

Thomas Immoos: Das Tanzritual der Yamabushi und Ein Ritual der Wiedergeburt in den Yamabushi-Kagura.

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The Japanese Yamabushi assimilated many different religious traditions: shamanism, shintôistic veneration of Nature, Buddhist traditions, especially those of Tendai and Shingon sects. Tendai explains the Shintô Kami as avatar (jap.= Gongen), an incarnation of Buddha. According to Shingon, man is an emanation of Buddha Vairocana. The Yamabushi, in their effort to bring together Shintô beliefs and Buddhist teaching, used both traditions. But Shingon had a special influence on their dance ritual, because, being an emanation of Vairocana, man can use his, Buddha's, words, gestures, etc., to achieve miraculous results for the best of himself or others. And on the other hand the ritual and the magic formulas make the Yamabushi aware of his unity with Vairocana who gives him all the magic power.

Therefore the dance ritual is very essential for the Yamabushi, but since it doesn't exist anymore as such, the author tries to reestablish its essential elements with the help of traces he finds in the Yamabushi-Kagura. Elements of fertility and initiation rites, magic, etc., are here combined with plays of the Noh-type which were used as a means of instruction and amusement for the farming population during the long winter.

The sacred dance, Kagura, is essential for Shintô. It is not only prayer and offering, but also a reenactment of a divine act, the dance of Uzume in front of Amaterasu's cave. It gives what it represents in its ritual: life, good luck . . . Further, the author thinks that underlying its basic formal structure there is the polarity of Yin and Yang.

As examples the author cites a number of Yamabushi-Kagura still performed in the villages, Otsugunai and Dake, in Northern Japan (Iwateken). About one third of the repertoire of the two troupes is made up by the Shikimai, the real ritual dances. The more formal of these, the Omotemai (public dances) are performed during the day. They are intended to call down the Kami, to please the Kami and the spirits and to foster fertility. The "hidden dances" (Uramai) are performed after nightfall in the houses. They are more of the comical sort in order to make the meaning understandable for everybody.

According to the author the so-called Gongen-dance might represent the very core of the Shugendo-ritual. The Gongen is not just represented by but is a lion mask which tours the village during the day. At night it is put on a drum, the sacred instrument of a shamanistic priest, and set in the *tokonoma* of the house where it will spend the night. In front of this lion mask the ritual dances are performed which climax in the Gongen-mai (Gongen-dance). The meaning of this dance, being fertility magic and rebirth to another state of life, is explained more extensively in the article "Ein Ritual der Wiedergeburt in den Yamabushi-Kagura" by the same author. During the Gongenmai a child is offered to the lion, eaten up by it (i.e., hidden under the cloth symbolizing the lions body) and reappears after some time. This suggests a ritual of death and rebirth; death to a former type of existence and rebirth into a new life or a new state of life. These two steps symbolize an essential change in the individual, which reappears out of the lions belly imbued with supernatural powers. The author quotes interesting parallels from the old religions of the

Middle East and others.

Other examples for such a ritual of deep-going change in connection with Shugendo are the Ishizukome rite, which is considered more an initiation rite than just a way of punishment: the young man is buried to his former life to enter a new one from now on. In the same line seems to be an episode in the Noh "Nenju", where an old couple makes 33 times a pilgrimage to the Gongen of Kumano and finally is granted rejuvenation.

It would be very interesting to take up the suggestion of the author and to investigate more of such parallels between the traditions and religious practices of peoples who seem to have nothing in common at the first glance.

Peter Knecht

Gitta Lepsius: Das heutige Japanische Puppentheater auf dem Lande und seine Vorgeschichte.

In: Mitteilungen der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, Band L. Tokyo 1968, pp. 27-95 mit Fotos.

The author of this report doesn't want to give an answer to the question where the Japanese puppet theater might come from, nor does she give a complete list of all the types of dolls and performances still existing in Japan.

First the author gives a short characterization of the oldest types of dolls which still exist although sometimes only in one or two places. Then follows a brief description of the great time of the professional puppet theater in Osaka under Takemoto Gidayû (1651—1714), Chikamatsu Monzaemon (1653—1724) and Tatsumatsu Hachirobei (?—1734). During this period a change took place. For a doll handled by a single man (*hitorizukai*) there was introduced another handled by three men (*sanninzukai*). The author mentions here the findings of Prof. K. Sugino which would prove that the three-man-doll was in use about 20 years earlier than 1734, when it was introduced first in Osaka. Since the heads of dolls Sugino has found are in the Edo style it might suggest that the *sanninzukai* doll has its origin in Edo and not in Osaka.

After this the author concentrates on the non-professional puppet plays in rural areas. She describes the use of one-man-dolls in some villages in Kyushu, Shikoku and especially on the Island of Sado. Then, *sanninzukai* dolls were introduced and flourished particularly on Awaji Island. Gradually external conditions lead to modifications. Where there were not enough players available, a little chart was used to facilitate the actors mobility (*kuruma ningyô*) or women learned the art of the puppet play (Otome Bunraku).

In some regions rather small dolls are used which can be handled by one player (*sashigane* doll, *jimokuji* stickdolls) or even with a single hand (finger dolls). The giant form of the *shikake* dolls, some of them taller than the player, has disappeared. In the performances with such dolls, complicated mechanical devices and tricks were used. Mechanical dolls of a similar type are the *karakuri* dolls, brought to Japan from China. But with a few exceptions they were not used for dramatic performances.

Marionettes don't seem to have much importance in Japan. An interesting form among them are the lantern dolls of Annaka, Gummaken: their body is

lighted by a small built-in oil lantern.

Finally the author mentions the dance of "Sambasô", a ritual dance of a doll which represents a figure equally found in all the theatrical forms in Japan. *Sambasô* is the third doll in a group of three: *okina* (old man), *senzai* (thousand years) and *sambasô* (the third). Sometimes the dance is performed by all three dolls, but mostly only by *sambasô*. It is performed before the puppet plays start. *Sambasô* is the bringer of good luck. Therefore, the doll is considered to be sacred and its ritual dance is performed in great earnest and respect in rural areas. Usually it is connected with the local Shintô shrine. The doll may lay there before the kami or it may be brought there in a solemn procession by the actors before the dance starts. But once the puppet play has started the *sambasô* is also just a dancing doll.

In the appendix the author presents a great number of photos which illustrate the different types of dolls as well as many ways of handling them.

The article shows how even in modern Japan very old forms of her theatrical tradition still survive, but also in what a danger Japan is, to lose these precious things within a rather short time. It shows also to some extent the connection of these performances with ritual and religious forms as do Prof. Immoos's articles in the same volume in a similar field.

Peter Knecht

Toichi Mabuchi: Toward the Reconstruction of Ryukyuan Cosmology.

In: Folk Religion and the Worldview in the Southwestern Pacific. The Keio Institute of Cultural and Linguistic Studies. Keio University, Tokyo 1968; p. 119-140.

By the title of his essay the author implies that the cosmology of the Ryukyu Islanders presents as it is a confused picture, lacking a consistent structure, and has to be reconstructed. He finds a state of confusion with regard to the ancestral deities, that is, which deities, the heavenly ones or the earthly ones, are to be considered the primordial ones in creating the islands and making them inhabitable. Connected with the confusion in matters of the deities is the confusion with regard to the cardinal points. The author, who is an outstanding expert in the ethnography of the Ryukyu Islands, shows himself thoroughly familiar with the facts concerning religion and society in his field of research, and when attempting interpretations of these facts, he weighs them against each other with utmost circumspection and thoughtfulness, and still he does not yet propose any definite hypothesis as to which cosmology may have been the original one.

In connection with the author's pursuance of his goal the reader is given a great amount of information on Ryukyuan folk life and lore. First comes the construction of houses and shrines. The four-room plan of the house is the most common one, each room having its own religious and social significance and implication. Also the house-yard is tied up with religious acts and observances, be they worship of ancestors or of deities. We learn further that the islanders are basically farmers, fishing being only a secondary means of subsistence. The agrarian annual cycle therefore determines the rythm of religious life. The latter consists of thanksgiving for the harvest, securing fertility of the crops and human beings, and warding off of evil spirits. At the annual festivals the