

The Heavenly Rock-Grotto Myth and the Chinkon Ceremony*

By

TAKESHI MATSUMAE
Tenri University, Tenri City (Japan)

I. The Heavenly Rock-Grotto myth and the rituals of the Ise Shrine.

According to the *Kojiki*, Susano-o once went to visit his sister Amaterasu, who was living in her heavenly palace. She suspected at first that he might wish to usurp her territory. However, when he swore an oath to prove his faithfulness to her, she opened her heart to her brother. Nevertheless, Susano-o proceeded to do violence in her palace, growing more impudent with her kindness. He broke down ridges between her rice fields and filled up their water channels with earth. He strewed faeces about the hall where she was holding the *Niiname*¹ Feast. In spite of this violence, Amaterasu did not reprove him.

But then, Susano-o committed more extraordinarily violent deeds. That is, when Amaterasu was weaving the divine garments in her sacred weaving hall, he opened a hole in the roof of the hall and thrust a pony which he had skinned down through the hole. At this, one of the weaving maidens was astonished, struck her genitals against a shuttle, and died. With this violence, Amaterasu became indignant and afraid, and hid herself in the Heavenly Rock-Grotto. Thus the whole world became dark, and constant night reigned. Then, evil deities and demons devastated the world, and all manner of calamities arose.

Consequently, many deities assembled in the bed of the Heavenly Yasu River and tried various devices to lure her out. Omoikane, the deity of wisdom, formulated a plan, and ordered the deities to gather crowing cocks together. In preparation for a ritual, Amatsu-mara and Ishi-koridome (both of whom were deities of the clan of blacksmiths) made a mirror, while Tamanoya (the deity of the clan of jewel-makers) made *magatama* (comma-shaped jewels). Ame-no-koyane and Futo-dama, meanwhile, performed a divination by baking the shoulder-bone

of a deer. These two deities then uprooted a big *sakaki*-tree² and set it in front of the cave. In the branches they hung many beads, many pieces of cloth, and a mirror. Futodama offered these objects while Ame-no-koyane chanted a prayer.

In the meantime, the goddess Ameno-uzume, holding bundles of bamboo leaves in her hand, danced and stamped on the bottom of *ukefune* or an upside-down tub.³ During this dance she fell into a trance and exposed her breasts and her genitals. All the deities then burst into laughter at her comical behavior. The great deity Amaterasu partly opened the door of the cave and asked Ameno-uzume why the deities laughed. Uzume answered that they rejoiced at the coming of a deity superior to her. Then, Ame-no-koyane and Futodama showed her the sacred mirror to reflect her face. Amaterasu, wondering at the image, gradually emerged. Then a strong deity, Tachikarao, pulled her all the way out, and in consequence the whole world again became light. Finally, Susano-o was punished and expelled to the Land of *Ne*.⁴

This is the basic outline of this story as related in the *Kojiki*.⁵ The *Nihongi* has almost exactly the same plot as the *Kojiki*. However, it is noticeable that several alternate versions of the *Nihongi* tell of the illness and death of Amaterasu herself. One version tells that Susano-o made excrement in her ceremonial hall on the occasion of the *Niiname-sai* or the "New Tasting Festival," and thrust down a skinned pony into the weaving hall of Amaterasu while she was weaving. Consequently, she hurt herself with a shuttle and hid herself in a grotto.⁶ According to another version, Susano-o discharged faeces under the sacred seat for the "New Tasting Festival." The solar goddess sat on this seat without noticing what he had done, was sickened, and then entered the grotto.⁷

By comparing these different versions, we can conclude that the most primitive form of this myth depicted the illness, death and resurrection of the goddess Amaterasu. The old Japanese word *iwa-gakuri*, or hiding oneself in a rock-cave, means the death of a noble person. In the *Manyōshū*, this word is often used to represent death. It suggests the custom of cave-burial in those days. Actually, in recent years, several old sites of cave-burial from the Jōmon and Yayoi periods were found in Izumo and in Kumano in Kii. Accordingly, we can conclude that Amaterasu's entering of the cave and her reappearance represent her death and resurrection. The cock-crowing in front of the Heavenly Rock-Grotto symbolizes the resurrection of the solar deity.

I conjecture that the primitive form of the Heavenly Rock-Grotto myth was a local tradition about the solar deity that was worshipped in Ise. There are many elements of Ise folk-belief in this story. The role

of cocks in this tale is a good example. At the Ise shrine, cocks are regarded as sacred messengers of the goddess Amaterasu, and they are now kept in the precinct of the shrine. Old records such as the *Kōtai-jingū Gishiki-chō*⁸ and the *Engishiki*,⁹ both of which were written in the early Heian Period, tell that these creatures were sacrificed to Amaterasu and other deities on the occasion of the festivals of the shrine.

Cocks are often believed to be related to the sun, because they have a habit of crowing before the sunrise. In China, too, they are often regarded as solar birds. Among the Miao tribes of southwest China, it is told that the sun once hid himself behind a mountain and darkened the whole world. Then, a big cock crowed to attract his attention. Out of curiosity, the sun reappeared and the world became bright again.¹⁰ This story resembles the myth of Amaterasu's Heavenly Rock-Grotto.

Even today in the *Sengū-sai* (the Periodical Rebuilding Ceremony of the Ise Shrine held every twenty years) a priest mimics the crowing of a cock three times in front of the gate in the innermost fence of the new building of the main hall. Before this ritual, the Yata Mirror (the sacred emblem of Amaterasu which is kept in a sacred coffin-shaped box called a *mifunashiro*) is carried there by several priests on their shoulders. As soon as they arrive at the gate, the cock-crowing mime is performed.¹¹

According to the records of the Ise Shrine, another mimic ritual of cocks was performed until medieval times. This was called the *tonago-mai* or "chicken dance", which was performed on the occasion of the shrine's three important annual festivals.¹² This dance was abandoned in modern times. The above mentioned customs concerning cock-crowing have been believed since medieval times to have been derived from the myth of the Heavenly Rock-Grotto. I conjecture that the encasement of the sacred mirror of Amaterasu in the coffin-like *mifunashiro* may symbolize her death. The purpose of the priest's mimicry of cock-crowing may have been to promote the resurrection of the solar goddess.

As for the relation between the Heavenly Rock-Grotto myth and the rituals of the Ise Shrine, we will notice the existence of many other similarities. In the myth, it is told that a great fire was kindled in front of the cave, while in the *Sengū-sai*, a corresponding fire is kindled even in modern times. In the myth, Ame-no-koyane recited a prayer and Futodama set up an uprooted *sakaki* tree as the sign of the ceremony. The same ritual was performed on the occasion of the *Sengū-sai* by their descendants: the highest priests of the Nakatomi and Imibe clans. In the myth, the strong deity Ame-no-Tachikarao pulled Amaterasu out of the cave. That god is still worshipped as one of the

subordinate deities enshrined with Amaterasu inside the main hall of the Naikū, the Inner Shrine.¹³

One alternate version recorded in the *Nihongi* tells that the sacred mirror was struck against the rock door and received a slight flaw. The text of the *Nihongi* continues as follows: "This is the Great Deity worshipped at Ise."¹⁴ Although this is an imperfection in the original text, we can interpret it to mean: "This is the emblem of the Great Deity worshipped at Ise." This tale evidently tells of the actual condition of the sacred mirror in the Ise Shrine in those days.

According to the myth, Amaterasu was weaving divine garments in the Weaving Hall when Susano-o's behavior became violent. This motif reminds us of the old custom of the *Kamu-miso* or "Divine Garment" Festival. In this festival, priestesses offered to Amaterasu the divine garments which they had woven in a sacred weaving hall. This festival was held on the fourteenth day of the Fourth and Ninth Months of the lunar calendar. The autumn festival, especially, was held in preparation for the *Kanname-sai*¹⁵ (or harvest festival) in the Ise Shrine, when the first-fruits of rice were offered to Amaterasu.

This *Kanname-sai* was held annually on the 16th of the Ninth Lunar Month. However, every twenty years, a special *Kanname-sai* was held on the same day. On that occasion, new buildings, new garments and ornaments, and new treasures and offerings were prepared for the deity. First-fruits of rice were also offered to this deity. This is the *Sengū-sai*, which is believed to preserve the oldest form of a harvest festival in Japan. According to one alternate version of the *Nihongi*, while Amaterasu was celebrating the feast of first-fruits, Susano-o discharged faeces in the New Palace.¹⁶ In this story, the word "New Palace" probably meant the new buildings constructed for celebrating the *Kanname-sai*.

Judging from the above cited sources, we can conclude that the Heavenly Rock-Grotto myth was intimately related with rituals and beliefs of the Ise Shrine. However, I will point out one more Ise element in this myth. It is that of the *Chinkon-sai*.

II. The relation between the *Chinkon-sai* and the Heavenly Rock-Grotto myth.

The *Chinkon-sai* or *Mitamafuri no matsuri* was held in the middle of the Eleventh Lunar Month, on the day before the *Niiname-sai* or "New Tasting Festival". The date of the *Niiname* festival in the Imperial Court was different from that of the *Kanname-sai*. However, the two festivals had the same meaning and function. According to

the *Ryō-no-Gige* of 833 A.D., the purpose of the *Chinkon-sai* was to recall the wandering soul of the emperor for the sake of his health and longevity, since it was believed to be often separated from the body of its owner in winter.

In this ceremony, among various magical devices, an official priestess called the *Omikannagi* danced on the bottom of an upside-down tub called *ukefune*, stamping resoundingly upon it. Then, she occasionally struck the bottom with the end of a spear or a bough from a *sakaki* tree as she counted from one to ten.¹⁷

During this ceremony, the Chinkon songs were chanted. These songs were recorded in a medieval document called *Nenchū-gyōji-hisho*. They are of very archaic form and style, and their meaning is not easily interpreted. However, we notice that the concept of the death and resurrection of the solar goddess Toyohirume (perhaps the same deity as Ohirume or Amaterasu), appears in the following songs:

“We want to call the soul of the Goddess Toyohirume,
who is going up to heaven . . .”

“Let us supply the shortage of the soul. By means of
making knots in strings inside the soul-box, the
deity, whose spirit has just ascended (separated)
from the body, has come here.”

“We will call back the separated soul, with this soul-box.”¹⁸

These songs aimed at calling back the missing soul of the dead or dying solar goddess and resuscitating her.

It is notable that the concept included in this ceremony coincides with that of the Heavenly Rock-Grotto myth. The concept of the death and resurrection of the goddess Amaterasu can be found in both the myth and the ceremony. In this myth, a comical goddess Ameno-Uzume, the ancestress of the Sarume clan, performed an *ukefune* dance on the bottom of an upside-down tub, carrying a spear wreathed with Eulalia grass. This is the same performance as that of the *mikannagi* or the official priestess in the *Chinkon-sai*. The *mikannagi*, holding bells in one hand and a vine-draped spear in the other, mounts the same inverted tub (called *ukefune*), and performs a dance.

The *Kogoshūi* of 808 A.D. holds that the *Chinkon-sai* originated from the performance of the goddess Uzume, and accordingly insists that the *ukefune* dance should not be performed by the official priestess *mikannagi*, but by a Sarume maiden, a descendant of the goddess Uzume.¹⁹ The author Imibe Hironari regretted that the role of this dance had been performed by a *mikannagi* maiden of the Nakatomi clan, owing to the decline of the power of the Sarume clan. The Sarume

maidens performed another dance in this ceremony during the Heian Era, according to the *Engishiki* of 927 A.D. Originally the *ukefune* dance must also have been performed by one of them. At any rate, it is evident that the Heavenly Rock-Grotto myth was the ritual myth of the *Chinkon-sai*.

The striking of the tub with the spear suggests intercourse between a male and a female. It may have been a magical device for the promotion of the fertility of the soil, or for the resurrection of the dead goddess. It reminds us of a folk custom known as *tamayobi*. According to this custom, in order to revive the deceased soon after death, a relative of the deceased must climb onto the roof of his house, and call his name three times, beating the bottom of a *masu* or measure-box. Then, it was believed, he would be revived. Uzume's frenzied performance of exposing her genitals may also have been a kind of fertility magic.

Then what was the original meaning of this ceremony? And why did the solar goddess die and revive in this ceremony? Dr. Tsuda insisted that the Heavenly Rock-Grotto myth was a solar eclipse myth.²⁰ Dr. Matsumura and Dr. Matsumoto denied the solar eclipse theory, and pointed out that the *Chinkon* ceremony was an annual solar cult at the winter solstice. This ceremony was held on the day of the Tiger in the middle of the Eleventh Lunar Month. This date nearly corresponded to the winter solstice. It was believed among many races that the winter solstice was the day of the death and resurrection of the solar deity. Fire festivals were often held in order to resuscitate or rejuvenate the dead solar deity. In the Heavenly Rock-Grotto myth, too, a great fire was kindled in front of the cave.²¹

I agree with this theory. This ceremony must have been part of a solar cult to call back the soul of the sun deity and restore her to life at the winter solstice. In this ceremony, the *ukefune*-dance and the *Chinkon* songs were presumably transmitted by the Sarume clan and imported by them into the Imperial Court. The Sarume clan had originally been located in Ise and Shima, before the maidens of this clan served the Imperial Court in Yamato.

According to the *Nihongi*, the goddess Uzume often met a local deity Sarudahiko, attended him and went to the area of the Isuzu River in Ise. Thus, she was given the designation of Sarume-no-Kimi, or "the Lord of the Sarume clan".²² According to the *Kojiki*, when her consort Sarudahiko drowned in the sea near Azaka in Ise, she returned to Ise and gathered many kinds of fish. It is for this reason that the Sarume clan partook of marine offerings sent by the Shima fishermen to the Imperial Court.²³

These stories indicate that this clan originally belonged to the Ama people in Ise and Shima. The archaic form of the worship of Amaterasu and the solar elements in the *Chinkon-sai* were conveyed from Ise to the Imperial Court in Yamato by the hand of the Sarume clan. The Heavenly Rock-Grotto myth may also have originally been transmitted by them. I conjecture that the Sarume-elements in this ceremony were brought to the court in the sixth or seventh century A.D., when the worship of Amaterasu was established firmly in the Imperial Court.

However, we must know that the purpose of this ceremony was to recall the soul of the emperor and settle it into his body, as well as to resuscitate the solar deity. That is to say, it was held for the welfare and health of the emperor. It is evident that the emperor was identified with Amaterasu herself in this ceremony. In this ceremony, several magical devices were performed to call back the soul of the emperor. A Nakatomi priest tied a knot in the emperor's life-cord by counting the numbers from one to ten. Then, a priestess took a box containing the emperor's garments and shook the box ten times. These performances were believed to settle the instable soul of the emperor firmly in his body. These rituals were originally adapted from various *tama-furi*²⁴ magical practices among the people of those days.

Tying knots in strings was called *tamamusubi* or "tying one's soul." The purpose of this ritual may have been to pack the wandering soul into the knots. In Kyoto, if a person sneezes, it is often believed to be a symptom of his soul leaving his body. Then, he must make a knot in a string to tie his soul to it for the sake of his health. Shaking the box containing the garments may have been held to lure back the wandering soul. We can find survivals of such old customs in modern Japanese folklore. When a person is going to die, one of his relatives stands on the roof of his house, calling his name, and shaking his clothes. Then, it is believed that the dying person will recover.

III. Other elements in the *Chinkon-sai*.

Concerning the origin of the *Chinkon-sai*, we must know that there is another version in the *Kujihongi*.²⁵ According to this text, Nigihayahi, the ancestral deity of the Mononobe clan, descended from heaven on board of a heavenly ship to rule the earth accompanied by many subordinate deities. At his departure, his divine mother conferred on him the following ten treasures: a "mirror of the offing," a "mirror of the shore," a sword, a "jewel giving life," a "jewel giving perfect health," a "jewel of the resurrection of the dead," a "jewel for expell-

ing serpents," a scarf for expelling bees, and a scarf for assorted functions. Then, she said to him, "Shake these objects back and forth, counting one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, when someone gets sick. Then, he will recover at once, even if he is almost dead." Later, Umashimaji, Nigihayahi's son, applied these magical treasures for the health of Emperor and Empress Jinmu. That is why the counting from one to ten and a Sarume-dance are performed in the *Chinkon-sai*.²⁶ These treasures are kept in the Isonokami Shrine in Yamato.

This tale is a different version from the Heavenly Rock-Grotto myth. However, it is certain that there were several *tamafuri* elements transmitted by the Isonokami-Mononobe clan in the *Chinkon-sai*. Counting from one to ten was one of these elements. In another Chinkon song than those cited above, the divine sword of *tamafuri* in the Isonokami Shrine is referred to. In the actual *Chinkon-sai*, eight treasures including a sword, a bow, two arrows, bells, a roll of cloth, etc., were placed in front of a *himorogi* or a branch of a *sakaki* tree, the sacred emblem of the nine deities of this ceremony.²⁷ In the *Engishiki* there is no description of shaking these treasures, though their names were listed in it. However, it is possible that such performances were held in those days.

According to my conjecture these Isonokami-Mononobe elements were brought by the Mononobe clan to the court in the fifth or sixth century A.D., when this clan had a great influence over the Yamato Court. Were all the *tamafuri* elements included at that time in the *Chinkon-sai* only borrowed from other clans such as the Sarume and Mononobe? That is to say, were there no elements of the proper *tamafuri* magic of the Imperial family? My answer is as follows: There is clear evidence that the above ritual of *tamamasubi* or tying knots of strings was based on an old custom of the Imperial family.

In the *Chinkon* ceremony, nine deities were worshipped, including five *Musubi* deities and four other deities. The *Musubi* deities include Takami-musubi, Kami-musubi, Ikumusubi, Tamamusubi, and Tamatsume-musubi. All of them were believed to be guardian deities of the long life and welfare of the emperor. The word *musubi* was interpreted by Dr. Orikuchi as meaning "to tie." These five *Musubi* deities and three other deities—Ōmiketsukami, Ōmiyanome and Kotoshironushi—were called the Eight Deities of the *Jingikan* or Ministry of Shinto Affairs. The function of the five *Musubi* deities in this ceremony was to tie the wandering soul of the emperor into the knots of the string for his health.²⁸ It is notable that Amaterasu was not included in these Eight Deities, although her name did appear in the Chinkon songs.

In recent investigations made by some scholars including Oka, Mishina and myself, it has been becoming clearer that Takami-musubi was the original tutelary and ancestral deity of the Imperial family, before the worship of Amaterasu was established in the Imperial Court.²⁹ The other four Musubi deities may have been added to this deity in later days. In the main versions of the *Nihongi*, it was only Takami-musubi who sent his grandson Prince Hono-ninigi to earth as a sovereign. In these versions, Amaterasu does not appear. The original form of this myth must have contained Takami-musubi rather than Amaterasu. About a month after the *Chinkon-sai*, the priests of the Ministry of Shinto Affairs performed the ritual of keeping the above mentioned knots, the life-symbol of the emperor, in the Hall of the Eight Deities. The purpose of this ritual was evidently to keep the emperor's soul under the protection of these tutelary deities. At any rate, it is evident that this *tamamusubi* magic was originally proper to the Imperial family.

Dr. Orikuchi conjectured that the *Chinkon-sai* and *Daijō-sai* were inseparable from each other in origin.³⁰ I concur with his opinion. The old records of the Heian Period say that the emblems of the Eight Deities of the Ministry of the Shinto Affairs were all branches of the *sakaki* tree. According to my recent researches into the ancient *Daijō-sai*, these eight deities were agricultural deities of folk origin. In modern Japanese folklore, a branch or twig of a tree is often set up at the water inlet to a rice field, and rice (either poached or baked) and flowers are placed in front of the branch. That branch is believed to be a *yorishiro* or an object upon which the deity rests. In some districts, they call it the chair for the deity of the rice field.³¹

Before permanent shrines were established in the Imperial Court for these eight deities, some among them, including Takami-musubi, were worshipped in a temporary hut by the side of the sacred rice field on the occasion of the *Daijō-sai*.³² First fruits of the rice crop were offered to the deities. Their emblems or *yorishiro* were also branches which were set on a shelf of bamboo in the hut. Takami-musubi was the principal god among them. He must have been originally the tutelary deity of the rice field of the Imperial family.

IV. The formation of the *Chinkon-sai*.

In the primitive stage of development, according to my conjecture, the Imperial family celebrated their harvest festival and worshipped their tutelary deity Takami-musubi in the sacred hut, by the side of the rice field. They offered the first fruits to the sacred branch as the emblem

of the deity. In addition, they tied their own souls into the knots of a string and hung the knots in the branch to put their souls under the protection of the deity and to pray for their welfare.

This was the original meaning of *tamamusubi*. However, in later days,³⁴ there was the strong influence of the *tamafuri* ritual as effectuated by the Mononobe clan. The new element of shaking treasures overlaid the old element of *tamamusubi*, and the resulting ritual became the national ceremony of the Imperial Court. Finally the solar magic of the Sarume clan and Amaterasu worship were conveyed from Ise to the Imperial Court.³⁵ Thus, the emperor was identified with the solar goddess Amaterasu, because he was believed to be her incarnation.

In those days, the emperor himself must have attended the ceremony and the *tamafuri* ritual was performed for the sake of his health. Later, the emperor's garments were used as a substitute for him. According to the *Nihongi*, in the fourteenth year of Emperor Tenmu, a certain ritual was performed for the sake of the sick emperor in the *Mimurotono* or "Cave Hall" in the Imperial palace: Then, a number of actors and dancers were given payments of cloth in front of the hall.³⁶ Ban Nobutomo, one of the greatest Shinto scholars in the nineteenth century, conjectured that the "Cave Hall" had the shape of an artificial cave or grotto and was made after the model of the Rock-Grotto of Heaven in the mythology.³⁷ If so, the ritual conducted in that hall must have been the Chinkon ceremony.

In later times, in the ceremonial hall of the *Chinkon-sai*, a miniature model of the Rock-Grotto was laid out. According to a fragment of the diary *Miyama Gyoki* written in the Heian Era, a priestess *mikannagi* brought the ornament of paper on which a rock-shaped figure in black ink was depicted. She set it out and decorated it with a bell and a garment.³⁸ Then, a branch of a *sakaki* tree was set by the side of the ornament. This ornament must have symbolized the Heavenly Rock-Cave of the mythical age.

According to the *Kojiki* and *Nihongi*, the comical goddess Amenuzume fell into a trance during her dance, exposing her breasts and genitals. The meaning of her trance was discussed by many scholars. Matsumoto Nobuhiro, Kurano Kenji, etc. once maintained that Uzume was a shamanistic medium through whom Amaterasu gave an oracle.³⁹ That is to say, Amaterasu possessed her and gave an oracle. However, this interpretation may not be valid. In shamanistic rituals of soul-recalling performed among many peoples of Siberia, aboriginal America and Indonesia, shamans or medicine men often fall into a trance during their dance. They send their own spirits to the otherworld to restore the missing soul of the patient. The shamanistic dance of

Uzume must have been made to restore the soul of the dying goddess Amaterasu to life.⁴⁰ The *mikannagi*-maiden must also have fallen into the same trance.

In this myth, Susano-o played the role of an evil demon who stole the soul of the solar deity and destroyed the sacred order of the heavenly world. After his violent deeds, a heavy fine was imposed upon him for purification and he was "expelled with a divine expulsion."⁴¹ The motif reflects *Oharae* or the ritual of the Grand Purification in the ancient Imperial Court. Thus, we can find another element in this myth. In the prayer of purification in this ceremony (recorded in the *Engishiki*) exactly the same acts as Susano-o perpetrated them in the heavenly world (such as destroying the rice fields, defiling the sacred palace, and skinning horses) are all called heavenly sins. These acts are so designated because these evil deeds although committed in this world originated from the primaeval deeds performed by Susano-o in the mythic age.

The Grand Purification Ceremony was held on the last day of the sixth and the twelfth month of the year. In this ceremony, dolls of wood or iron were made as surrogates for all the people's sins and evils. At the end of this ceremony, these dolls were abandoned in the stream or were buried in the ground. All the sins and evils were then believed to have been transferred from the people to these dolls, and the whole world was believed to be thus purified. In the prayer mentioned above, there is a description that after all the sins and evils were abandoned in the stream, they floated to the ocean, and finally were drunk up by the goddess Haya-sasura-hime in the Land of *Ne* beyond the sea.

It is clear that the Land of *Ne* was regarded as the original source of all sins and evils. It is noteworthy that Susano-o was often related to the Land of *Ne*. A heavy fine was imposed upon him for purification and he was expelled to the Netherworld. In a sense, he was a deified surrogate for all sins and evils.

However, the Grand Purification Ceremony may have once had several agricultural elements. Three months before the *Daijō-sai*, this ceremony was held for the fertility of the soil. It is strange that many evil deeds concerning agriculture, such as the destruction of the rice fields, are included among the Heavenly Sins.

Perhaps, in the ancient agricultural ritual, a person played the role of an evil demon who devastated the divine rice fields and finally was expelled to the Netherworld. Such performances survive in modern folk-dances in rural districts. The original meaning of the Grand Purification Ceremony may have been to expel an evil demon from the rice fields for the sake of fertility.

Susano-o in this motif plays the part of the evil demon. In the *Chinkon-sai*, Susano-o was identified with a demon who stole the soul of the sun-goddess and sickened her. In the Purification Ceremony, he was identified with an evil demon devastating the rice fields. That is to say, he was always a demon destroying the sacred order of the heavenly pantheon.⁴²

Such images of Susano-o may have been formed at the hand of the nobility of the Yamato court in the seventh century A.D. However, his real birth place was not Yamato. He was originally a local deity of fertility in the Susa area in Kii. The worship and myths of this deity were conveyed to Izumo and acculturated there.⁴³

NOTES

* This paper is based on the draft of my lecture delivered in the spring semester, 1977, at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

1. The *Niiname* festival was an old harvest festival of rice held in the middle of the Eleventh Lunar Month in Japan.

2. *Sakaki* (*Eurya Japonica*) is a kind of evergreen tree. It is regarded as sacred and often used in Shinto rituals.

3. It is also called *ukefane*. This tool was used only in the Chinkon ceremony.

4. It is a kind of 'Land of the dead'. It was once believed to be situated beyond the ocean. However, gradually it became to be identified with the dark infernal regions, called *Yomi*, of the underworld.

5. See Donald L. Philippi, *Kojiki*, Tokyo 1968, pp. 79-86.

6. Sakamoto Tarō, Ienaga Saburō, Inoue Mitsusada and Ōno Saburō (eds.), *Nihonshoki*, vol. 1, Tokyo 1967, p. 112; W. G. Aston, *Nihongi; Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A.D. 697*, Tokyo 1972 (reprinted), p. 41.

7. Sakamoto and others, 1967, vol. 1, pp. 114-115; Aston, 1972, p. 47.

8. This is a book of records of the rituals, ceremonies and legends of Ise Shrine. It was written in 804.

9. The *Engishiki* is a collection in fifty volumes of the regulations concerning the rituals and ceremonies of the court and the main shrines. It was compiled and published in 927. An English translation has been published by Felicia Bock, *Engi-Shiki: Procedures of the Engi Era*, books I-IV, Tokyo 1970.

10. Matsumura Takeo, *Nihonshinwa no Kenkyū*, vol. III, Tokyo 1958, p. 72.

11. This ritual is recorded in old documents such as the *Kōtaijūgū Gishiki-chō*, *Kōtaijūgū Nenchū-gyōji*, etc. It is still performed today.

12. Descriptions of the ritual dance *tonago-mai* can be found in the old records of the Ise Shrine, like *Kōtaijūgū Gishiki-chō* of 804 and *Kōtaijūgū Nenchū-gyōji* of 1192. See Matsumura T., *Nihonshinwa no Kenkyū*, vol. III, p. 73.

13. See the *Kōtaijūgū Gishiki-chō* and the *Gunsho-ruijū*, Tokyo 1904, pp. 1-51.

14. See Aston, *Nihongi*, p. 48; Sakamoto T. (and others), *Nihonshoki*, vol. I, p. 116.

15. The word *Kamame-sai* means 'Divine Tasting Festival'. This word is used only for the harvest festival of the Ise Shrine. Meanwhile, the word *niiname* is used for the harvest festival in general.

16. See Sakamoto (and others), *Nihonshoki*, vol. I, p. 114; Aston, *Nihongi*, pp. 40-41.
17. The details of this ceremony can be found in old records of the Heian Period, such as the *Jōgan Gishiki*, *Engishiki*, *Seigūki*, *Gōke-shidai*, etc. The first to study this ceremony was Ban Nobutomo, one of the greatest Shintō scholars of the nineteenth century. See his work *Chinkon-den* and *Ban Nobutomo Zenshū*, vol. II, Tokyo 1907, pp. 628-655.
18. See Ban Nobutomo, *Chinkon-den*, pp. 649-655.
19. See the *Kogoshūi or Gleanings from the Ancient Stories*, translated and annotated by Katō Genchi and Hoshino Hikoshirō, Tokyo 1924, p. 47.
20. Tsuda Sōkichi, *Jindaishi no Kenkyū*, Tokyo 1924, pp. 191-192; 212. The same solar eclipse theory was adopted by J. G. Frazer. See his *The Worship of Nature*, vol. I, New York 1926, p. 653; Ōbayashi Taryō also adopted the same theory and made a comparison between this story and southeast Asian parallels. *Nihonshinwa no Kigen*, Tokyo 1961, pp. 132 sq.
21. See Matsumura Takeo, *Nihonshinwa no Kenkyū*, vol. III, pp. 74-87. Matsumoto Nobuhiro, *Nihonshinwa no Kenkyū*, Tokyo 1931, (reprinted 1971), pp. 92-98.
22. See Sakamoto T. (and others), *Nihonshoki*, vol. I, p. 149; Aston, *Nihongi*, p. 79.
23. Kurano Kenji and Takeda Yūkichi (eds.), *Kojiki Norito*, Tokyo 1958, p. 131; Philippi, *Kojiki*, p. 43.
24. The word 'tamafuri' is a synonym of 'chinkon'. The former is a proper Japanese word, while the latter was derived from a Chinese word. 'The word 'furi' means' to shake'. This seems to be a magical device to call the rambling soul back by shaking certain articles.
25. This was written in the early Heian Period. Its preface by Soga Umako is now proved to be a forgery. But, this book contains many old versions of the Mononobe clan.
26. See *Kujihongi*, part III, part IV; *Kokushi-taikei*, vol. VII, Tokyo 1898, p. 209; 321.
27. See D. C. Holtom, *The Japanese Enthronement Ceremonies*, Tokyo 1972, p. 86.
28. Orikuchi Shinobu, "Musubi no Shinkō", *Orikuchi Shinobu Zenshū*, vol. XX, Tokyo 1956, pp. 253-260.
29. Oka Masao, and others (eds.), *Nihon Minzoku no Kigen*, Tokyo 1958, pp. 45-47. Mishina Shōei, *Nihon Shinwaron*, Tokyo 1970, pp. 122-133. Matsumae Takeshi, *Kodai-denshō to Kyūtei Saishi*, Tokyo 1974, pp. 37-103.
30. Orikuchi Shinobu, *Kodai Kenkyū*, *Minzokugakuhēn* vol. II, *Orikuchi Shinobu Zenshū*, vol. III, Tokyo 1955, p. 196.
31. Matsumae Takeshi, *Kodai-denshō to Kyūtei Saishi*, p. 63; 68.
32. According to the *Engishiki* the different set of eight deities, including Takami-musubi, was worshiped and served in a temporary shrine by the side of the sacred rice field three months before the *daijō-sai*. The first fruits of rice were plucked and offered to these deities by a sanctified maiden called *Sakatsuko*. I believe that their rituals were a primitive form of the *daijō-sai*. See Matsumae, *Kodai-denshō to Kyūtei Saishi*, pp. 39-42; 53-56.
33. This stage, perhaps, belongs to the fourth or fifth century A.D.
34. This is the second stage, which belongs to the beginning of the middle of the sixth century A.D., when the Mononobe clan had great power in the Yamato Court.
35. The third stage belongs to the seventh century A.D.

36. Sakamoto (and others), *Nihonshoki*, vol. II, p. 475; Aston, *Nihongi*, vol. II, p. 375.
37. See Ban Nobutomo, 'Hikobae,' vol. III, *Ban Nobutomo Zenshū*, vol. IV., pp. 47-48.
38. Ban Nobutomo, *Chinkon-den*, pp. 639-640.
39. Matsumoto T., *Nihonshinwa no Kenkyū*, p. 97; Kurano Kenji, *Nihonshinwa*, Tokyo 1952, pp. 167-168.
40. See Matsumae Takeshi, *Nihon-shinwa no Shinkenkyū*, Tokyo 1960, pp. 151-165.
41. See Philippi, *Kojiki*, pp. 85-86; Aston, *Nihongi*, vol. II, pp. 49-50.
42. There is no trace of Susa-no-o-worship in the ancient Imperial Court, although he was always identified with an evil principle in some rituals.
43. See Matsumae Takeshi, *Nihon-shinwa no Keisei*, Tokyo 1970, pp. 126-159; Matsumae T., *Nihon no Kamigami*, Tokyo 1974, pp. 47-89; Matsumae T., *Izumo Shinwa*, Tokyo 1976, pp. 105-116. Concerning this matter I am planning another study for the near future.