

KAWAI Hayao 河合隼雄, *Mukashibanashi to nihonjin no kokoro* 昔話と日本人の心 [Folktales and the Japanese psyche]. Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1982. 371 pp.

AS THE MOST widely known representative of Jungian psychology in Japan, Dr. Kawai's influence in such areas as clinical psychology and general cultural studies has been considerable. Already from the outset, in the 1960s when he first introduced Jungian psychology to this country, his work has maintained certain critical reservations regarding the "universal" validity of Jung's models. The story is told that when he sat before the board of examiners in Zurich for his diploma as a Jungian analyst and was asked what the symbol of God is, Kawai replied, "Everything!" This resistance to Western paradigms in the Jungian scheme runs throughout his writings, and is present also in *Mukashibanashi to nihonjin no kokoro*, a work which was awarded the Osaragi Jirō Prize by the newspaper *Asahi shinbun* in 1982.

Many of the great variety of religious traditions that have found their way to Japan throughout history have been so thoroughly absorbed into its culture that it is no longer possible to discuss any aspect of Japanese culture and religion without regard for their influences. Buddhism is one such example. Others have taken almost no root in Japanese culture. The most notable example here is Christianity, which despite a history in Japan that goes back to

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the sixteenth century, can only rarely point to such phenomena as that of the "hidden Christians" in Kyushu as true instances of its inculturation. In recent years, however, the Catholic Church has shown increased concern with naturalizing its heritage in Japan.

Now it is to the credit of Kawai that he is not only fully conscious of this state of affairs and how it has crept over into other areas of cultural importation, but has made efforts to transform his own field of specialization, Jungian psychology, into a body of thought appropriate to the Japanese mind. The greatness of his achievement as a Jungian lies precisely in that he has molded that tradition, as he once quipped off the cuff, into a "Kawaiian psychology." As the first major manifesto of that project, whatever one may think of the results, the epoch-making importance of this book is secure.

It seems to be the fate of modern Japanese that whatever stance we take we do so by positioning ourselves relative to the standpoint of the West. Even when we want to know ourselves, we are constantly looking over our shoulder to the West. What Kawai tries to do, through the medium of a depth-psychology analysis of Japanese folk tales, is to unearth the structural peculiarities of the Japanese psyche. And this he does for the most part by contrasting these tales with their Western counterparts.

To begin with, he alludes to the tale known as "Uguisu no sato" (The nightingale's town),¹ and points there to unpunished transgression in the story as an instance of *mu*, or "nothingness." It is not merely that something has not happened, but that "nothing" has happened: "'Uguisu no sato' is an instance of a folk interpretation of primordial nothingness" (p. 30). The essential element here is the feeling that a Japanese experiences when hearing the story recounted, a feeling that Kawai calls *aware*, or the pathos

1. "Uguisu no sato" is a subtype of a group of tales called "Miruna no zashiki" ("The forbidden chamber"). The general plot has a man disregard a taboo against looking into a particular room; as a result, a nightingale is unable to realize her desire to become a human being.

peculiar to Japanese aesthetic consciousness. Also present is the feminine sentiment of *urami*, or *ressentiment*, from which he makes the intuitive leap to the conclusion that it is best to view the Japanese tales through the eyes of a woman and that the female figure is a representative of the Japanese "ego."

Thus although he acknowledges that traditional tales have a compensatory relationship to the ordinary public life of a people, he insists that the Japanese people are possessed of a feminine consciousness. Had he followed the original Jungian model, he would have called the woman here an "anima" figure. Instead, he seems deliberately to avoid the question of the anima in order to introduce a novel point of view.

Unfortunately, it is hard to see that anything is gained in the process, or why the proto-Jungian paradigm would not have been of service here. To make use of the concept of projection in a somewhat ironic if not perverse way, one might even suggest that the book is really a covert rationalization of Kawai's own anima projected onto the Japanese psyche in general. The more he shuns the anima/animus issue, the weightier grows our doubt in this matter. If Kawai sees some reason to alter the Jungian paradigm and slice it off with Occam's razor, he should state it forthrightly and argue his case.

A number of female figures are treated in the book—women who don't eat, wives who are not human, long-suffering women, compliant women, and so forth—but as one makes one's way through the tales one cannot help but notice the absence of structure. In some cases it is the women and not the men who are the hero-figures, and in others vice-versa. Kawai tosses them all together into the same pot, the Japanese psyche. The error is a basic one. It would be equivalent to the patent absurdity of considering Cupid in the tale of "Amor and Psyche" (taken as a story of female developmental psychology) as the "ego" of the Western individual, and twisting the story into a tale of hero vs. dragon.

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I may be too critical of Kawai's point of view. But as he himself admits, he has not adequately reflected on his own methodology (p.370), and it is this more than anything that accounts for the projection referred to above. At the same time, his avoidance of any treatment of heterosexual relations between men and women at a psychological level, that is, in terms of a relationship between ego and anima/animus, points to the strength of the taboo among Japanese against the discussion of these matters.

I do not hesitate to recommend the book for its many and provocative insights, though with the reservation that one accept it as but a first halting step in the direction of Kawaiian psychology or a Japanese version of Jungian psychology. Just as Jung's own *Symbole und Wandlungen der Libido* took him down a path different from Freud's, we can only wait now and see what direction Kawaiian psychology will take as it matures.

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