronicles is found in the *Shoku Nihongi* under Keiun 3 (706), 2nd month, 26th day: "This day 109 shrines of the provinces of Kai, Shinano, Etchû, Tajima, Tosa, and so forth, for the first time began the custom of *Toshigoi* offerings. The

names of these shrines are supplied in the Records of the Ministry of Official Shinto."[6] Of course this notice is not contemporary; the expression "for the first time" would give away the perspective of a later time if we did not know that the *Shoku Nihongi* is constructive history written in a period not much more than a century before the compilation of the *Engishiki*, and well over a century after the events it records for the Keiun period. Nonetheless the ascription of the first celebration of *Toshigoi* to Keiun 3 is significant, and perhaps not overly inaccurate, if the Court ceremony is meant. The clue is in the final reference to records of the Ministry of Official Shinto. Although as we have seen this office certainly had precedents in the role of such families as the Nakatomi and Imbe, the publication of the Taihô Code which reorganized the government on the Chinese model and officially established it dates only from 701–02. Apparently the lapse of four years was considered a decent interval for the details of such a rite to be worked out so the "official" inauguration of the spring prayer for crops was set at 706. The Keiun 3 reference incidentally gives a date, the 26th of the 2nd month, rather later than any other source, although the exact date of *Toshigoi* has varied somewhat within the first half or so of the second month. Of course the Keiun date may refer rather to the time these 109 shrines supposedly received the offerings. But it is the last item of the second month, which suggests it might have been appended as something of an afterthought, with the recollection that it always fell within that month.

The medieval *Nenchûgyôji Hishô*, however, states that the *Toshigoi* was first celebrated in Temmu 4 (675). Although this late Heian document is not historically reliable, there is often truth in its fictions. Nishiyama Toku, in his recent extensive study of the *Toshigoi*, expresses the view that it is definitely a later product of the imperial Shinto consolidated in the reign of Temmu. He demonstrates in detail, for example, that the *Toshigoi norito* is a compendium of several earlier agricultural and imperial *norito* and *yogoto* (congratulatory words to the throne).[7]

A second item of interest in the *Shoku Nihongi* reference is the relatively large number of shrines in diverse places which are said to have made (or received) *Toshigoi* offerings. One is reminded of the fact that by the time of the *Engishiki* 3,132 places reputedly participated,

6. "Shoku Nihongi," *Kokushi Taikei*, II (Tokyo: Kokushi Taikei Kenshûkan, 1935), p. 26.

7. Nishiyama Toku, *Jinja to Saiki* (Tokyo: Shibundô, 1965), pp. 267–330.

a considerably larger number than that given for any other festival.[8]

The next reference (and one earlier in date) is the mention of the *Toshigoi* in the legal codes of the Taihô period. The *Ryô no Shûge* commentary on the *Toshigoi* (880 A.D.) may be translated as follows. The *Ryô no Gige* (834) is identical but goes only as far as the asterisk.

> The Middle Month of spring. [*Naka no haru*: note transposition of word order to accomodate Chinese usage.]
>
> *Toshigoi* festival. [These characters are also transposed for the Japanese reading. Presumably the original *Ryô* or law provided no more than the name of the festival.]
>
> [The name] means: to pray or implore. [The ministers] are caused to pray that the year may progress without disaster and in accordance with the order of nature. It is celebrated by the Ministry of Official Shinto. Thus it is called *Toshikoi**. This is the explanation. The character *ki* is pronounced *koi*. Cheng Hsuan discusses in his commentary on the Chou Book of Rites thus: '*Ki* is prayers; that is, [prayers] in order to avoid disaster and above all to call on good deities for blessing.' All deities of Heaven and Earth are celebrated by the Ministry of Official Shinto. A hundred families gather. At Katsuragi the Kamo family especially serves *Mitoshi no Kami*. They present one white boar and one white cock. It is celebrated to make the harvest ripen, and is like the *Ôtoshi* festival.[9]

A note added in the original *Shûge* says that the part from what we have rendered "All deities of Heaven and Earth" to" . . . one white cock" is taken from the *Nihongôki*.

This passage provides occasion for several comments which should illuminate the background of the *Toshigoi*. Hence I will now discuss 1) the name *Toshigoi*, 2) Cheng Hsuan and the Chinese background of the rite, 3) Katsuragi and the Kamo family, and 4) Mitoshi, Ôtoshi, and the offering of white animals.

The name Toshigoi. The significance of the first half of the name, the word *toshi*, is of most interest, since it presently means "year" but appears anciently to have meant "harvest" as well.

According to the *Shuo wen*, a Chinese dictionary published in 100 A.D., the character read *toshi* in Japanese meant grain harvest, and according to the *Spring and Autumn Chronicles*, the upper part of the

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8. In part this may reflect the fact that Toshigoi was assimilated to the native spring agricultural tradition. We may note in passing that Toshigoi falls about the same time as Setsubun, the official Heian beginning of spring. To this festival have been gathered many popular rites, both Chinese and Japanese, such as bean-throwing and *tsui-na* or casting out of demons.

9. "Ryô no Gige," *Kokushi Taikei*, XXII (Tokyo: Kokushi Taikei Henshûkai, 1939), p. 77; "Ryo no Shûge," *Kokushi Taikei*, XXIII (Tokyo: Kokushi Taikei Henshûkai, 1943, p. 195.

character represents a ripe rice plant and the lower part a thousand. The combination of the two stands for thousands of ripe rice plants or the yield of a harvest, gathered only once a year.

It seems that the Japanese word *toshi* which attached to this Chinese character had similar connotations both of "year" and "harvest," although the precision of the correlation supplies some ground for suspicion. But it would be a very natural identification in an archaic agricultural society. However even by the Nara period, the "year" usage strongly outweighs the "harvest." I have checked twenty-eight occurrences in the *Manyôshû* (in #180, 211, 214, 378, 525, 619, 897, 1942, 2035, 2037, 2055, 2058, 2243, 2398, 2494, 2832, 3067, 3264, 3502, 3657, 3925, 4113, 4116, 4124, 4127, 4229, 4269). Excluding the phrase *aratama no toshi*, which will be discussed in a moment, only two examples occur in which *toshi* could have the meaning of "harvest." The first is #3925, which I translate, "At the beginning of the year (*atarashiki toshi no hajime*) snow falls which evidences a fruitful year (*toyo no toshi*)." Obviously the second *toshi* could equally well, or better, be rendered as "harvest," and the modification by *toyo* is particularly interesting in the light of the opinion of the *Nihon Kogo Daijiten*[10] that the *to* of *toshi* derives from an ancient root meaning "full" or "plenteous" which is also the root of *totemo* and *toyo*. The *shi* is here said to derive from an ancient word meaning "food"[11] and hence the whole of *toshi* ancient meant "one food-growing cycle" and so one calendar year.

The *Manyôshû* poem #4124 is the example usually cited by Japanese lexicographers, along with the *Toshigoi norito*, to demonstrate the "grain-harvest" meaning for *toshi*. It may be rendered, "The rain for which I longed has come to fall. If this is so, even if no prayers are said, the year (*toshi*) will flourish."[12]

Of particular interest is the expression *aratama no toshi*, which as a "pillow word" or conventional epithet supplies the opening words of fourteen of the Manyôshû poems. I have looked at these fourteen examples (#590, 2140, 2410, 2891, 2935, 2956, 3207, 3258, 3775, 3979, 4156, 4244 4248, 4490) and find that in all these cases *toshi* has the apparent sense of "year," with special emphasis on the beginning or end of the year, or the long succession of years. The phrase *aratama no*

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10. Compare the archaic word ***shishi*** for flesh or meat and various archaic and current words for meat-animals and food related to it, such as ***ushi*** ("cow"), ***inoshishi*** ("boar"), ***shika*** ("deer"), and ***sushi*** (small cakes made of rice, a delicacy such as seafood, and vinegar). However most of these refer to meat rather than grain food.

12. "Waga yorishi ame wa yuri-kinu kaku shi koto-age sezu tomo toshi wa sakaemu."

toshi no ito nagaku (the course of the year lasts long) occurs six times.

However we must try to discern what the word *aratama* actually is, and why it is attached to *toshi*. According to the standard *Kenkyûsha* dictionary it still survives attached to *toshi* in the expression *aratama no toshi no hajime* for New Year's; according to the *Kojien* dictionary it is used as a "pillow word" with several other time-words as well: *tsuki* (month), *hi* (day), *yo* (night or age), *haru* (spring). The characters commonly used for *aratama* however represent "uncut jewel."

A great deal of discussion, too lengthy to detail here, has circled around *aratama*.[13] But a recent contribution by Kako Akira, of which I can only summarize the conclusions, relates the matter to our problem. He states that *tama* ("jewel" character) is often used where *tama* ("spirit") is meant, and that the word *aratama* certainly was originally used to mean "rough spirit" or "manifest spirit."[14] The notion of *aramitama*, active, expressive, "working deity, is familiar from the mythology, and Kako appends to his discussion a long list of early uses of the term.[15] But why is *aratama* attached to *toshi*? The original meaning of *toshi* is a clue. Citing the *Shuo wen*, the mention of the deities *Mitoshi* and *Ôtoshi* in the *Kojiki*, the *Kogoshûi*, and the *norito*, together with the two *Manyôshû* poems cited, he accepts the notion of *toshi* as originally meaning "grain harvest." Kako concedes that one should exercise caution in using only two lines of the *Manyôshû* to prove the original meaning of the word. But in this case he believes it is justified, since these two expressions are drawn from old songs, which are always conservative, like the liturgical precedents and retains set phrases which preserve obsolete usage.

Thus Kako concludes that the expression *aratama no toshi* originally meant *aratama no minori*—"harvest of the rough spirits"—a harvest brought to plenteous ripening by the presence of the beneficial active deities.[16]

This seems plausible enough, if the "rough spirit" sense be accepted for *aratama*. Even though the word be written "rough jewel" the sense of "new" is rejected by Kako, although J. L. Pierson in his translation of the *Manyôshû* is often satisfied with the words "a fresh year" for the phrase, and the *Kogojiten* gives *aratamaru* ("to make new") as the *first meaning for aratama no*; but again, the "pillow word" may well retain obsolete and archaic connotations. If even partially true, Kako's

13. A summary of major positions is found in Kako Akira, *Manyôshû Shinron* (Tokyo: Fûkan, 1965), pp. 65 ff.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 83.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

theory would give coloration to the original meaning of *toshi* and the world-view of the very archaic age—already passing by the Nara period —in which it was current, and which supplied the Japanese background and the sense of *toshi* which lingers in the title and *norito* of the *Toshigoi* festival.

In any case, the opinion of the two English translators of the *norito*, Satow and Philippi,[17] that the word *Toshigoi* means "Praying for the harvest" before "praying for the year" seems to be valid. Whether this is to be explained through the influence of the double meaning of the Chinese character *nien*, since it is from Chinese usage, as we shall see in a moment, that the conjunction of the two characters derives, or from a coincidental double meaning for the word for "year" in two non-cognate languages is not clear.

Cheng Hsuan and the Chinese background of the Rite. The quotation in the Taihô Code commentary is from the commentary by Cheng Hsuan (127–200 A.D.) on the *Chou Li*.[18] The citation is typical of the intense desire of the Nara and early Heian court to establish precedents in China for their institutions. Certainly there were in China, as in Japan and virtually every culture, rites of spring. The *Chou Li* reports in the chapter "Service of the Office of Cocks" that "At spring the officer presents the cocks that are sacrificed. Moreover, like the cock, he announces the dawn. From this comes the particular name of his service."[19]

This is interesting in connection with the offering of a cock at *Toshigoi*, discussed below. The Chinese Emperor also commanded district chiefs to gather their people at convenient times to administer them and to read the rules to them, and in spring and autumn to administer rites. A commentator says that at spring he sacrifices to the spirit of the land to ask rain and abundance of the five grains. In fall, he sacrifices in thanksgiving for a good harvest.[20]

There is also a passage in the *She King* which is frequently quoted by traditionalist-minded Japanese scholars on behalf of *Toshigoi*, al-

17. Satow and Florenz, *op. cit.*; Philippi, *op. cit.*

18. The *Chou Li*, one of the ancient ritual texts, is a long presentation of the duties and ceremonies connected with the various court offices. It was attributed to the beginning of the Chou dynasty, but is probably actually compiled early in the Han as a rather fanciful reconstruction of Chou usage, though it may contain some authentically early material. It was taken much more seriously by classical Chinese and Japanese savants than by modern scholarship. My citations are based on the French translation by Edouard Biot, *Le Tcheou-Li* (2 vols., Paris: Imprimérie Nationale, 1857).

19. *Ibid.*, I, p. 248.

20. *Ibid.*, note 3.

though the conjunction of the characters appears to be fortuitous. James Legge translates the lines:

> In praying for a good year I was
> Abundantly early—
> I was not late [in sacrificing] to [the Spirits]
> Of the four quarters of the land,
> God in the great heaven
> Does not consider me.[21]

However the religious significance of the character compound does seem to be both ancient and modern in China. To this day there stands beside the famous T'ien T'an in Peking a smaller, circular and covered temple called the Ch'i Nien, a name employing the same characters as *Toshigoi*. Apparently the present structure, which is not unimposing but of little architectural or ritual significance, was built at about the same time as the present T'ien T'an, that is, 1420, and was rebuilt in 1754. However as one would expect the name seems to derive from a previous temple. In the later Han history *Ti Li Chih* we read that "The Ch'in blessed the officials of the capital and raised the Yearly Blessing (Ch'i Nien—Japanese *Toshigoi*) Temple to bless them in."[22]

A more important Chinese ideological antecedent was perhaps the *Lu-shih ch'un ch'iu*, part of the *Li Chi*, or Confucian Book, of Rites, even though it is quoted less frequently than the *Chou Li*, for it reflects in a striking way the kind of rites, and even more important the philosophy of courtly rites, which the first Japanese visitors to China might have witnessed. The passage for the first month of Spring is easily available and will not be reproduced *in extenso* here, although it is all important.[23] The section begins with a summary of the astronomical phenomena of the month, and of its proper deities, creatures, musical note, taste, small, and sacrific. All of this derived from the idea of the universe as a unity working according to the interaction of the five elements and the polar *yin* and *yang* forces, and rites are designed to assist the forces which are in ascendence in that month and to bring

21. James Legge, *The Chinese Classics*, Vol. IV: *The She King* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Univ. Press, 1960), p. 532. Kiyohara Satao, *Shintô-shi* (Tokyo: Kôseikaku, 1941), p. 51, notes, perhaps too facilely, in connection with this passage that here is the most overt difference between the Chinese and Japanese rites. The Chinese pray to heaven for the crops, the Japanese to a collection of Kami and most important to terrestial agricultural spirits such as Ôtoshi, Mitoshi, or Toyouke.

22. *Daijiten* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1953), VII–VIII, art. "Kinen," p. 581.

23. See William T. deBary, et al., comp., *Sources of Chinese Tradition* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1964), I, pp. 223–26 for translated text.

the life of man and the state, personified by the Emperor, into harmony with them. Thus, "In this month, on a favorable day, the Son of Heaven shall pray to the Lord-on-High for abundant harvests. Then, selecting a lucky day, he shall himself bear a plowshare and handle in his carriage, attended by the charioteer and the man-at-arms and leading the chief ministers, feudal princes, and officials, shall personally plow the Field of God."

This common practice of the King plowing the first furrow is to this day practiced in Japan though not as part of the *Toshigoi*. The underlying ideology—that the sovereign as Representative Man and Representative Deity has a ritual responsibility toward the inauguration of the seasons, and above all the agricultural year, which if not performed will throw the balance of nature out of gear—is clearly what the Taihô Code ceremonial calendar is intended to express. For although the Emperor is not given a stated role in the *Toshigoi* document, perhaps out of deference, the rite was performed in his name, as the *norito* makes clear. The result of mishandling of the rites is evidenced in the final paragraph of this section of the *Lu-shi*: "In all things one must not violate the way of Heaven, nor destroy the principles of earth, nor bring confusion to the laws of man. If in the first month of spring the ruler carries out proceedings proper to summer, then the wind and rain will not come in season, the grass and trees will soon wither and dry up, and the nations will be in great fear. . . ."[24]

The specific, though unacknowledged, source for the placing of the *Toshigoi* in the Court ritual calendar was the Tz'u-Ling or ritual section of the T'ang Ling or legal code of the T'ang dynasty. This code, which served as a fundamental model for the Taihô Code, was issued in several periods, including the Wu-te (618–626 A.D.), the Yung-hui (650–55), and the K'ai-yüan (713–741). The second would have had most effect on the Taihô Code of 702 and the Yôrô of 718. The ceremonial sections of these codes have recently been translated into English by Professor Kashihi Tanaka. Her rendition of the articles treating of the Chinese court spring festival which lent its name (characters) and concept to the *Toshigoi* reads as follows:

> Article 5. (As issued in the Wu-te period)
> On the eighth day of the first month of spring, Kan-ti at the Festival Plain in the South of the capital. Yüan-ti is to be the subordinate object of worship in the ritual. Two calves are to be used for the sacrifice in this ritual.
> Article 5. (As issued in the Yung-hui period)
> Perform a ritual for Tai-wei-kan-ti at the Festival Plain in the South

24. *Ibid.*, p. 226.

of the capital.

Article 5. (As issued in the seventh and the twenty-fifth years of the K'ai-yüan period)

Pray for a good harvest on the eighth day of the first month of the year. Perform a ritual for Hao-t'ien-shang-ti at Huan-ch'iu. Kao-tsu, i.e., Shen-yao-huang-ti, is to be the subordinant object of worship in this ritual. Also worship Wu-fang-ti at the first step of the altar.[25]

Katsuragi and the Kamo family. This allusion in the commentary gives some insight into the Japanese background of the *Toshigoi*. As

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25. Kashihi Tanaka, *A Comparison of the Tz'u-Ling and the Jingi Ryo* (Thesis, Claremont, 1966), pp. 17–18. The regulations concerning the two conditions of preparatory abstinence are also specifically inspired by Chinese precedent, though certainly also have a general spiritual background in Shinto observance of purity. The Tz'u-Ling also says in article 37–38, as translated by Professor Tanaka:

"Article 37. During the period of the general abstinence for all the Great Rituals, officials who are involved in the abstinence are to get together in the office of the Secretariat of State Affairs (Shang-shu-shen) at 6:00 A.M. and receive the instructions regarding the rituals.

During the strict abstinence the three highest officials shall stay at the Tu-sheng, the Central Office of State Affairs, and the officials who are in charge of the rituals shall set up the place for the ritual. The rest of the officials who have their main offices in the imperial palace shall be in abstinence at their offices. Those who do not have their main offices in the imperial palace shall be in abstinence at the office of rituals. All officials are to arrive at the place of purification one day before the ritual day. At the third hour of the water-clock they are to leave the place of purification for the place of the ritual. The officials are to have the road they use purified. The officials who are on the way to the place of ritual shall not be permitted to see pollution and uncleaness or funerals. If there is a funeral procession on the way to the place of ritual, the officials shall go first. After the officials have passed, the funeral procession may continue on its way. If the voices of those crying at the funeral reach to the place of the ritual, unofficially they shall be made to cease crying, and the ritual shall continue.

"Article 38. For all the Great Rituals, the general abstinence is to be for four days. The strict abstinence is to be for three days. For the Middle Rituals, the general abstinence is for three days. The strict abstinence is for two days. The Small Rituals require a general abstinence period of two days and a strict abstinence of one day.

During the days of the general abstinence the officials involved in the abstinence can handle ordinary business during the day-time. At night they shall sleep in the front building of their dwelling. The officials involved in the abstinence for the rituals cannot go to funerals and they cannot call upon sick people. They cannot affix their signatures to any documents specifying the death penalty. They are not to punish any kind of criminal. They are not to perform any kind of music. They are not to have any contact with polluted things.

During the strict abstinence they are to do things pertaining to the rituals only. Those who cannot undergo the general and the strict abstinence are to spend one night at the ritual building purifying themselves.

we have seen, the *Ryô no Shûge* indicates that on *Toshigoi* the Kamo family expecially serves the *kami* Mitoshi at the Katsuragi shrine. Mitoshi has a special place in relation to *Toshigoi*. As we shall see, this deity is mentioned in connection with the offering of the three white animals in the ritual, the *norito*, and the *Kogoshûi*. The Mitoshi passage is thought to be the oldest element in the *Toshigoi norito*, and is what distinguishes it from the *Tsukinami norito*, otherwise virtually identical. It reads:

I humbly speak before you,
The Sovereign Deities of the Grain: [Mitoshi]
The latter grain to be vouchsafed by you [to the Sovereign Grandchild],
The latter grain to be harvested
With foam dripping from the elbows,
To be pulled hither
With mud adhering to both things—
If this grain be vouchsafed by you
In ears many hands long,
In luxuriant ears;
Then the first fruits will be presented
In a thousand stalks, eight hundred stalks;
Rising high the soaring necks
Of the countless wine vessels, filled to the brim;
Both in liquor and in stalks I will fulfill your praises.
From that which grows in the vast fields and plains—
The sweet herbs and the bitter herbs—
To that which lives in the blue ocean—
The wide-finned and the narrow-finned fishes,
The seaweeds of the deep and the seaweeds of the shore—
As well as garments
Of colored cloth, radiant cloth,
Plain cloth, and coarse cloth—
In these I will fulfill your praises.
Before the Sovereign Deities of the Grain [Mitoshi]
I will provide a white horse, a white boar, a white cock,
And various types of offerings,
And will present the noble offerings of the Sovereign Grandchild
And fulfill your praises. Thus I speak.[26]

Mitoshi, certainly a grain-harvest deity, is mentioned in the *Kojiki* as the son of Ôtoshi and grandson of Wakatoshi, about whom little more is said.

There is obviously a deep-rooted connection between the Japanese

26. Philippi, *op. cit.*, pp. 17–18. On the relation of the Toshigoi norito and the Tsukinami norito, see also p. 5; *Engishiki Norito-Kô* (Tokyo: Buzô 1951), pp. 65–66; and Miyagi Eishô: *Engishiki no Kenkyû* (Tokyo: Daishûkan, 1964), II, pp. 547–58.

background of the *Toshigoi* and the Mitoshi shrine in Katsuragi and the Kamo family, since a special point is made of this family's celebrating it there. According to the *Seishi Kakei Daijiten* (Dictionary of family lineage) the Kamo family originated in Katsuragi of Yamato (Nara prefecture).[27] Possibly the *Toshigoi* roughly coincided with their clan *kami* festival—always in the spring and fall—and was somehow introduced into the Nara court through the influence of this family.

The Katsuragi Mitoshi shrine worships Ôtoshi, Mitoshi, and Takaterasuhime. On visiting the shrine, I was told that it is also called Nakakamo, the name carved on the 200-year-old second *torii*, suggesting its relation to the Kamo family and shrine. *Toshigoi* is still one of the major festivals of the shrine, and until the Meiji period the offering of the white horse, boar, and chicken was continued, and this is the only known shrine where this custom was followed. The white animals are pictured on the left side of the 450-year-old main building. The location of the shrine vividly suggests the descent of heavenly *kami* into the fields; it is built up the slope of mountains surrounding the Yamato plain, with the building much higher than the *torii*. Not far away is the Katsuragi Ichigon Shrine, celebrating a famous story of divine manifestation from the *Kojiki*. Katsuragi is moreover a mountain famous as an abode of shamans and ascetics, such as *En-nu-Shôkaku,* reputed founder of the Shugendo. All evidence in myth and religious history points to a particular aura of sacred

27. *Seishi Kakei Daijiten* (3 vols.; Tokyo: Kininsatsu, 1963), I, p. 1795. According to the *Yamashiro Fudoki*, Take-Tsunomi no Mikoto, now the heavenly male deity who shares the lower Kamo shrine in Kyoto with Tamayori-hime, descended first on Hyûga with Ninigi, the imperial ancestor. But on his way through Yamato, he stopped at Katsuragi. Then he proceeded to the Kamo River and developed Yamashiro province. He married a Princess Ikakoya of Tamba, and she gave birth to Tamayori-hiko and Tamayori-hime. The latter gave birth by the Kamo River to Ikazuchi no Mikoto, the deity of the upper Kamo shrine. When he was come of age his father served wonderful sake and after seven marvellous days and nights of festivity, he ascended to heaven, breaking through the roof tiles of the birth-house. The *Nenchûgyôji Hishô* reiterates this information and adds that on his ascent to heaven he carried fire on the spear-tip, wore a *hagoromo* or feather-robe associated with heavenly beings, and rode an ornamented horse. A book called the *Ironaji Ruisho* also adds that during his time on earth, he made cloth of various colors which participants in the festivities wore, and that those who wore them were the ancestors of the Kamo family. They were so-called because the children looked like they were decked in the plumage of wild ducks (*kamo*). Of course these were children of the Kamo ancestor who descended with the imperial ancestor. Thus, in this myth we see that, through Katsuragi and then to the Kamo River, the former place and the Kamo River, Shrine and family are connected. The mythic material is as cited in Higo Kazuo, *Nihon Shinwa Kenkyû* (Tokyo: Kawade, 1941), pp. 140–48.

power about Katsuragi.

Mitoshi, Ôtoshi, and the offering of white animals. The reference to Mitoshi and the white animals is what separates the *norito* and rite of *Toshigoi* in the *Engishiki* from that given for the *Tsukinami.* Certainly this offering is something of a different nature from the lavish but very routine offering of cloth, foodstuffs, and military equipment to many shrines which constitutes the rest of the rite.

Mitoshi is listed in the *Daijô-sai* section as one of the deities celebrated in its version of the Eight Gods. The most extensive information about Mitoshi, however, is found in the *Kogoshûi,* which relates a most interesting myth. We use Katô and Hoshino's translation:

> On one occasion in the Divine Age, when cultivating rice in a paddy field, *Ôtokonushi no Kami* served his men with beef, while the son of the rice-god *Mitoshi no Kami,* when visiting that field, spat in disgust upon the dainty offered to him, and returning home, reported the matter to his father. Then *Mitoshi no Kami* in wrath sent a number of noxious insects, or locusts, to *Ôtokonushi no Kami's* paddy field to kill the young rice-plants and in consequence the leafless rice-plants appeared like "shino" or short bamboo grass. When *Ôtokonushi no Kami* tried to ascertain the true cause of the incomprehensible disaster, he bade a "katakannagi" "kata-augur" (by means of a Japanese meadow bunting) and a "hiji-kannagi" or "hiji-diviner" (by means of rice grains or a domestic cooking furnace ring) to ascertain the divine will. The interpretation was as follows: "*Mitoshi no Kami* has sent a curse, which makes the young plants die, so that you should not fail to appease the offended god with offerings of a white wild boar, a white horse, and white domestic fowls." The conditions revealed in the divination being obeyed, the God was appeased. *Mitoshi no Kami* disclosed the secret thus: "It is I that brought the curse. Make a reel of hempenstalks, and therewith clear the rice-plants, by expelling the locusts with the hempleaves. Drive them out of the paddy field with heavenly figwort, and sweep them thoroughly away with fan shaped leopard flowers. If nevertheless they will not retreat, place some beef at the mouth of the ditch in the field together with a phallic symbol (as a spell to appease the divine wrath) and put corn-beads, tooth-ache trees, walnut leave, and salt beside the dykes." These divine orders were obeyed, and so the young rice plants which because of the divine wrath were dying revived and throve, and that autumn the people's hearts were gladdened by an abundant rice-crop. The custom having been started, *Mitoshi no Kami* is still worshipped in the present Shinto Bureau with offerings of the white boar, a white horse, and white domestic fowl.[28]

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28. Genchi Katô and Hikoshiro Hoshino (trans. and annotators), *The Kogoshûi: Gleanings From Ancient Stories* (Tokyo: Meiji Japan Society, 1926), pp. 51–52. The appearance of noxious insects, and the instruction of the deity to drive them out with the figwort and grasses, reminds one of the present mid-summer *mushi-okuri* rites to keep such pests away. Haga Hideo describes, with pictures, such a rite: a procession is made through the fields with a straw figure

Although this myth may seem to have quite an archaic flavor about it, and certainly is of an old type, in the given form it probably is not. As Aston has pointed out, this is one of the first references in Japanese literature to the idea that eating flesh might be offensive to *kami*, and this element certainly reflects Buddhist influence. However in this case it is odd that the horse, boar, and cock would be acceptable as offerings. But Katô has shown that there is a Buddhist precedent in the Mahayana Sutra *Bussetsu-Jokyô-Saigen-Kyô* or "Sutra for removing fear, misfortune, and anxiety." This work says that when the Buddha Sakyamuni was staying at Rajagrha a terrible epidemic swept the country. The authorities were at a loss how to act. Two Brahman priests proposed erecting temples to appease the angry gods. But a third advised a still more effective remedy—to offer several hundred white colored animals, horses, camels, cows, sheep, cocks, and dogs.[29] Katô cites also a passage from the history of China entitled *Sui-shu* published in 636. In describing religious customs of Cambodia, it reads: "During the fifth and sixth months every year, when the climate is very unhealthy, the people offer white wild boars, white oxen, and white sheep in sacrifice outside the western gate of the citidal, believing that if they did not do so the harvest of 'five cereals' would be bad, their 'six domestic animals' die, and the people suffer from pestilence."[30] No doubt the color white is intended as "sympathetic magic" for good health or favorable weather. But since in China the color white is inauspicious, the usage would not have come directly from that source.

It would be difficult if not impossible to ascertain precisely how the spring offering of the three white animals came to be practiced in Japan, probably first at the Mitoshi shrine and then by the Ministry of Official Shinto. Even if there are such vague precedents in documents which might have reached Japan by the Taihô era, it is not necessary to assume the rite was introduced solely on this level; Japan had had ethnological links with the continent and South-East Asia for centuries which may be highly controversial in detail but cannot be denied in entirety. But is is clear that in the Mitoshi myth, two levels exist, for the two answers given as to the means of appeasing the offended deity, the one in answer to "the divine will" to offer the animals, the other, from Mitoshi himself, to cleanse the field with the leaves, phallic object, and so forth, are doubtless alternates

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on horseback held aloft and fire. The figure is first beneficent; then after the procession he becomes a scrapegoat demon and is burned. Haga Hideo, *Ta No Kami* (English title: *The Rituals of Rice Production of Japan*) (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 1959), pp. 46–52.

29. Katô and Hoshino, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

from different sources, and one need not question but that the latter is the more "folk." The former answer is apparently introduced to complement the practice of the Ministry of Official Shinto, as the last sentence of the paragraph indicates. The remainder of the myth reflects the point of view and possibilities of the agricultural peasant, but a white horse, pig, and cock would be relative rarities, not available to every peasant community for its spring rice rites, but might indeed be flaunted by the Yamato court, which prided itself on its horses and delighted in receiving unusual animals. The reference to beef, both in the offence and in the second response we may assume was introduced simultaneously, since beef also had no place in ancient Japanese peasant culture. Probably it was a substitute in the myth for some agricultural offence of the type committed by Susanoo in heaven before his expulsion. The reference to divination is doubtless important. It is true that the Ministry of Official Shinto rite in the *Engishiki* does not contain divination for the crops, but it is everywhere part of shrine and field practice at spring festivals.

References to the *Toshigoi* in the *Shoku-Nihongi* under Keiun 3 and in the Taihô Code have been cited. Miyagi Eishô cites a reference in the *Ruishu Kokushi*, Vol. 10, for Enryaku 17 (798) to the effect that shrines were commanded to make *Toshigoi* offerings. In Miyagi's opinion, this year represents the occasion of the separation of national shrines that is, those which received offerings from the Court. The *Toshigoi*, he says, is an agricultural festival incorporated into the imperial system, and this is indicated by the inclusion of sword and shield (symbols of sovereignty) among the offerings.[31]

There are later references in the *Kônin* and *Jôgan* Rituals. According to Miyagi, there is a change and increase between these two and the *Engishiki* in the number of shrines receiving state offerings for *Toshigoi* and *Tsukinami*, and for these feasts only.[32]

In conclusion we see that the *Toshigoi* as represented in the *Engishiki* rite is a government ritual which expresses the unity of Shinto and State and the spiritual *imperium* of the Palace, through its granting of imperial offerings to major shrines and its setting the model of worship by provincial officials, and of course through the basic intention of the rite, to secure divine blessing on the harvest for the whole nation. It certainly is not lacking the cool and perfunctory spirit of most such official recognitions of deity. However it typifies something quite important: the conflation of several sources to create a new official Shinto which, though secondary to Buddhism, was an

31. Miyagi, *op. cit.*, II, p. 455.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 360.

expression of the unity and ideology of Heian Japan. Three kinds of religious expression are brought together: intellectual, mythological, and folk religious.

The intellectual expression in turn has two aspects: the attempt to reproduce the Chinese model of an imperial court, and the attempt to express a Japanese ideology which was becoming more self-conscious in the period. (In this respect, the *Toshigoi* is somewhat different from the *Saigû* and *Daijô-sai*, insofar as in them the emphasis was heavier on the preservation in ritual of archaism.) We have shown that the idea of an official spring rite as part of a pattern of Court rites for the four seasons designed to support the cosmic forces at work in that season, based on the idea of the sovereign as mediator between heaven and earth, can be traced to the ideology of the *Chou Li* and *Li Chi.* Indeed at the time it was so traced—this emphasis on a Chinese precedent also distinguishes the *Toshigoi* from the other three rites under consideration, making it both more "foreign" and more "contemporary" to the "Ritsuryô state"—the very name *Toshigoi* being a Japanese reading for a Chinese expression for spring prayers. However one must not let the flourish of Chinese references blind one to the importance of Japanese elements even in the Ministry of Official Shinto rite. The invocation of Mitoshi and the many other polytheistic *kami* rather than "Heaven" is Japanese, all the more in that it is partly "terrestrial" deities who are called upon to bless the harvest. In China the offering would have been a bloody sacrifice of a cock, dark blue calf, or some other animal; in Japan it is the offering of cloth, foodstuffs, horses and, to indicate the national character of the offering, military equipment, and at Mitoshi Shrine the three white animals. In all this, ritual killing has no stated part.[33]

The institution of imperial offerings, while a part of the centralization trend which was ultimately inspired by contact with China, was probably immediately incited by a problem resulting from a native problem: the immunity of local clan chieftains and feudal lords who identified their land holdings with those of the clan shrine, of which they were nominal chief priest. This was the case at the time of the Taika Reform (645 A.D. The granting of imperial offerings, like the granting of a patent of nobility, seems to honor the recipient, but at the same time establishes the superiority of the one making the grant. The same device is given the provincial governors, and on this level the final sentence of the rite above hints that the assembly of local

33. However, it was not unknown in Japan; in 642, during the first year of the Empress Kôgyoku, horses and cattle were killed in various shrines in prayer for rain. W. G. Aston, *Nihongi* (2 vols. in 1. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1956), II, p. 174.

officials for the receiving of offerings for their shrines may have also been an occasion for the settling of tax matters.

The mythological background of the rite represents a Japanese intellectual expression. One senses behind it the imperial myth of the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki*, or rather that both derive partly from the same world. The artificial nature of the rite is evident in the fact that it has no very impressive mythic expression, unlike the *Daijô-sai*, but nevertheless one is reminded that the chief clergy, the *Nakatomi* and *Imbe*, are descendents of companions of the imperial ancestor in his descent, and that the Emperor is the voice which addresses the gods through the *Nakatomi*, and the special place given Ise, is linked to the consolidation of the myth at about the same time the rite was inaugurated. The rite as a vehicle for the imperial myth is of course quite a different thing from its assimilation of folk religion elements.

A link between the intellectual myth and the background is found in the Mitoshi element. Mitoshi, together with variants such as Ôtoshi and Wakatoshi, is clearly a primordial rice god; whether heavenly or earthly is not entirely clear. He would be one of a type still extant, a god who is called into the fields in the spring and prospers the crop until fall,[34] whose name derives from the old meaning of "toshi" and, if we follow Kako, is an *aramitama* or "Rough Spirit." He may have been a clan *kami* of the Kamo of Nara. But the inclusion of these names into the divine generalogies of the *Kojiki* shows how the "little traditions" of this sort are brought into the "great tradition." Local gods are made relatives and retainers of the major figures (Mitoshi was a descendant of Ôkuninushi in the *Kojiki*), over which the imperial line, especially after the submission of the Ôkuninushi faction, is supreme. The insertion of the three white animals into the *Kogoshûi* Mitoshi myth, which clearly derives from this archaic stratum, is another good example of how such elements are assimilated into the "great tradition." Unfortunately the precise source of the three animals is not clear, whether an alien importation, a local custom of the Mitoshi shrine, or a court custom.[35]

But in either case we can see how the assimilation occurs. The archaic myth is made to justify the new practice and ideology by serving

34. See Toshijirô Hirayama, "Seasonal Rituals Connected with Rice Culture," in R. M. Dorson, ed., *Studies in Japanese Folklore* (Bloomington, Indiana: Univ. of Indiana Press, 1963), pp. 57–74; and Ichirô Hori, "Mysterious Visitors From the Harvest to the New Year," *ibid.*, pp. 76–105.

35. Tsugita Urû believed it to be alien. He felt that the tradition concerning the three white animals may come out of the "Izumo tradition," which, he adds, would only indicate that it came from the continent, viz. Korea. Tsugita Urû, *Norito Shinkô* (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1942), p. 83.

as the archetypical framework into which the symbolic of the new is fitted. Thus the three white animals, symbols of the Ministry of Official Shinto *Toshigoi* and hence, by implication, of the whole Taihô ideology, are bourne on the Mitoshi myth. In the same way the animals and Mitoshi are fitted into the *norito* and the ritual, otherwise devoted to "official" gods and practices—although some of them, like the case of the Eight Gods, have a comparable background.

According to Joachim Wach, religious apprehension takes three forms of expression: intellectual (theology and myth), cultic (liturgical), and social (the religious group). What is the religious idea that is being expressed in the *Toshigoi*? It would be naive to say that it is a simple desire to pray for a good harvest. No doubt some faith in prayer lingered among the members of the Ministry of Official Shinto, but the real desire, so far as the spiritual life of the nation was concerned, was to crown it by fulfilling the proper functions of the Emperor.

One can study the transition from peasant harvest-prayer to court rite by noticing the changes in the form of these three modes of expression. As we have seen, intellectual expression changes from a peasant myth such as the original Mitoshi story, concerned with magic for stopping a plague of locusts, to the somewhat more advanced form which provides an aetiology for the Jingi-kan Mitoshi practice, and on the other hand to the inclusion of Mitoshi in the imperial myth. This also expresses a centralization of power and implies a cosmic function for the sovereign. The social group also changes from the agricultural community to the Ministry of Official Shinto, a professional group of clergy who are a branch of the government bureaucracy.

Of course this development served to alienate in turn the *Toshigoi* from the plain agricultural and folk religious concerns of the people. A recent study of the Aso shrine in Kumamoto, Kyushu, by Sugimoto Hisao illustrates this beautifully. This shrine was, in the *Engishiki* period, one of those which received *Toshigoi* offerings from the provincial governor. Today it has a festival on the first day of the second month called the Spring Priest Festival which balances a Winter Priest Festival on the first of the eleventh month. The spring service is structurally the same as the ancient *Toshigoi*. The priest for these two services is chosen from a lay group. It is otherwise little regarded.

But beginning on the first *mi* (snake) day of the second month, there is a Field-opening Festival which follows the old folk pattern and needless to say is as popular and colorful as the survival of the provincial governor's is not. The people welcome the Year-god from the mountains, they offer fish at the ancestral shrines, and the shrine deity is taken in the palanquin to temporary houses in the fields where

he is celebrated for a day and a night. More activity continues for seven days.[36]

Here we see what the *Toshigoi* grew out of—the propition of the "Toshigami" of "Year-god" who arrives in the spring and blesses (or, if displeased, curses) the crops until fall. We see what the "great tradition" has done to this kind of rite—and how the "folk" rite will continue to reassert itself.

36. Sugimoto Hisao, *Chûsei no Jinja to Sharyô* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kôbunkan, 1961), pp. 453–57.

Tables of Measurement[1]

Linear

10 *bu*	—1 *sun*	—1.2 inches
10 *sun*	—1 *shaku*	— .994 foot
6 *shaku*	—1 *ken* (not an exact unit in Heian times)	
10 *shaku*	—1 *jo*	—3.31 yards
36 *jo*	—1 *chô*	—119 yards
36 *chô*	—1 *ri*	—2.44 miles

Square Measure

1 sq. *ken* or *tsubo*		—3.95 sq. yards
30 *tsubo*	—1 *te*	—119 sq. yards
10 *se*	—1 *tan*	—245 acres
10 *tan*	—1 *chô*	—2.45 acres

Capacity

1 *shaku*		—.0384 pint
10 *shaku*	—1 *gô*	—.384 pint
10 *gô*	—1 *sho*	—1.92 quarts
10 *shô*	—1 *to*	—4.8 gallons
10 *to*	—1 *koku*	—44.8 gallons

Weight

1 *momme*		—.1325 oz.
160 *momme*	—1 *kin*	—1.32 lbs.
1000 *momme*	—1 *kan*	—8.72 lbs.

1. Based on A. N. Nelson, *The Modern Reader's Japanese-English Character Dictionary* (Rutland, Vt., and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1962), pp. 1029–30.