JOSEF A. KYBURZ
C.N.R.S, Paris

Omocha: Things to Play (or not to Play) With

Abstract

How closely does the English term and Western notion of "toy" match the Japanese concept of *omocha*? Leaving out of consideration playthings currently in use among Japanese children—predominantly of modern industrial conception—one has first to determine if there is such a thing as a Japanese toy, and what is meant by this concept. Among the genre of "folk-toys" there exist several classes of objects the ludic function of which is, at best, accessory, if not absent altogether. The traditional folk toy, though it may continue to be a product of local folkcraft, seems to have lost its functions as a child's plaything and to have become instead, from as early as the late Meiji era, an object of aesthetic appreciation and collection for adults. Radical changes in life-style and customs since the 1950s have further deprived folk toys of practical meaning. Indeed, most traditional toys originally were, and to some degree continue to be, talismans and amulets for the blessing and protection of the holder, tokens of and material links with certain holy places and their tutelary deities. It must therefore be acknowledged that, among *omocha*, there are entire categories that would hardly qualify as "toys," even if they are miniature in size (which indeed is often the only common denominator between the two categories).

Key words: *omocha* — folk toy — magical function — symbolic function — amulets and talismans — folkcraft — souvenirs and local products — hobbyhorse — collecting

TAKEN in the concrete sense of "a material object for children or others to play with," a toy would appear to have an essentially ludic function: to serve as an actual plaything and to be "contrived for amusement rather than practical use."[1] However, *omocha* 玩具, the commonly accepted equivalent for "toy" in Japanese, covers many objects whose ludic purpose is only incidental if, indeed, present at all, to the point where one may justifiably doubt whether they may be considered playthings in any real sense.

On the uppermost, immediate, level of meaning, the word *omocha* covers more or less the range of accepted synonyms in the Western languages: *toy* in English, *jouet* or *joujou* in French, *Spielzeug* in German, *giocca* in Italian, etc. All appear to derive from the verb designating the act of playing (or rather, "toying"), and serve as the generic term for the things that are played with. It would seem that *omocha* is a dialectal contraction of *mote-asobu* or *mochi-asobu*, meaning literally "to play with,"[2] since it is with the two ideographs used in this word (持遊) that it makes its first written appearance, in the *Ukiyoburo* [Bathhouse of the floating world] (SHIKITEI 1809), one of the most popular works of comic fiction of the late Edo period. In addition to this level of meaning, the word is, like its equivalents in the above-mentioned Western languages, applied also to persons, referring to the use of somebody as a plaything or for sport (*omocha ni suru*).

Though the *Ukiyoburo*, written by Shikitei around 1809, is thought to contain the earliest recorded usage of the word *omocha*, this is of course not the first time that toys were mentioned in Japanese literature, albeit under different names. Such unequivocal playthings as the top and the hobbyhorse are already listed in the *WAMYŌ RUIJUSHŌ* [Lexicon of native names, classified and annotated], compiled around 937.[3] However, no generic term seems to have been in common usage until the early twentieth century. Wherever one finds toys described or even illustrated—mostly in works of encyclopedic nature, from the *Wamyō ruijushō* to the 1830 *Kiyū shōran* [An amusing view of happy

play] (KITAMURA 1830)—it is always indirectly, in the context of "games," "play," "amusement," "pastimes" (*yūgi*, *goraku*, *tawamure*) or, at best, "children's games." KITAGAWA Morisada (1853), who gives us a comprehensive survey of popular urban life and culture between 1837 and 1853 in his *Morisada mankō* [Morisada's jottings], does not as yet use the term *omocha*; like earlier authors of this genre of essay literature, he has recourse to such makeshift constructs as *rōganbutsu* 弄玩物 (literally, "things used in play and games") and a few other equally awkward terms.[4] It was only towards the very end of the Meiji era (1868–1912) that the word *omocha*, born of popular Edo idiom, came into common usage, and it was later still, in the 1930s, that it was definitely established in the written language as the standard generic term. The alternative *gangu* 玩具 appeared in the first years of the Taishō era but has remained to this day a learned word, originally created by toy collectors using a high-sounding Sino-Japanese pronunciation for *asobigu* 遊具 (or *asobimono* 遊物: "things to play with"), a term already seen in written form nearly a century earlier in the *Kiyū shōran*. *Gangu* was coined and adopted as a taxonomic concept in reaction to the influx of Western playthings, when it became evident that the latter had already driven traditional Japanese toys from the child's world, at least in urban society.

We have, therefore, two basic terms for *toy* in Japanese: the popular and somewhat diminutive *omocha*, for which the French *joujou* is decidedly the closest translation; and the generic but technical *gangu*, better corresponding to the English *plaything* and the German *Spielzeug*. The narrow, specific sense of *gangu* will be taken up later, in its proper setting.

WHAT ARE *OMOCHA*?

What exactly does the word *omocha* signify? Frederick STARR, the first serious foreign student of Japanese toys,[5] remarks, in a paper delivered before the Asiatic Society of Japan in 1926, that Japanese collectors "use the word toy . . . with an extreme latitude, and in their collections they include much that we would not consider toys" (1926, 102). He goes on to classify the contents of these collections into four categories, on a descending scale as they diverge from the Western conception.

The first category, obviously fundamental to the American scholar, contains "toys proper, made to use in play, or to give a momentary pleasure."

Into the second category fall "objects, more or less intended for children's pleasure, but *somewhat related to temples or shrines*" (the italics are Starr's).

The third category includes "*objects definitely religious*, possessing

inherent virtue as protectors or charms. These are sold from temples and shrines and are not in the least intended for play. They may be odd, or pretty, but are surely not toys in our sense of the word" (the italics are Starr's).

Finally, there are "*ema*, votive pictures. Whereas originally these were made for actual use at temples or shrines, there is no excuse whatever for calling them toys."

Yanagita Kunio, in a newspaper article published fifteen years later, set forth his ideas on the subject in similar terms, classifying toys into three categories:

First, things made by the child himself from any available material; they live through the fantasy and the imagination of the child, are discarded after play, and are for that reason not considered "toys";

Second, things made by adults for the sake of the child; they are typically miniature versions of objects in the adult world that the child longs to imitate;

Third, things produced for a market and bought for the child (YANAGITA 1941, 15).

Starr's and Yanagita's respective first categories coincide in their fundamental but somewhat abstract concept of "toys proper," things made for an exclusively ludic purpose. Both consider these to be the only real toys, though Yanagita denies the label of "toy" to the temporary playthings made by the child on the grounds that they are essentially abstract, having form and purpose only in the child's mind. The two scholars' concepts therefore refer to different things, since Yanagita mentions objects that by definition have no enduring material existence and, in consequence, cannot be collected.

Concerning the respective second categories, Starr's "objects somewhat related to temples or shrines" and Yanagita's "things made by adults for the sake of the child," the two scholars again seem to have in mind two different kinds of toys. The former is reviewing the contents of some of the foremost collections of his day, and his classification there fore reflects the conception of Japanese toys held by contemporary local amateurs and not by Starr himself. This is obvious from the representative example he cites of toys of this kind, the *kumade* 熊手 (rake-of-fortune), which could hardly be considered a plaything in any Western sense, intended as it is for no other purpose than to act as a talisman for prosperity in business (cf. KYBURZ 1991, 108–13). Yanagita places toys of this kind in a much larger and general context within the conceptual framework of ethnology, stressing such universal characteristics as miniature size and imitation of objects in the adult world.

Starr's third category, "objects definitely religious," also appears to

be a narrow subdivision of Yanagita's much more comprehensive "things produced for a market and bought for the child." The latter's view is universal in theory only, however, since from the examples he cites it is evident that he is actually talking about the same kind of things as Starr, namely indigenous toys of the traditional kind. Yanagita sees the origin of these toys as lying in the gifts and "souvenirs" (*omiyage* 御土産 [local product], which he etymologizes as 御宮笥 [box from a shrine]) bought at temples and shrines on festival days or during pilgrimages, and thus as emerging ultimately from the religious life of the Japanese people (YANAGITA 1941, 15–16).

As to the fourth category mentioned by Starr, "votive pictures," we will here follow his suggestion and deny them the label of toys, and therefore leave them out of consideration.[6]

Outwardly at least, Yanagita's conception of *omocha* seems to be sufficiently general (not to say scientific) to agree with the Western notion of "toy," something that cannot be said of Starr's, which refers to specifically Japanese varieties. The term *omocha* in the Japanese language not only indicates Japanese toys but also serves to translate foreign words for toy, applying to all those playthings we would designate as such in Western cultures. It therefore covers the concept of toy in both the Japanese and Western conceptions, from purely indigenous products such as the popular papier-mâché "beckoning cat" (*manekineko* 招き猫) to wholly foreign ones like the French bisquit doll, and includes such culturally hybrid types as toy-figures from comic strips and cartoons.

WHAT IS A *JAPANESE* TOY?

Once the notion of *omocha* has been considered in its different elements and its semantic territory delimited, attention must be paid to those characteristics that distinguish it from the Western understanding of toy. Since my purpose is to clarify the differences, I shall point out only those features that place it outside the range of the English concept.

It is difficult to reconcile the descriptions of Starr and Yanagita, written between the two world wars, with the objects Japanese children play with today. This is hardly surprising if one takes into account the profound changes that have affected the world of toys—along with all other realms of material culture—during the intervening half century. Moreover, their texts show that the two folklorists were in fact describing playthings that by their time already belonged to another age, one that had ended with the Meiji era. An actual comparison between the old and new types of toy shows that the difference is not so much of a temporal and social nature—modifications that the same basic toy would have undergone in its evolution through history and in its social milieu—

but is, at the most basic level, one of two different conceptions.

In order to find out where exactly the Western and Japanese terms for toy differ semantically, one has to know if there is such a thing as a "Japanese" toy, and, if so, what its characteristics are.

The best evidence for the existence of Japanese toys may be seen to lie in the emotions and sentiments that, for older Japanese people, still form an intimate part of the notion of *omocha*. For someone whose childhood preceded World War II, the word carries strong sentimental overtones (or, better, undertones) that lead far back into the person's "roots," to the time and place he grew up in. It calls to mind the cherished companions of childhood, nostalgic feelings for his native place (*furusato* 故郷), and, faintly, affection for his homeland, nation, and culture. Nostalgia for times gone by, for a certain beauty and purity associated with childhood and prewar Japan, often combined with love for and pride in the Japanese nation, are important psychological elements of the image prewar generations preserve of their traditional toys.

These emotional undertones are present in the term "folk toy" (*kyōdo-gangu* 郷土玩具), which commonly designates this taxonomical subdivision of *omocha* as a genre. We know from the history of ethnography (called *kyōdo-kenkyū* 郷土研究 in Japan at the time the term was created) that the meaning of *kyōdo*—depending on how far one extends the geographical range of the component *do* 土—can embrace anything from one's native village to the entire territory of the nation.[7] Naturally, in the context of Japanese folklore as well as in vernacular usage, it refers to the Japanese people and nation in particular. "Japanese" is therefore a dimension that is, unless otherwise mentioned, inherent in the notion of "folk toy."

If *omocha*, as a taxonomical genre of its own, would seem to have emerged naturally from such older conceptual aggregates as "games," "play," and "amusements," *kyōdo-gangu*, a more specific term and concept, appears to be a rather artificial product created in reaction, and contrast, to the toy of Western conception. This much is implicit in a statement from the *Kyōdo-gangu jiten* [Dictionary of folk toys], the authoritative modern reference work on the subject, where, echoing earlier declarations to the same effect by Starr, Yanagita, and others, it says that "the essential features of the traditional Japanese toy are the very opposite of those of the modern toy that has invaded the market everywhere, the type imported from the West since the Meiji era, mechanically mass-produced from such industrial materials as tin, rubber, celluloid, and plastic" (SAITŌ 1971, 48).

In addition to the opposition of Japanese and Western characteristics, there is mention here of a distinction between traditional and modern. One

would assume these two pairs of antonyms to be complementary ("Japanese" matching "traditional" and "Western" corresponding to "modern"), but reality is not so simple. In fact, most playthings on sale today in department stores and toy shops are classified as "Japanese modern": toys that originated in the social and cultural context peculiar to "modern" Japan.[8] Theoretically there is also such a thing as a "Western traditional" toy, a term that applies literally to any plaything expressive of a particular Western cultural tradition (like, for example, the numerous versions of the Pierrot figure). Finally, a third kind of "Japanese" toy is represented by the countless products, sold even in the remotest parts of the world, that are designed for foreign markets and often have nothing Japanese about them except the fact that they were "made in Japan."[9]

Where does one draw the temporal borderline between "traditional" and "modern"? For the purists among toy amateurs it lies in the latter half of the Meiji era, when the industrially produced toy of "Western" conception came to dominate the world of child's play. Later students and enthusiasts, less severe in their judgment, have been willing to extend the limit to as far as the 1950s. As early as the 1930s, however, the folk toy had apparently disappeared from the minds and the actual play of children, despite considerable effort on the part of the government to instill nationalism through the use of patriotic "Japanese" toys.[10] As a result, the production and sale of these toys had so declined that even the most optimistic folklorists admitted that the life of a cherished, and by now already idealized, tradition was drawing to an end.[11] For the traditional collector, this was as far as the concept of *kyōdo-gangu* could be stretched without its losing an essential quality (and its beauty) as folkcraft: being "alive," i.e., fulfilling its traditional function and purpose.

This conception contrasts with the much broader view of toy folklorists of the third generation, who have ceased to consider function as the essential criterion, and instead give increased weight to the "folk" component of the concept. In their opinion, the folk toy, having undergone a renaissance during the 1950s thanks to the folkcraft movement and the development of tourism, is living on in what is termed its "new" (lit., "newly-risen" *shinkō* 新興) form.[12] This epithet is now used in reference to the *omocha* manufactured in increasing numbers since the 1960s that outwardly retain the typically Japanese and regional characteristics of the traditional type but that have lost their practical value for the child (with the exception of a few—such as the kite—still used in games or rites). They have become, instead, refined objects of aesthetic appreciation for adults, items of collection, or simply souvenirs

brought back from a journey. We will return to this postwar type later.

THE FOLK TOY

The historical dimension of the "Japanese" toy thus delimited, we now need to know what kind of objects the term "folk toy" applies to in practice. The contemporary toy scholar Saitō Ryōsuke characterizes them in the following way:

1) They are made of such materials as are readily and cheaply available in everyday life: clay, wood, bamboo, paper, cloth, yarn, or straw, all used in Japan since before the Meiji era.
2) They are handmade and bear in every region the characteristic marks of local folkcraft.
3) Many of them are sold on *ennichi* 縁日 (link-days)[13] and in the permanent markets in the precincts of temples and shrines. As such they are intimately related with folk beliefs concerning the protection from and riddance of disease and misfortune, and embody wishes for happiness and long life, vows for abundant crops, and prayers for easy delivery. Others are essentially *engimono* 縁起物 (luck-bringers; lit., "material links") (KYBURZ 1991, 108–13, 114). Those that are given or sold by shrines are in many respects the same as amulets or talismans. Some are decidedly unlike playthings.
4) They are profoundly linked to local customs and domestic ritual, some serving as decorations during seasonal festivals and others being associated with annual observances like the yearly festival of the village shrine. They thus also have a strong seasonal tinge.
5) Historically, they have their origin almost without exception in the Edo period and the Meiji years, prior to the industrial revolution. Often products of provincial castle-town culture, they are rich in local (*kyōdo*) color." (SAITŌ 1971, 48)

This is the current general and scholarly conception, with particular emphasis on the "folk" dimension. Half a century earlier, however, Starr gave a more factual and realistic description. Having moved for fifteen years in the circle of the foremost toy amateurs of his day, he reported on the content of their collections (most of which ran to several thousand pieces) in the classificatory manner of the collector he himself was,[14] though actually he was doing little more than reflect the typification then current among Japanese connoisseurs.[15] He lists the following distinctive groups:

First: come the toys with which the child imitates and plays at the occupations and life of his elders. Children everywhere play at real life. Everywhere they use miniatures of the tools and implements, the weapons, the musical instruments of grown people. It is unnecessary to specify examples. They abound in Japan as in every part of the world. [He nevertheless refers to the doll, distinguishing between "*ningyō*, true dolls used by girls," and "*hina*, ceremonial objects that are not intended for little girls to play with."]

Second: *ningyō, not* dolls. Of human and animal figures in clay or other materials, which can not actually be called dolls, there are thousands. [As a typical example he cites the "year-animal-figure toys" representing the twelve zodiacal signs.]

Third: are the toys used in the playing of games. Such are the *hagoita* (battledores), "beanbags," etc. . . .

Fourth: are simple toys, whose mode of use lies in themselves—kites, windmills, tops, whistles, and the like. . . .

Fifth: springing toys, which might have been included in the preceding. . . .

Sixth: are toy figures, which are illustrative of, or related to, popular stories or real history. [Examples are Momotarō, the badger and the kettle, Tenjin, and others.] This entire group might have been included in our second division.

Seventh: . . . miniature representations of objects used in public ceremonials. . . . In Nagasaki, a festival is celebrated once in seven years in which a giant whale figure is dragged through the streets. At the time of this festival miniature reproductions of this whale are sold and are popular as children's tops.

Eight: toys somewhat religious in character. . . . The same "toy" may be purely secular or actually religious, in the case of the figure of Daruma. Another example is found in the *uso* (bullfinch) sold at Tenjin shrines at the festival of January 25. . . .

Ninth, and *lastly*: are the "toys," which are no toys, but where magical, curative, protective, or luck-bringing powers are the real motive of securing and keeping them. Such "toys" do not remain in children's hands as playthings, but are placed on the god-shelf, fastened up in the house or shop, or worn upon the person. Here belong the many quaint and curious forms of clay-bells, shrine-clusters, and the like. (STARR 1926, 105–10; the italics are Starr's)

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE WESTERN AND THE JAPANESE CONCEPT

After this taxonomical outline, the "To play or not to play with" of this

article's title, though admittedly lacking the philosophical profundity of Hamlet's question, appears less rhetorical, or facetious, than it might have at first sight. If we take ludic function to be the essential criterion of the toy in its basic sense as a material object for children or others to play with, then fully half of Starr's groups are not toys. Only the first, fourth, and fifth groups can be considered real toys, that is, playthings.[16] We will follow Starr here in leaving out of account the *hina* 雛 "dolls," whose function is mainly ceremonial, destined as they are to be displayed on the Doll's Festival. Besides, a ceremonial or ritual role is assigned to dolls in most cultures, so that the Japanese *hina* are not unique in this respect.

Toys belonging to group two and groups six to nine, however, do not fully qualify as playthings in the basic sense of the term. Their primary function being nonludic, they form in fact a coherent whole, subdivided into a number of types. Their essential formal characteristic is the miniaturized representation, in figurative terms, of certain human beings, animals, or material objects, expressive of symbolical values that do not intrinsically relate to play, games, sport, amusement, or entertainment. Quantitatively the most important types are anthropomorphic figurines of popular, historical, legendary, mythical, sacred, or divine (also profane) personages, followed by animal figures and, finally, by three-dimensional likenesses of material objects and symbols. Typical examples of the first type are the images of Tenjin (representing the early-Heian scholar and statesman Sugawara no Michizane), sumo wrestlers, famous warriors (Takeda Shingen, Uesugi Kenshin), personages both legendary (Benkei, Daruma) and imaginary (Momotarō, Kintarō), fabulous beings like goblins (*tengu* 天狗) and imps (*kappa* 河童), mythic archetypes (Urashima Tarō, the Greybeard of Takasago), sacred beings (mountain-dwelling immortals [*sennin* 仙人]), and all the denizens of the popular pantheon (Ebisu, Daikoku, etc.). As for representations of the animal world, there are one or several models of almost every prominent species, whether it be of the flying (crane, bullfinch), walking (dog, horse), crawling (turtle, snake), or swimming kind (sea bream, octopus, etc.). In contrast, practically no species of vegetal life has lent shape to an *omocha* (a rare exception being the peach, but only as an attribute of Momotarō), though some do play a secondary role as decorative motifs (bamboo, plum blossoms). Material objects form attributes in the composition of a main image (e.g., a money chest on the back of an ox), but appear more often as functional devices (professional, ritual, and magical instruments: drum, helmet, portable shrine, bell), or as full-fledged emblems and symbols (treasure ship, fire-brigade standard).

The purpose of the first group of toys, those meant to be played

with, lies in their practical function, whereas for "toys" of the second kind it lies in their meaning. The latter function primarily on a metaphorical level, as material objects representing or even embodying symbolical images and values. The two kinds are not, however, mutually exclusive, and numerous toys do indeed serve both purposes. Structurally, a folk toy such as the "pigeon-whistle" (*hato-bue* 鳩笛), a local product of the town of Usa (Oita Prefecture), is a well-functioning wind instrument, but its primary purpose lies in the multiple layers of symbolic meaning associated with it: the pigeon is the emblematic animal of the god Hachiman (whose main sanctuary is Usa) and functions as his messenger and means of communication; the sound of the whistle, a strikingly close imitation of the bird's eerie cooing, is, by a tangle of associations too complicated to unravel here, deemed to be highly auspicious; and the whistle itself is thought to possess a magical efficacy against children's choking (SAITŌ 1971, 30–31), apparently because of the unobstructed wind-passage of the instrument, representing the effortless ease with which food passes down the pigeon's gullet.[17]

As practical function gives way to symbolic meaning, a plaything turns into a symbol, moving out of the child's hand into the conceptual universe of the adult. It is with respect to this class of "toys," which lacks all ludic purpose in form as well as intent,[18] that our "To play or not to play with" question appears justified. It is here that the limit has to be drawn between the English term "toy" in its basic acceptation, and the Japanese *omocha*, here where the latter would appear to lie outside the scope of the former's semantic field. So, naturally, it is here that we approach the idiomatically Japanese features, especially since we are dealing with folk toys, of which "local color" is a quintessential element.

Within this category there are several types to be distinguished, according to whether they are related to 1) religious beliefs, 2) ritual or ceremonial practices, 3) magical superstitions, 4) habits, social manners, and customs, or 5) specific locales.

TOYS AS AMULETS AND TALISMANS

As an example of a "toy" of the religious sphere, we may mention once more the figurines representing the god Tenjin in the guise of the Heian courtier he originally was. Made from rather fragile materials such as baked clay, papier-mâché, or paste, and existing in numerous variations all over the country, its practical purpose was to serve as a cult image of the tutelary deity of children learning calligraphy (SAITŌ 1971, 212–13). Tenjin-sama is thus representative of Starr's second class, "*Ningyō, not* dolls" (because not destined to be played with in the manner of dolls).

His seventh group, "miniature representations of some objects used in public ceremonial" (and ritual, we might add), corresponds to our second type, exemplified by the miniature lion-head masks and portable shrines already mentioned by Starr and still current today, both as objects for ritual use and as *omocha*.

"Toys" incarnating magical beliefs are exceedingly numerous. In fact, a magical conception of the world seems to underlie, to a greater or lesser degree, most of the second group, which consists predominantly of *omocha* named *engimono*: "material links," a term designating certain things that function as charms to ensure such this-worldly advantages as prosperity, happiness, luck, longevity, etc. It can, with some degree of semantic correspondence, be rendered into French as *mascotte* (Eng. *mascot*).[19] Folk toys in every sense of the word, the most popular among them are known all over the country, forming families with numerous variants, all differing slightly according to their place of production. Subjects are drawn from all categories of existing forms, representing deities (gods of fortune, especially Ebisu and Daikoku) and human beings (Daruma, Momotarō), animals (bullfinch, the twelve zodiac animals), and things (bells, rakes-of-fortune). Magical function is also the essential role of another family of "toys" closely resembling "mascots," namely those, few in number, that are outright amulets (*omamori*) or talismans, such as a tiny figurine of a frog (*kaeru* 蛙) sold by the Okitama Shrine of Futami and thrown into the sea to ensure that seafarers safely return (*kaeru* 帰る).

Omocha that are not actual playthings and that stem from the profane field of social manners and customs can be exemplified by the *hagoita* 羽子板 (battledores) of the decorative variety; decked out with gaudy rag pictures of fashionable actors or beauties of the entertainment world,[20] they are sold at certain New Year's markets (such as the one still held every year in the precincts of the Asakusa Kannon Temple), and serve as congratulatory gifts and ornaments. Their purpose being entirely ornamental, they are to be distinguished from the instruments actually used in the battledore and shuttlecock game (*hanetsuki* 羽子突). Objects of this kind do qualify, in English, as "toys" if we use the term in the extended sense of "something contrived for amusement rather than for practical use," or even of "a small article of little intrinsic value, but prized as an ornament or curiosity."[21] Here we are close to what is meant by the French word *bibelot* (only approximately rendered by the English *knick-knack* or *trinket*).

The last type are the "toys" that, in outer form and inner meaning, indicate a particular region, locality, or institution, this indication being their essential function. Meant as tokens of remembrance of some

place, event, or person visited, they may be appropriately termed "souvenirs," and are indeed considered as a sort of *miyage*. Formal and iconographical peculiarities are the keys to their provenance, to the point where the toy's name is usually determined by a place-name. Thus the Miharu Colt (*Miharu-goma* 三春駒), with its countrywide reputation as the masterpiece of toy horses, has its legendary origins in what is today the township of Miharu (Fukushima Prefecture). Locally used as a talisman for child rearing and the easy delivery of horses, and also as an amulet to ward off measles and smallpox, this small wooden figurine has recently become a local souvenir that, with its characteristic pattern of vivid colors on a black body, forms a distinctive gift article often brought back from journeys to northeastern Japan.[22]

Multiple Functions

We have so far considered only the dominant function of these toys. From the examples given, however, one can easily guess that most of them do in fact have several additional, if subordinate, functions, among which may even be that of actual play. Still, the fact remains that many Japanese folk toys—the majority of them, according to most qualified prewar observers[23]—would not be considered toys in any Western sense of the term, lacking as they do any recognized ludic purpose. They are nevertheless part of the taxonomical category of *omocha*, even though this term clearly derives from the verb meaning to "handle in play" and should properly refer to playthings. It is therefore in regard to objects whose main purpose is religious or magical that the respective semantic fields of the Western and Japanese terms for "toy" seem to differ. The "rake-of-fortune" has already been mentioned above as an example of this semantic shift (see also fig. 1.).

An even better-known example will fully illustrate the difference between the two concepts, and the subtle distinctions implied. The Daruma doll, an ovoid figure usually made of *hariko* 張子 (papier-mâché), is supposed to be a likeness of the Indian monk Bodhidharma, legendary patriarch of the Zen school, sitting in the meditation posture (this explains why the figure has neither legs nor arms). The essential feature of the "toy" lies, however, not in its figurative representation of the stout, bearded Zen monk[24]—there are local variants picturing the god Hachiman, one or another of the gods of fortune, a *tengu*, a noble girl, a sumo wrestler, etc.—but in its physical structure of an *okiagari* 起上り (tumbler) with its rounded and weighted base that causes it to right itself (*okiagaru* 起き上がる) whenever pushed over.[25] This physical property is naturally associated, through imitative and sympathetic magic, with the power of prompt "recovery," which makes the toy a mascot or tal-

FIGURE 1

The papier-mâché dog's role, apparently since Nara times, has been to promote easy delivery and healthy growth for the child. A local folkcraft item typical of the Tokyo region, it accompanies here a baby on his first ritual visit to the Meiji Shrine. (Photograph by courtesy of Hagiwara Hidesaburō.)

isman one has recourse to in cases of bad luck or sudden disease.

The Daruma symbolism, in its popular version, has a legendary origin in the icons of the sitting Bodhidharma that the Chinese Zen monk Tōkō Shin'etsu (1642–1696), the founder of the Daruma-dera in Takasaki (Gunma Prefecture), reportedly drew for his parishioners as New Year's charms to bring happiness and prosperity and ward off accidents and misfortune. At the beginning of the Meiwa era (1764–72), Tōgaku, the ninth priest of the temple, is said to have responded to constant solicitations from the local peasants to reproduce the charm by entrusting its production to the farmers themselves, giving them a wooden

sculpture of Daruma to use as a block (mold).[26] The peasants utilized this to produce their own three-dimensional charm in papier-mâché, eventually reproducing it in sufficient numbers to sell it as a mascot to a regional population mainly living from sericulture.

It is hard to say precisely when the Daruma shape was grafted onto the tumbler toy, but KITAMURA Nobuyo (1830, VI [*ge*], 165) and KITAGAWA Morisada (1967, 305) both note that, in mid-nineteenth century Edo, the two were practically synonymous. In any event, the Daruma of Takasaki has been a much-prized mascot in farming families that, throughout the Kantō area and as far west as Nagano Prefecture, produced silk as a cash crop, at least until that subsidiary occupation became obsolete in the 1960s. Silkworm-raising being reputed to be largely a matter of luck, the tumbler was intended to bring about the success (*agari* 上がり) of the cocoon crop. Effective (like most Japanese charms) for only one annual cycle, new ones had to be bought at the *Daruma-ichi* (Daruma market) of Takasaki or at one of the numerous other local fairs that took place shortly after the New Year.

In addition to its role in sericulture, Daruma is known to have played a prominent part in the treatment of smallpox, and this also for metaphorical reasons. Placed at the affected person's bedside, the figurine was thought to have a propitiatory function by virtue of its bright vermilion color, for which the demon of this disease was said to have a particular liking.[27] Its ability to tumble also had a therapeutic significance, as it was held to be conducive to a recovery as prompt as the attack had been sudden.[28] The doll was also given to the child to play with as a prophylactic measure.[29]

Another of the Takasaki Daruma's typical features, its original lack of eyes, led to painting in the left eye on purchase and promising to give it full eyesight on fulfilment of one's wish, a custom that was then widely practiced by the silk farmers of the Kantō area and that has been turned by modern politicians into a public-relations gesture marking election campaigns.[30]

This Fuku-Daruma (Fortune Daruma), typical of the Kantō area, has until today remained a local handicraft—a "folk toy" par excellence—produced by a number of Takasaki workshops and sold on the regional Daruma markets at the beginning of each year, mostly to farm and merchant houses as a mascot for prosperity, good fortune, and happiness.[31] It represents, however, only a particular aspect of an otherwise immense theme, the constellation revolving around the Daruma figure being composed of a large and still-changing number of local legends, popular cults, beliefs, and forms of representation.[32] What has been said will suffice to demonstrate how, for this "toy" too, the purpose

is magical rather than ludic.

Seen in this light, folk toys of the second type, whose main purpose is to convey meaning (and, of course, the power inherent in it), appear as objects conceived and produced by adults and existing for adults. Although they may not be without a ludic dimension, their enjoyment is conditioned by so profound and complex a symbolism as to place them essentially outside the child's mental range. Thus many are in fact playthings only secondarily (one might almost say accidentally). The only characteristic common to these "toys" and real toys seems to be their size: miniature, so that they can be easily manipulated by small hands. Still, as I have noted elsewhere (KYBURZ 1991, 111–12), the size of particularly the symbolic type of toy is liable to frequent deviation, from the exceedingly small to the overly large. There are, on the one hand, Daruma figurines carved into beans no taller than a few millimeters, and, on the other, papier-mâché Daruma images larger than life-size.[33]

TOYS FOR ADULTS

The "adult" dimension of the Japanese folk toy, one of its peculiar yet major aspects, has been noted by early observers since the middle of the Edo period, but was fully acknowledged only after the industrial toy of Western conception began to threaten the folk toy's existence during the latter half of the Meiji era. It is thanks to this dimension that the Japanese toy has survived to this day in relatively good health, in spite of having long since ceased to play an active role in the child's world.

Following our semasiological inquiry into the meaning of the term *omocha*, it might be of some interest to the student of Japanese ethnography to trace the course of the notion of *omocha* through successive cultural settings. It goes without saying that this perspective also is limited to the viewpoint and mode of perception of the adult, since there is of course no child's view on record.

Edo nishiki [Edo new and old] (RŌ and KITAO 1773) is the earliest work entirely dedicated to toys. With some eighty-eight playthings drawn by Kitao Shigemasa (1739–1820),[34] who was by then well established as one of the period's great masters of book illustration, and with a foreword by the noted humorist Ōta Nanpo (1749–1823), this *ehon* 絵本 (picture book) is a telling product of the milieu known as the "floating world," of its chroniclers, and of the urban population of Edo and Osaka in general. It had a very limited circulation, but its very creation proves that there was an interest in toys as a category of daily-life object. It remained, however, the only monograph produced until the middle of the Meiji era; all other written testimony, beginning with a few references in the popular prose stories of Ihara Saikaku (1642–93), mention

toys either incidentally or in the context of games and sports, as do such popular encyclopedias as the *Kottō-shū* [A miscellany of old facts] (1813–15) by SANTŌ Kyōden (Kitao Shigemasa's disciple), the *Kiyū shōran* (1830) by KITAMURA Nobuyo, and the *Morisada mankō* (1853) by KITAGAWA Morisada. It is noteworthy that all of these authors belong to a distinct social and professional group within urban society: publishers, editors, illustrators, writers of comic fiction (*gesaku* 戯作) and poetry (*haikai* 俳諧, *kyōka* 狂歌), stage artists, other poetasters and would-be men of letters, all of whom were participants in the literary coteries frequently hosted by prosperous, dilettante merchants.[35] Games and instruments of amusement would indeed have been a congenial topic for discourse and versifying in these stylish and often frivolous assemblies, where connoisseurship (*tsū* 通) in all sorts of mundane pleasures was a required accomplishment.

It was precisely within the framework of these coteries that the appreciation of toys as objects of aesthetic and emotional value took form and developed, till the end of the Meiji era, into something of a fashion for the new urban elite. In 1880 Shimizu Seifū (1851–1913), head of a wealthy, officially appointed trade dynasty in Tokyo but rather more interested in verse-writing and illustration,[36] founded, with a few childhood friends, the "Hobbyhorse Club" (Takeuma-kai 竹馬会), dedicated to the merry and nostalgic enjoyment of children's toys.[37] A passionate and widely traveled student of local folk toys, Seifū began in 1891 to publish a series of books entitled *Unai no tomo* [The child's friends] (SHIMIZU 1891–1923), in which he himself illustrated and catalogued some 440 items of his own collection and those from different regions of the country. With the appearance in 1923 of the tenth volume (six by Seifū himself and four more by the painter Nishizawa Tekiho), this work had become the bible for all serious toy amateurs.

As Japan progressively opened itself to the outside world, the interest in playthings captivated a wider circle and was stimulated by different motivations. As mentioned above, the notion arose of a "Japanese" toy, in contrast to the now ubiquitous toy of Western conception, imported and locally produced since after the turn of the century. Japan's national consciousness received a considerable boost by the country's victories over China (1894–95) and Russia (1904–5), and this, along with a new conception of beauty and a growing nostalgia for the things of the good old days, eventually led to a reappraisal of indigenous toys as beautiful products of the Japanese genius. In 1906 several toy exhibitions were held, such as the Kodomo Hakurankai (Children's Exhibition) in Ueno Park, where many folk toys from the collections of Seifū and a few other people were on display, and one in Osaka, entirely

devoted to toys made in Japan. In 1909 the Mitsukoshi Draper's Store Inc., which had begun in 1904 to organize artistic exhibitions as part of its commercial strategy, staged the widely acclaimed Bankoku Omocha Ten (International Toy Show).[38]

In 1909 also, Shimizu Seifū founded a new club called the Ōdomo-kai 大供会 (adults' club),[39] on the same principles as its predecessor. For every meeting, participants had to bring along newly acquired toys for joint appraisal. Membership was still largely composed of the social and intellectual elite, of "enlightened" gentlemen of Meiji society such as Seifū himself, the Asakusa bank executive Nishizawa Senko, the painter and Saikaku scholar Awashima Kangetsu, the anthropologist Tsuboi Shōgorō, the craftsman and art professor Takeuchi Kuon, the Marquis Tokugawa Shigeyoshi and Matsumoto Tadasuke, and, some years later, foreigners like the English potter Bernard Leach and professor Frederick Starr. According to one of the period's most widely read society-magazines, the *Fūzoku gahō* [Manners' graphic], these personalities were embodiments of the Meiji ideal of the "gentleman of distinction" (*kiken-shinshi* 貴顕紳士), and their somewhat peculiar occupation of collecting, appraising, and nostalgically handling toys was said to be a *shumi* 趣味 (hobby), a fashionable notion that had barely been introduced a few years before in replacement of the old Edo term *dōraku* 道楽.[40] Already in these last years of the Meiji era it had become clear to amateurs that indigenous playthings were quickly and ineluctably being abandoned by children and that their survival would afterwards lie in the hands of adults—a conviction, and a mission, clearly expressed in the name Seifū chose to give his new circle.

The student of the history of Japanese ethnology will remember that, late in 1910, Yanagita Kunio, Ishiguro Tadayuki, and others founded, at the home of Nitobe Inazō, a very similar association named the Kyōdo-kai,[41] a kind of salon that was to be the cradle of Japanese folklore studies (MIYATA 1990, 21–23). These two clubs developed in parallel currents during the Taishō years, the toy collectors being considered "mere" amateurs in pursuit of a curious hobby by the folklorists, who were almost without exception academics concerned with subjects of greater consequence than toys.[42] The link between the two fields of interest seems to have been the anthropologist Tsuboi Shōgorō, who was an ardent toy collector as well as one of the founding fathers of Japanese folklore; it was initially through him that the dilettantes became acquainted with the vocabulary and the fieldwork of the ethnographic school. The conceptual evolution is best followed in the successive generic terms for indigenous toys, from the initial and still all-embracing *teasobimono* 手遊物 (playthings), which, by the authority of Seifū's *Unai*

no tomo, was the standard word until the end of the Meiji era, to *ōdomo-gangu* 大供玩具 (adults' toys), used by members of the club during a short interlude around 1910, to terms that increasingly reflected geographical and national (not to say patriotic and racial) dimensions: the vague *shokoku-gangu* 諸国玩具 (provincial toys) and *chihō-gangu* 地方玩具 (local toys), discarded during the Taishō years in favor of *dozoku-gangu* 土俗玩具 (folk toys), which in turn lost out to the presently used *kyōdo-gangu* 郷土玩具 (folk toys).[43] What finally came to be considered the model of the Japanese folk toy was, according to the toy scholar Arisaka Yotarō (1896–1955), a plaything that expressed the particular culture of its place of origin as well as the expressive talent of its maker.[44]

The slow sclerosis that the traditional toy suffered up to World War II was the result of several factors. The most important, as has already been pointed out, must surely be the disuse that such toys fell into with the invasion by toys of Western conception. The consequence was a notable decrease in both supply and demand as interest in traditional toys became restricted to adult amateurs and collectors, and as their manufacture ceased to provide a livelihood for many local family workshops. The Ministry of Home Affairs' outlawing of toxic colors in 1900 brought a stop to the production of many regional clay figurines, which had not always been painted with harmless mineral and vegetable pigments (Saitō 1985, 134). A major hemorrhage occurred with the Great Kantō Earthquake of 1923, which brought about the destruction of an entire quarter of toy makers, shops, and dealers in downtown Tokyo,[45] not to mention of a few major collections.[46]

The traditional folk toy only narrowly escaped the last crisis to threaten its existence: the period of the 1940s when, with an economy and a population at war, then defeated and destitute, adults had little leisure to either make or play with toys. Towards the end of the 1950s the folk toy awoke to a new life, though not quite as splendidly as the phoenix and from somewhat more than ashes. Again, several factors were simultaneously at work. The extension of the road network, increased mobility, and the development of tourism and its concomitant economical and psychological substructure have all been extrinsic conditions for folk toys' remarkable comeback as local products (*dosan* 土産) that are everywhere for sale as souvenirs (*miyage* 土産). The collection of prewar or, better still, Meiji or even early nineteenth-century pieces, has continued and regained vigor with the hobby boom, affecting enthusiasts on an ever-wider social basis thanks to the mass media.

Authentic "Japanese" toys of the traditional "folk" kind have been coveted collector's items from as early as the end of the Meiji era in the case of purely indigenous specimens from Edo-period and preindustrial

Japan, and since the 1950s in the case of items produced up until the last war. Their survival, even in their "new" form, is owing almost completely to a few amateurs, of dilettante as well as of academic persuasion, and to an even smaller number of idealistic artisans and craftsmen perpetuating the manufacture of playthings as a local family tradition.

NOTES

1. The citation is from the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

2. This etymology, to which YANAGITA Kunio lent the weight of his authority in a short but quintessential article appearing in the *Asahi Shinbun* newspaper in April 1941 (1941, 15), has so far gone undisputed.

3. See under the heading *zatsugei* (miscellaneous skills), Book II, 26. A later dictionary of the same kind, citing a passage of the *History of the Later Han* that speaks of a certain Tao Qian playing with a bamboo horse, traces the history of that plaything back to Later Han times (25–220 A.D.); see TERAJIMA 1712, *jō*. ARISAKA Yotarō (1931) has made the most serious attempt so far to study the history of Japanese toys. Cross-cultural studies, however, are still almost nonexistent. It would be very revealing, for example, to explore the cultural history of the top, of which no other country has known as many varieties, technical developments, and ways of use as Japan, despite its being called a "decidedly Western" toy by an essayist as penetrating as Roger CAILLOIS (1967, 162). A recent exhibition in Marseilles had on display Egyptian, Greek, and Roman specimens, of which the oldest dated from the first dynasty (RÉUNION DES MUSÉES NATIONAUX 1991, 77–79).

4. *Morisada mankō* was published under the title *Ruiju kinsei fūzoku shi* [Records of modern customs and habits] in 1928 and 1964. It was reedited and published anew as *Kinsei fūzoku jiten* in 1967 (see KITAGAWA 1853). See Book II, chapter 25: "Amusements" (297–340). Other terms, used indiscriminately, are *ganbutsu* 玩物 and *rōgan no gu* 弄玩の具.

5. According to STATLER (1983, 237–55), Frederick Starr first came to Japan in 1904, visited and studied the country at length some fifteen times prior to his death in Tokyo in 1933, all the while serving as professor of anthropology at the University of Chicago, where he gave influential and much-publicized lectures under the simple heading of "Japan." His interest in Japanese toys might have been stimulated by the ethnologist Stewart Culin, director of the Museum of Archaeology and Paleontology, University of Pennsylvania, who not only was the first Western scholar to study the games of Far Eastern cultures (CULIN 1895), but was also (with Frank H. Cushing from the Bureau of American Ethnology) the pioneer student of the world's games as a branch of ethnology, at least in the United States. Starr also collected and wrote on votive pictures and inscriptions (*ema* 絵馬 and *nōsatsu* 納札; see n. 6, below).

6. The question as to why *ema* should be considered *omocha* raises a truly intriguing problem, and an attempt will have to be made someday to explain and explore this idiosyncratic extension of the concept. *Ema* were until at least Starr's time an integral part of all Japanese *omocha* collections, and have remained so in some much more recent ones. In 1930 the toy scholar TAKEI Takeo recognized the oddness of this classification and recommended that *ema* be considered a class apart (1930). Strangely enough, in spite of Starr's explicit disqualifying statement and contrary to

most Western taxonomical and conceptual criteria, *ema* also figure in quite a number of *omocha* collections assembled by foreigners, among them such methodically composed examples as that of René de Berval (shared by the Musée de l'Homme in Paris and the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka) and, prominently, in that of Starr himself (part of which is supposed to be in the custody of the University of Pennsylvania). In fact, the American professor was an enthusiastic collector of *ema*, and was the author of one of the very few Western-language articles on the subject (STARR 1920), still often cited today (e.g., READER 1991). In Starr's and, more recently, in de Berval's case, this seems due not to any conscious taxonomical analysis but to the eclectic passion, common to both of them, of collecting aesthetically interesting types of Japanese folk art. The votive pictures in de Berval's collection, some eight hundred items, were sold to Osaka after his death in 1987.

7. TAKAGI Toshio declared that "the aim of folklore is the thorough study, from every angle, of the totality of the phenomena in the life of the Japanese people" (1913). This manifesto indicates that Takagi conceived of the new school of folklore studies founded by him and Yanagita as sharing the spirit of German folklore studies, to which Wilhelm Heinrich von Riehl had clearly assigned the notion of the Germanic people (*Volk*) as a basic framework (*Naturgeschichte des Volkes*, 1851). Thus *kyōdo-kenkyū* would be a translation of the German *Volkskunde* rather than of the English *folklore*, just as *kyōdo* itself has its closest equivalent in the German *Heimat* (there being also a form of folklore called *Heimatkunde*).

8. Conspicuous examples being the now universally notorious robots of the Transformer, Ultraman, and Gachaman type; avatars of the modern child's science-fiction cartoon universe, their "Japaneseness" owes little to traditional indigenous culture.

9. In 1927 Japan was already the largest producer of celluloid toys in the world. Their export value reached 42 million yen in 1936, making it the fourth-biggest item of trade in the country's industry. By 1962 Japan produced and exported the largest number of toys in the world, with an export value of 28.6 billion yen (1969: 67.2 billion yen), until the leading position in this field was taken in 1972 by Hong Kong. For the history of the modern Japanese toy, see the astonishing chronological table by SAITŌ (1985, 131–42). The so-called *masukomi-omocha* (mass-communication toys) of the robot type first invaded the country in the guise of "Steel-Arm Atom" and "Steel-Man no. 28" in 1964 (SAITŌ (1985).

10. Besides the (toy-)weapon arsenal of the imperial armies, there were kites, table games (backgammon, poem-cards, and picture cards), plays, and play-songs, all featuring patriotic slogans and illustrations (such as episodes from the glorious "Three Heroic Human Bombs" of the Shanghai Incident of 1932), and, last but not least, the indispensable "Lord of Higo Knife" (also called "The Boy's Soul"). An instructive collection is to be found in *Taiyō* 49: 77–83. See also SAITŌ 1985, 137–38. The export of such toys led to the prohibition, in 1940, of Japanese toys in the United States and many European countries.

11. Some of the big names in the toy world participating with Arisaka Yotarō in a symposium on the past and future of the Japanese folk toy (published as the "Fifth Special Issue on Folk Toys" of *Tabi to densetsu*, 1932), still voiced some hope for its survival, but Yanagita's newspaper installments on children's games, written ten years later during the war (1941) at his retreat in the Izu hot springs, sound like the toll of the passing bell. For Starr's Japanese contemporaries, the end had already come with the Taishō period (see STARR 1926, 102).

12. Such is the gist of another symposium, held by members of the Japanese Folk

Toy Society in 1956, the results of which were published in the society's official organ *Taketonbo* 14 (1956). The phrase used to describe the renewal of the 1950s is "Shō-wa-Genroku," the latter era (1688–1704)—sometimes called the Japanese Renaissance—having been characterized by an extraordinary efflorescence of material and artistic life.

13. A particular day of the month or, more often, of the year, on which, by virtue of a special karmic link with the local deity, one's worship at a sanctuary is held to be particularly meritorious and productive of worldly benefits. For the special significance of this "link," with mascots and toys and their commerce, see KYBURZ 1991, 102–10.

14. The author would be grateful for any information on the whereabouts of Starr's own reputedly well-furnished collection; if it survived his death in 1933 in Tokyo, it is likely to have gone either to his alma mater, the University of Chicago, or to the Museum of Archaeology of the University of Pennsylvania, where his friend, the toy specialist Stewart Culin, was director and curator of a large collection of toys from East Asian cultures (see note 5, above).

15. Their leader at the time was Arisaka Yotarō, who, two years later, was to lay down the contemporary conception in ARISAKA 1928.

16. The fifth group really could be included in the fourth. Other observers besides Starr have been struck by the sheer ingenuity of the "springing toys" (*tondari-hanetari*), the different articulated parts of which are set in motion by loosening the string that holds under tension a body made of some elastic material (usually bamboo); so notably HEARN (1894, vol. 1, 260–64) and MORSE (1917, vol. 2, 79–80), who both list them as uniquely Japanese playthings. By virtue of their function they belong of course to the fourth type: "toys whose mode of use lies in themselves."

17. Such interpretations are hazardous, for completely contrary beliefs are often held in different regions. For example, according to a saying of the Yamato plain, the pigeon's call brings good weather, whereas in northern Japan (Iwate Prefecture) it is thought to bring rain (SHŌGAKU TOSHO 1982, *hato*). The bird's coo is unanimously credited with magical power, no doubt because of its haunting note. Its auspicious character is apparent in a proverb of southeastern Kyūshū (Miyazaki Prefecture): "Where pigeons build their nest, the house will prosper" (SHŌGAKU TOSHO 1982), a virtue that is attributed in many regions of Europe to the swallow.

18. Needless to say, this statement depends on how far one is willing to push the limits of the meaning of "play." I am deliberately following the definition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* since it represents the general consensus on the subject. It is paradoxically more "meaningful" and universal than the sense, too vague and relative, which HUIZINGA tried to force on it in his study *Homo ludens* (1951). I feel all the freer not to subscribe to Huizinga's pronouncements because his thesis essentially refers to the cultural dimension of play as a social activity indulged in by adults (whereas the majority of playthings are intrinsically meant for children), and, more importantly, because of the too vast and therefore ill-defined semantic territory he assigns to the concept. Moreover, even though we probably owe to Huizinga the introduction of the word "ludic" into general parlance (although it is not yet listed even in the 1971 supplement to the *Oxford English Dictionary*), we treat toys here in an ethnological, cross-cultural perspective that necessitates a greater degree of lexical precision than is possible in a work that considers all of human civilization to have been born within play, *as* play (see Huizinga's foreword and first chapter).

19. For an outline of *engimono*, see KYBURZ 1991, 108–13; for *engimono-omocha* see 114, 115. *Mascotte* (or the more anglicized *mascot*) seems indeed a fairly close

equivalent if one considers its origin in the charm representing the singer Mme Grizier-Monbazon in the title role La Mascotte of the operetta of the same name. A talisman very much in vogue in Parisian society and particularly among gamblers, its popularity peaked in 1885 (see the specimen from the collection of a contemporary, in MUSÉE NATIONAL DES ARTS ET TRADITIONS POPULAIRES 1991, 30, 54, 168).

20. Needless to say, the personalities portrayed are always the objects of the latest crazes, this at least since the early years of the nineteenth century (Bunka and Bunsei eras) when likenesses of popular Kabuki actors and notorious courtesans of the Floating World became the dominant pictorial subjects of battledore decoration (*Kinsei fūzoku-jiten*, II, 330–32 [see KITAGAWA 1853] and SAITŌ 1971, *hagoita*).

21. *Oxford English Dictionary*: "Toy" II. 6. and 7.

22. For an exceptionally well-documented history of the Miharu horse, see SAITŌ 1971, 321–31. SHIMIZU Seifū depicts a contemporary version in the third volume of *Unai no tomo* (1907), but knows of it only as a talisman for child rearing. This is still the case as late as 1930, when TAKEI Takeo describes it in the same terms (1930, vol. 1 "Eastern Division"). Its transformation into a "souvenir" seems therefore to be a postwar phenomenon and was without doubt greatly promoted by its appearance on the New Year's postal stamp of 1954, the year of the horse. As to the economic role of folk-toy manufacture, in its general and historical aspects, see HERRING 1981, 100, 101.

23. On the Japanese side, everyone from Shimizu Seifū to Yanagita Kunio (see SAITŌ 1971, 41–43) acknowledged the numerical dominance of toys rooted in religious and magical beliefs. This is also the impression one gets from the major contemporary Western testimonies on Japanese toydom, namely those of GRIFFIS (1876, vol. 2, 452–65), HEARN (1894, vol. 1, 258–68), MORSE (1917), and STARR (1926), who all come to talk about this topic in connection with shrine and temple festivals, for festivals were then, and in many rural villages still are today, the principal commercial outlets.

24. Just as there exist toys of the tumbler variety other than Daruma, so the Daruma figure graces other types of toys, such as kites, Daruma tops, *wanuke* Darumas, etc. However, both the tumbler principle and the Daruma figure seem to have found the ideal complement in each other, as the two elements are most often found combined.

25. A plaything of this type, in the form of an old man, is said to have been introduced from Ming China (1368–1644) and, under the new guise of a young boy, to have enjoyed some popularity in the Kinki region during the mid-seventeenth century; see SAITŌ 1971, 196–97, based on *Kinsei fūzoku-jiten*, II, 305, which has an illustration of this toy, called the "tumbling acolyte" (*okiagari-kobōshi* 起上り小法師). Morisada there already had occasion to note the fact that, as a plaything, it had been almost completely neglected by the children of his day.

26. See KIDO 1932, 596–601; also SAITŌ 1971, 232. These events, though having all the ingredients of legend, are not as farfetched as they might seem. For one thing, the technique of producing papier-mâché figures over a block or mold is said to have been introduced from China during the Muromachi period (1336–1573), and toys made from this material are mentioned as early as 1662, in connection with the tumbling acolyte (above, n. 25). IHARA Saikaku (1687) talks of "a certain Shinroku living in Dōtonbori [downtown Edo], a toyman who made lion-whistles and papier-mâché tigers. . . ." In addition, peasants in many regions of Japan have until quite recently produced amulets and talismans by running prints off their own individual wood blocks (see KYBURZ 1987, 220–22).

27. See ROTERMUND 1991, 68–71 for this god's preference for vermilion. A preventive, palliative, or conciliatory ritual is recorded from the area between the towns

of Ōtsu, Kusatsu, and Moriyama along Lake Biwa, where a papier-mâché figurine of the imaginary red Shōjō was placed along with his "companion-Daruma" (Tomo-Daruma) on a paper to be offered to the demon, together with rice and salt (for this and other apotropaic customs, see OKUMURA 1981, 99, as well as SAITŌ 1971, 110, and KIDO 1932, 530–35.

28. See ROTERMUND 1991, 156; as for the role played by representations of Daruma, and of the toy, in the iconography of "smallpox pictures" (*hōsō-e*), see ROTERMUND 1991, 156 and pl. nos. 8, 18, 26, 32–34, 36, 37, 41, 42, 47, 52, 54; also KIDO 1932, 535–38.

29. It was also given for its red color, which, in the Kyoto area, the demon of smallpox held in abhorrence. Throughout the Kansai, toys in general were painted red, to the point where "red things" (*akamono* 赤物) became a generic name for toys, and *akamono-ya* 赤物屋 for "toyman" (see OKUMURA 1981, 99).

30. See SAITŌ 1971, 231–32, for the Menashi-Daruma (Eyeless Daruma), and MCFARLAND 1987, 66–67, for the eye-painting-in "political rite of passage" as well as for Daruma lore in general. SAITŌ (1971, 197), following KIDO (1932, 389–96), reports on a practice current during the juvenile smallpox epidemics of the later Edo period, when, in the hope of preventing the disease from affecting their children's eyes, people would buy sightless Daruma dolls and afterwards have the craftsman paint the eyes in their presence and according to their specifications.

31. According to statistics from the Japanese Toy Association, almost eighty percent of the nationwide Daruma production in 1976 still came from the Takasaki area, where about 400,000 pieces, fetching some fifty million yen, were manufactured by ninety-eight workshops in the Toyooka section of Takasaki and by local farming families (for whom it forms a remunerative sideline) (SAITŌ 1971, 231–32). According to MCFARLAND (1987, 99), who does not identify his sources, the same local Daruma industry turned out in the 1980s "about 1.3 million pieces annually, approximately 70 percent of the nationwide total."

32. Daruma symbolism is without doubt the theme within the world of Japanese folk toys that has aroused the most enthusiasm and serious study on the part of both collectors and scholarly folklorists. Kido Chūtarō, a Kyoto gentleman known to STARR (1926, 112 and pl.), was both. He had dedicated his fortune and some fifty years of his life to this pursuit when, in 1959, he bequeathed to his city a collection of some fifty thousand Darumas, related documents, and the annex of his residence, the Daruma Hall, constructed to house the collection. H. Neill McFarland seems to be similarly dedicated, judging by the quality of the pieces he uses to illustrate his monograph on the subject (1987), which is the only encyclopedic survey of the subject in a Western language.

33. For the latter, see MCFARLAND 1987, 106, 107. The former are a specialty of a tiny toy shop near the Treasury Gate of Asakusa's Kannon Temple, the only survivor of a once-flourishing trade in the miniature toys that had been the fashion among the city's men of taste towards the end of the Edo period. A minute, one-centimeter square kite, designed to be flown in the warm air over a brazier, is still produced today by young Katō Shin'ichi, a fifth-generation practitioner of this craft. It is such miniature toys that elicited the admiration of foreign visitors to Meiji Japan, and that helped in building up the nation's reputation for skillful miniaturization.

34. For the historical role of Kitao Shigemasa and the importance of his school in book-illustrating, see CHIBBETT 1977, 179–80.

35. On the Edo *kyōka* coteries, which included "representatives of nearly every academic and philosophical school—the various competing strains of Confucianism,

kokugaku 国学 (National Learning), and Dutch Learning—and of the new breed of thinker concerned with agrarian reform and technological innovation," and which formed "probably the most cosmopolitan, intellectually open and socially varied subculture in Japan," see LEUTNER 1985, 37–42.

36. Seifū, whose life as the founding father of toyphilia is treated in detail by SAITŌ (1971, 160, and in 1981a 93, 94), was a pupil of Kozandō Sangetsu for *haikai* and of the Hiroshige school for drawing.

37. According to information provided by Seifū in the epilogue to the first volume of *Unai no tomo* (1891), the Takeuma-kai was a banquet club that periodically met at a restaurant in the natural surroundings of Mukōjima. Attendants were required to wear children's dress, to bring along either playthings cherished in their own childhood days or newly discovered local folk toys, and to play with them there, with the "innocence of a child's mind." The club's initial "playmates" were the comic fiction writer Kanagaki Robun, the sculptor Takeuchi Kuon, the public entertainers (*yose* 寄席) Danshūrō Enshi and Dodoitsubō Senka, the Saikaku scholar and painter Awashima Kangetsu, the writer Uchida Roan, the scholars of literature Otsuki Nyoden and of children's literature Iwaya Sazanami, the gentlemen amateurs Hayashi Wakaki and Kataoka Heiya, the anthropologist Tsuboi Shōgorō, the historian Osatake Takeki, the Asakusa toy-store owner Banbo Yonekichi, and a few other sympathizers of the same milieu.

38. For the early history and commercial strategy of what was to become the Mitsukoshi Department Store, see YAMAGUCHI 1991, 82–83. This exhibition also featured Japanese folk toys, mostly a selection from Aichi Prefecture. Already in 1904, as part of a program of reconstruction, the department store Shirokiya had installed a playroom entirely fitted out with "modern" toys (SAITŌ 1971, 31). How revolutionary Mitsukoshi's policy of promotion was is shown by the fact that it established a sales counter for folk toys in 1925, only a year after the opening of the Fujiya in Hongō, the first and, for a long time, the only shop specializing in this genre.

39. The name is part of an intricate play on words and meaning, typical of the kind of esprit practiced in the gentlemanly clubs of the time: *ōdomo* 大供 (adult) is a pun on *kodomo* 子供 (child), and at the same time a contraction of *otona no tomo* 大人の友 (adult's companion), which, in turn, plays off *Unai no tomo* (child's friends), title of Seifū's pioneering serial monograph (*unai*, a juvenile hairdo, is a word for "child" in the same Edo dialect that is the source of *omocha*). The club, with its gatherings and the spirit in which they took place, seems to have been a fashionable amalgamation of the native Edo literary coterie and the imported Anglo-Saxon gentleman's club. All were in perfect harmony with the concept of "enlightenment," the leitmotiv of cultured society in the Meiji era. These details would be quite superfluous were it not for the fact, of interest to the student of Japanese folklore and ethnology, that this club parallels very closely the "Folklore Society" (Kyōdo-kai), founded the following year by Yanagita Kunio and Ishiguro Tadayuki.

40. The article in the *Fūzoku gahō* (dated 5 March 1909) is quoted in SAITŌ 1981b, 113. It is impossible here to do more than hint at the social milieu of the late Meiji era and its customs and manners. The notions of "gentleman" (*shinshi* 紳士), of clubs and all sorts of societies, and, of course, of "hobby," appear like epiphenomena in continuance of (as far as its Anglo-Saxon model is concerned), and in reaction to, the Rokumeikan spirit, with its exclusive and unconditional devotion to things Western. As to the notion of *shumi*, which seems to have first appeared in vernacular vocabulary and literature in 1907 (see ISHII 1944), it came to be applied around the same time to the recently adopted pursuit of collecting all sorts of material objects.

The rendering as "hobby" is not in every case justified, but in reference to toys the English term is particularly well suited—indeed, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "hobby" as "a favorite occupation or topic, pursued merely for the amusement or interest it affords, and which is compared to the riding of a toy-horse (*cf.* hobbyhorse)." It will be remembered that the "Hobbyhorse Club" (Takeuma-kai) was the name of the coterie Seifū founded in 1880.

41. As mentioned above in note 7, the most appropriate translation would be the German *Heimat Klub*.

42. How deep the cleavage between "amateurs" and "scholars" was during the Taishō period is well illustrated by the inverse perspective given by Yanagita Kunio, who, in his *Minzokugaku techō* [Notebook on folklore; 1954], remembers that the folklorists were at the time disdainfully treated by scholars from other fields as "bigwigs" (*o-eragata* 御偉方) interested in such things as origins and distribution (cited by SAITŌ 1971, 30).

43. *Dozoku* and *kyōdo* (for which see above, n. 7), different words rendering the same component "folk," reflect the influence of the two early currents of folklore, issuing respectively from Tsuboi on the one hand and from Nitobe and Yanagita on the other.

44. See his introduction to the 1928 edition of *Tabi to densetsu* (Dai-roku kyōdo-gangu-go), ARISAKA, 1928, 2.

45. The great earthquake of September 1923 has been aptly described by Saitō as "the clapperbeat announcing the fall of the curtain on the stage of the traditional toy."

46. STARR 1926, 111, mentions the destruction of the legendary *hina* doll collection of the Asakusa banker Nishizawa Senko.

REFERENCES CITED

ARISAKA Yotarō 有坂與太郎

1928 Kyōdo-gangu gaisetsu 郷土玩具概説 [An outline of the folk toy]. *Tabi to densetsu* (*Kyōdogangu-go*) 旅と伝説 (郷土玩具号), vol. 1-6, ed. Hagiwara Masanori 萩原正徳. Tokyo: Sangensha.

1931 *Nihon gangu-shi* 日本玩具史 [A history of Japanese toys], vol. 1. Tokyo: Kensetsusha.

CAILLOIS, Roger

1967 *Les jeux et les hommes: Le masque et le vertige* [Play and humans: Mask and vertigo]. Paris: Gallimard.

CHIBBETT, David

1977 *The history of Japanese printing and book illustration.* Tokyo, New York, San Francisco: Kodansha International.

CULIN, Stewart

1895 *Korean games with notes on the corresponding games of China and Japan.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.

GRIFFIS, William Elliot

1876 *The mikado's empire.* New York, London: Harper.

HEARN, Lafcadio

1894 *Glimpses of unfamiliar Japan.* Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin.

HERRING, Ann

1981 Sangyō to shite no kyōdo-gangu 産業としての郷土玩具 [Folk toys as an industry]. *Nihon hakken* 日本発見 29 *Kyōdo-gangu* 郷土玩具: 100–101.

HUIZINGA, Johan
1951 *Homo ludens: Essai sur la fonction sociale du jeu.* Paris: Gallimard. (originally 1938)

IHARA SAIKAKU 井原西鶴
1687 Nanshoku ōkagami 男色大鏡 [Great mirror of love between men]. *Teihon Saikaku zenshū* 定本西鶴全集 4.

ISHII Kendō 石井研堂
1944 *Meiji jibutsu kigen* 明治事物起源 [The origin of different things during the Meiji era]. Rev. ed. Tokyo: Shun'yōdō.

KIDO Chūtarō 木戸中太郎
1932 *Daruma to sono shosō* 達磨とその諸相 [Daruma and his various representations]. Kyoto: Hinoeuma.

KITAGAWA Morisada 喜田川守貞
1853 *Morisada mankō* 守貞漫稿 [Morisada's jottings]. New eds.: *Ruiju kinsei fūzoku-shi* 類聚近世風俗史 [Records of modern customs and habits]. Tokyo: Bunchōsha, 1928 and Uozumi Shoten, 1962. Later: *Kinsei fūzoku jiten* 近世風俗事典. Tokyo: Jinbutsu Ōraisha, 1967.

KITAMURA Nobuyo 喜多村信節
1830 *Kiyū shōran* 嬉遊笑覧 [An amusing view of happy play]. Tokyo: Meichō Kankōkai.

KYBURZ, Josef A.
1987 *Cultes et croyances au Japon: Kaida, une commune dans les montagnes du Japon central* [Cults and beliefs in Japan: Kaida, a community in the mountains of central Japan]. Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose.
1991 Des liens et des choses: *Engimono* et *omocha* [Of links and things: *Engimono* and *omocha*]. *L'Homme* 31/1 (no. 117): 96–121.

LEUTNER, Robert W.
1985 *Shikitei Sanba and the comic tradition in Edo fiction.* Cambridge MA, London: Harvard University Press.

MCFARLAND, H. Neill
1987 *Daruma: The founder of Zen in Japanese art and popular culture.* Tokyo, New York: Kodansha International.

MIYATA Noboru 宮田　登
1990 *Minzokugaku* 民俗学 [Folklore]. Tokyo: Hōsō Daigaku Kyōiku Shinkōkai.

MORSE, Edward S.
1917 *Japan day by day.* 2 vols. Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin.

MUSÉE NATIONAL DES ARTS ET TRADITIONS POPULAIRES
1991 *Amulettes et talismans: La collection Lionel Bonnemère.* Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux.

OKUMURA Nobuhaya 奥村寛純
1981 *Kyōdo-gangu ni matsuwaru engi, densetsu* 郷土玩具に纏わる縁起・伝説 [Legendary origins of some folk toys]. *Nihon hakken* 29 *Kyōdo-gangu:* 97–99.

READER, Ian
1991 Letters to the gods: The form and meaning of *ema. Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 18: 23–50.

RÉUNION DES MUSÉES NATIONAUX
1991 *Jouer dans l'antiquité* [To play in antiquity]. Marseille: Musée de Marseille.

Rō Raishi 弄籟子 and KITAO Shigemasa 北尾重政 illustr.
1773 *Edo nishiki* 江戸二色 [Edo new and old].

ROTERMUND, Hartmut O.
1991 *Hōsōgami—ou la petite vérole aisément* [Hōsōgami—or smallpox contracted

easily]. Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose.

SAITŌ Ryōsuke 斎藤良輔

1971 *Kyōdo-gangu jiten* 郷土玩具辞典 [Dictionary of folk toys]. Tokyo: Tōkyō-dō Shuppan.

1981a Shimizu Seifū to Okamoto Kidō 清水晴風と岡本綺堂 [Shimizu Seifū and Okamoto Kidō]. *Nihon hakken* 29 *Kyōdo-gangu:* 93–96.

1981b Kyōdo-gangu no keifu 郷土玩具の系譜 [A history of folk toys]. *Nihon hakken* 29 *Kyōdo-gangu:* 112–14.

1985 Meiji-Taishō-Shōwa kodomo-asobi nenpyō 明治・大正・昭和子ども遊び年表 [A chronological table of the history of children's play, for the Meiji, Taishō and Shōwa eras]. In *Meiji-Taishō-shōwa kodomo-asobi shū* 明治・大正・昭和子ども遊び集. *Taiyō* 太陽 Suppl. 49, 131–42.

SANTŌ Kyōden 山東京伝

1813–15 *Kottō-shū* 骨董集 [Miscellany of old facts].

SHIKITEI Sanba 式亭三馬

1809 *Ukiyoburo* 浮世風呂 [Bathhouse of the floating world]. In *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 63. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1957.

SHIMIZU Seifū 清水晴風

1891–1923 *Unai no tomo* うなゐの友 [The child's friends], 10 vols. Tokyo: Unshōdō.

SHŌGAKU TOSHO 尚学図書, ed.

1982 *Koji zokushin kotowaza daijiten* 故事・俗信ことわざ大辞典 [Great dictionary of proverbs and popular sayings]. Tokyo: Shōgakkan.

STARR, Frederick

1920 Ema. *Transactions of The Asiatic Society of Japan* 48: 1–22.

1926 Japanese toys and toy-collectors. *Transactions of The Asiatic Society of Japan* 2nd ser. 3: 101–16.

STATLER, Oliver

1983 *Japanese pilgrimage.* New York: William Morrow.

TAKAGI Toshio 高木敏雄

1913 Kyōdo-kenkyū no honryō 郷土研究の本領 [The territory of folklore]. *Kyōdo kenkyū* 1.

TAKEI Takeo 武井武雄

1930 *Nihon kyōdo-gangu* 日本郷土玩具 [Folk toys of Japan]. Tokyo: Chiheisha Shobō.

TERAJIMA Ryōan 寺島良安

1712 *Wakan sansai-zue* 和漢三才図会 [Things Japanese and Chinese illustrated]. Recent edition by Wakan Sansai-zue Kankō Iinkai, ed. Tokyo: Tokyo Bijutsu, 1970.

WAMYŌ RUIJUSHŌ 倭名類聚鈔 [Lexicon of native names]

ca. 937 Recent edition edited by Kyoto Daigaku Bungakubu Kokugo Bungaku Kenkyūshitsu. Kyoto: Rinsen Shoten, 1968.

YAMAGUCHI Masao 山口昌男

1991 Meiji modanizumu—Bunka-sōchi to shite no hyakkaten no hassei 明治モダニズム・文化装置としての百貨店の発生 (上) [Meiji modernism: The birth of the department store as cultural establishment]. *Herumesu* 33: 61–84.

YANAGITA Kunio 柳田國男

1941 Kodomo fūdoki 子供風土記 [Children's world]. Most recently in *Teihon Yanagita Kunio shū* 定本柳田國男集, vol. 21, 1–68. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1970.