

rean, traditions. The most fruitful aspect of this collection therefore is found in the fact that Ōbayashi clearly shows the connection of Japanese myth—which always means culture as a whole too—and the traditions of the surrounding parts of the world. The author continues with his work the tradition of ethnological study of Japanese myth and provides the reader with deep insights into the complexity of the Japanese culture.

## NOTE:

1. Alan Dundes, 1985. See my review in *Asian Folklore Studies*, vol. XLV-2, 1986: 299–301.

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ŌBAYASHI TARYŌ 大林太良, ARAKI HIROYUKI 荒木博之, et al. ed. *Minkan setsuwa no kenkyū—Nihon to sekai (Seki Keigo hakase beiju kinen ronbun shū)* 民間説話の研究——日本と世界(関敬吾博士米寿記念論文集) [Studies on folk tales—Japan and the world (Studies in honor of Dr. Seki Keigo's eighty-eighth birthday)]. Kyoto: Dōhōsha, 1987. iii+396 pages. Hardcover ¥8,000; ISBN 4-8104-0592-3.

The editorial column “*Tenbyō*” of the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shinbun* (evening, October 5, 1987), spoke of a party to celebrate Seki Keigo's *beiju* (eighty-eighth birthday) sponsored by the Japan Oral Literature Academic Society (Ozawa Toshio, President) and held at a hotel in Shinjuku, Tokyo. The column was entitled “Unfailing Enthusiasm for Studying Folktales.” The article introduces Seki as a scholar who “has endorsed from early on the necessity to study folktales on the basis of international comparative studies, and laid the foundations of contemporary studies on folktales by writing *Nippon mukashibanashi shūsei* (Collected Japanese folktales—afterwards re-edited and retitled as *Nippon mukashibanashi taisei*) utilizing his own classification system.” It also reported him saying that he wanted to test and see up to what age a human being can keep writing, and to add another book to his nine volumes of complete works. Therefore he spends eight hours a day writing.

The book I am reviewing was edited to celebrate Dr. Seki's *beiju*, as indicated in the subtitle. Seki is one of the two greatest authorities—the other is Yanagita Kunio—in the history of the study of Japanese folktales. His greatest work, *Nippon mukashibanashi taisei*, an index of Japanese folktale types, is the basis for determining the type of folktales, along with the *Nippon mukashibanashi meii* (Collection of Japanese Folktale Names) by Yanagita Kunio.

Yanagita's focus was not folktales themselves, but to discover the original mentality of the Japanese and the old folk beliefs revealed in folktales. On the other hand, the

object of Seki's studies is folktales themselves. Under the potent influence of Antti Aarne he attaches importance to the aspect of interchanges between traditions of folktales, and also to the social side, by regarding the content and form of folktales as corresponding to the structure of society.

Yanagita understands folktales as products of myths. He classifies folktales into two groups: *kankei* 完形 *mukashibanashi* (Tales in Complete Form), are myths changed into verbal art yet retaining their ritual nature, and *hasei* 派生 *mukashibanashi* (Derived Tales), derived from *kankei mukashibanashi*, in which the entertaining nature of their language and intention were further amplified. He emphasized the religious nature in the origin of folktales and, based on this idea, classified them into two groups which are different according to their time of origination.

Seki, on the other hand, followed Aarne's classification of tales into three large groups; fundamental (*honkaku* 本格) folktales, animal (*dōbutsu* 動物) folktales, and humorous tales (*warai banashi* 笑話). He added actual Japanese material and made a type index of his own. His classification is different from that of Yanagita who assumed a uniform origin of folktales. He accepted their pluralistic origination, and his classification stresses their synchronic existence in relation to social functions. It also contributed to expand our viewpoint concerning the diffusion of tale types, and pointed out the main lines of a study which considers Japanese folktales comparatively with those of the entire world.

This book contains nineteen essays. Except the five essays on folktales in Africa, the Middle and Near East, Germany, and Latin America, they are directly in line with both Yanagita and Seki's studies of folktales. Many of these essays further develop Seki's idea by which he surpassed Yanagita. This is clearly recognizable in two areas. The first point is the authors try to explain some folktales, which Yanagita treated as of Japanese origin, to be foreign loans, through comparison with types of folktales from neighboring nations—Korea, China, and so on. For example, it is well known that the folk story of *Kōga Saburō*, known from the tale of the origin of the Suwa Shrine, was based on the folktale of the "Bear John" type and underwent a characteristic Japanese transformation. Araki Hiroyuki explains that the folktale changed into *kishu ryūritan* 貴種流離譚 (folktales of heroes who gain noble positions or become gods after undergoing trying experiences), which has the "death and rebirth" structure of initiation, and began to acquire a ritual nature in the activities of advocating faith in the Suwa Shrine. It concretely reveals the spread of a folk tale from other countries and its transformation into Japanese style. I think the viewpoint stressing diffusion and transformation also contributes a new development on the problem of origination.

Secondly, we find papers arguing for the ritual character of folktales on the level of social function, not of their origin. Komatsu Kazuhiko emphasizes that folktales should be pushed back to the context of folk society where the story is circulating and be examined in relation to the modes of folk life. He has done field work for many years in the village of Mononobe, a village of fortune-tellers in Kōchi prefecture. He discovered that the different phases of relatedness to the rain ritual in the tale of *makuragi chōja* circulating in the village (a legend that villages offer their daughters to a snake god as sacrifices) are related to the tale's content and form. Such a problematic was clarified by the study of folktale modes of life in black African society where it is relatively easy to grasp the structure of society.

Kawada Junzō attempts to consider both the meaning of storytelling and, metaphorically speaking, its physiology, through studies about the place of story-telling and about the story-teller. Basing himself on his material from the Mossi of West Africa, he deals with the social function and metaphorical character of both riddles and folk-

tales as the art of words, by considering the place of story-telling and of the story-teller. He explains that folktales are given their form of expression in, so to speak, "the narration community" through what he calls "synlogue," and that folktales, proverbs, and riddles exist as expressions of social order and of relations of obedience and disobedience. Kawada doesn't connect the expression of folktales directly with ritual or the actual state of communities, but treats their nature as art of words and as metaphor connecting it with society on a different level of understanding. Here we find suggestions of a new direction in such studies.

In addition to the above-mentioned notable essays, this book contains essays in the field of the history of legends and tales. These are more literary studies. Fukuda Akira considers occasions for the origin of folktales by examining the various terms by which they are labelled. Using works of literature from ancient times and epic songs and ballads sung at festivals in modern Okinawa as materials, he argues that *furugoto* (tales of ancient events passed on from generation to generation inside given communities), the mythical tales passed on by the *katari* (a family of professional story tellers) telling the origin of things and matters, has come to take on the form of folktale expression by expanding the extent of its topics, and by enlarging the gap between the expression and the object. In this way he offers new viewpoints for considering the history of folktales.

By reading the nineteen essays in this book, we can gain a general view of the present state of the study on folktales in Japan. What I found interesting is that we begin to attach importance to international comparative studies with regard to all areas—the theory of origin, functional theory, semantics—even in the study of Japanese folktales. Arguments considering folktales as verbal art in relation to the problem of their function in social life or religious rituals have made progress. As for the former point I have no special thoughts of my own, but I want to add some comments about the latter problem.

In the commemorative lecture for the centenary celebration of Yanagita Kunio's birth, Richard Dorson said something like this: Japanese folktales are extremely akin to legends. Assuming that such characteristics can be acknowledged, there occurs the problem of why this is so. It may be possible to find an answer in our national or cultural features, e.g., that Japanese respect actuality and love history. I think that these characteristics made people connect myths with history but not with philosophy or religion. This is symbolically expressed in the fact that allegory was not developed. It is also linked to the lack of a tradition of fantasy in Japanese literature. The art of words does not take a flight in the world of fancy or ideas, but works as if it handles something substantial. I suppose such Japanese characteristics of folktales as art of words are more clearly shown through considering them at the place of story-telling or under their functional aspect, rather than in considering their origin.

I think, however, it is important that Dorson's indication be radically reconsidered. His comment concerns present characteristics and lacks a perspective on the history of Japanese folktales. It seems to me that the history of folktales as the art of words is basically connected with the history of literature. When we consider folktales in societies with a history of high culture, we need to consider folktales in their relation to the history of literature, particularly that of tale literature. This thought was conversely aroused through reading Kawada's essay which attempts to consider folktales in a non-literate society as the art of words under the aspect of their social function. It can be said that Fukuda's essay has something to say on this problem, but the book should contain another essay which treats it from a wider perspective. Nowadays in the field of anthropology, the necessity to utilize the results of the study of historical societies is

loudly proclaimed. We should, also in the study of folktales, leave behind studies of types or structure in which the time axis is disregarded in order to arrive at historical studies which consider folktales in their relation to historical society and the history of literature. This is the point I felt most deeply upon reading this book. (English translation by Kanō Noriko)

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OHNUKI-TIERNEY, EMIKO, *The Monkey as Mirror. Symbolic Transformations in Japanese History and Ritual*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987. xv+269 pages. References, index. Hardcover US \$29.95; ISBN 0-691-09434-9.

In 1978 the author visited Hikari City in Yamaguchi Prefecture, where she met Mura-saki Yoshimasa, head of the Suō Sarumawashi no kai (Suō Monkey Performance Group), and other people involved in training monkeys for performance, and saw monkeys in training. In Japan there is also a group of primate scholars researching monkey performing arts (headed by Kawai Masao, Director of the Japan Monkey Center) which has begun a comprehensive survey of this topic. The author is presently working at the Institute of Anthropology at Princeton University, and is an expert on Japanese culture, having already studied illness perception and health care in Japan from an anthropological point of view.

A general impression that people have of monkeys is that they are "curious." The author alludes to this in her opening words. Her cultural study of the relationship between monkey and human being, however, began with her encounter with a troupe engaged in monkey performance (*sarumawashi*), an art which has miraculously recovered from near extinction. She has studied its historical background based on historical documents concerning its transmission, textual sources, forms of the art, and its actual performance. On the basis of a survey of the audience, the author discusses the cultural concepts concerning monkeys among the Japanese.

The academic stance of the author seeks to go beyond mere cognitive research and to incorporate ethnological and historical research methods. She has attempted to clarify the significance of the "monkey" through the historical process in which legends and rituals of monkey performances have appeared and passed down.

The bulk of this book, as the author admits, is a description of cultural transformation in the language of monkey symbolism. The remainder analyzes forms of public entertainment including monkey performances. This analysis is mainly a historical consideration of entertainment, touching on the ancient belief in the monkey deity as a manifestation of the mountain god (*yama no kami*); the belief in the monkey as a guardian deity of the horse stable and on a monkey show with the monkey impersonating a religious practitioner (*kitōshi*) (41-47); the transformation of the art itself into a public street performance during and after the medieval period. All of these topics are astutely pointed out. This meant a historical transformation in the monkey's symbolic expressiveness, from that of mediator to scapegoat and finally to clown.

As the author points out, it is not necessary to concentrate only on "nature" or historical works as the background to the formation of Japanese culture. She focuses instead on the symbolism, ritual, and cultural interest surrounding the monkey. But