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Rites and Rituals of the Kofun Period

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The rituals of the Kofun period were closely connected with both daily life and political affairs. The chieftain presided over the principal rites, whether in the mountains, on the rivers, or along the roadsides. The chieftain's funeral was the preeminent rite, with a tomb mound, or *kofun*, constructed as its finale. The many and varied *kofun* rituals have been discussed elsewhere;[1] here I shall concentrate on other kami rites and their departure from Yayoi practices.

A Ritual Revolution

Around AD 190, following a period of warfare called the "Wa Unrest," the overall leadership of Wa was assumed by Himiko [Pimiko], female ruler of the petty kingdom of Yamatai. Beginning in 239 she opened diplomatic relations with the Wei court in China as the monarch of Wa, and she died around 248.

Makimuku 1 type pottery appeared around 190; in 220 or so it was followed by Makimuku 2, and then by Makimuku 3, in about 250. The 92-meter-long keyhole-shaped Makimuku Ishizuka tomb in Sakurai City, Nara, was constructed in the first half of the third century; in the latter half of the same century the Hashihaka tomb was built. Hence the reign of Himiko, circa 190 to 248, corresponds to the appearance of keyhole-shaped tombs. It was the dawn of the Kofun period and a formative time in Kofun-period ritual.

In the Initial Kofun, by which I mean the period traditionally assigned to the very end of the Yayoi, bronze ritual objects were smashed, dis-

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* This article is a partial translation of the introductory essay to volume 3 of ISHINO et al. 1991– , pp. 3–26.

[1] See the *Kofun jidai no kenkyū* series in 13 volumes edited by ISHINO et al., (1990–), especially volumes 7 (Mounds and burial structures, 1991), 8 (Grave goods, 1991), and 9 (*Haniwa*, 1992).

carded, and buried. During this period fragments from wide-bladed, bronze socketed spearheads were thrown into a river at the Tsujibatake site in Fukuoka Prefecture; a similar spearhead was broken into four pieces and buried in a grave in the Kisaka No. 5 mound on Tsushima in Nagasaki Prefecture; and, at the Byū site in Ōita Prefecture, small bronze bells were broken and discarded in a village, and in many settlements small mirrors manufactured in Japan after continental prototypes were discarded inside abandoned houses.

Bronze bells in the Kinki region met a similar fate. At the Kutadani site in Hidaka, Hyōgo Prefecture, fragments of smashed bronze bells (*dōtaku*) were collected and buried together, while at the Makimuku site in Nara Prefecture decorative projections from bronze bells were disposed of in a river.

At present there are eight sites across Japan where buried bronze bells have been discovered and excavated in an undisturbed state. The dates of burial can be determined for three of the sites from associated pottery: Takatsuka in Okayama City; Atobe in Yao City, Osaka; Daifuku in Sakurai City, Nara. Though few in number, all specimens are from the Late Yayoi. There is a good possibility that the Daifuku site is from the Makimuku 1 phase (final Yayoi–early Kofun); the bronze bell of the Nishiura site in Habikino City, Osaka, can be approximately dated by a stratum containing Shōnai-type pottery which lay directly above the pit in which the bell was buried.

These samples tell a tale of the rejection by Yayoi peoples – whether in Tsukushi, Kibi, or Yamato – of bronze ritual objects and the Yayoi kami they stand for. The time when this happened was principally the end of the Late Yayoi and the Initial Kofun, or approximately AD 190 to 220.

Himiko was a priestess as well as being monarch of Wa. Is it too far-fetched to assume that, when Himiko ascended the throne around 190, she and those who established her in power carried out an aggressive rejection of the Yayoi kami symbolized by the Yayoi bronze ritual objects? It was iconoclasm in the literal sense of the word. Why, we might ask, was it necessary to go to such extremes?

In the sections of the historical works *Wei zhi* and the *Hou Han shu* dealing with events in China in 194, it is recorded that there was a great and long-lasting famine, the result of unusual weather patterns, and "people ate other people." According to the climatic historian Yamamoto Takeo, this was the time of a Little Ice Age, when famine spread throughout the whole of East Asia. In Japan, people everywhere joined their rulers in praying for the aid of the kami, using the ritual bronze spearheads, daggers, and bells, but the successive years of famine did not come to an end. According to the section of the *Wei zhi* on Korea, regicide was practised when the prayers of the community were not answered. The rulers of the various Wa kingdoms were no doubt killed one

after another, but when the famine still continued the people ended up repudiating the Yayoi kami as well.

Once the Yayoi kami had been rejected it was necessary to seek new *kami* and then reveal them to the people. Himiko, as a result of her diplomatic negotiations with Wei in 239, acquired "an exquisite gift" of "one hundred bronze mirrors," which she then "displayed to people throughout the land." Can we not conclude that Himiko sought new kami from the kingdom of Wei and went about importing large quantities of the bronze mirrors that symbolized them?

That Himiko carried on diplomatic relations with Wei as the monarch of Wa, rather than of Yamatai, has been verified by YAMAO Yukihisa (1986) and NISHIJIMA Sadao (1991), among others. If this was the case, what Himiko's government needed at the time were doctrines, ideas, and systems to be shared throughout the realm of Wa. When we look for archaeological data that might show the existence of these in the first half of the third century, we find ample evidence in keyhole-shaped tombs and bronze mirrors.

Keyhole-shaped tombs were originally constructed as religious structures, but before long became heavily political in character. It is doubtful that either Himiko's foreign relations or her political rule could have continued for long if there had not existed a common system throughout the kingdom of Wa in the first half of the third century, a system of which the keyhole-shaped tomb was a symbol. That being so, are there any other remaining structures that reveal something of the revolution in rites and religious practices that occurred during the first half of the third century?

BUILDING OF SANCTUARIES

There are some unusual structures of the Makimuku 2 and 3 phases remaining in a sandbank on the northern part of the dwelling area at the Makimuku site. One is a raised-floor building, 4.4 by 5.3 m in size, surrounded by a fence; it is presumed to have had smaller raised-floor structures (160 x 180 cm) on either side. The pillars of the main building had a diameter of about 20 cm (fig. 1).

The shrine carpenter KIMURA Fusayuki studied these remains and considered them to be "prototypes of shrine architecture" (1983). The principal hall is gabled and faces directly west; it has a "central pillar" and "ridgepole-beam pillars," none of which are structurally relevant. "Considered in terms of architectural form, it resembles the plane construction of the Ise Shrine. It falls somewhere between the *taisha-zukuri* 大社造り and the *shinmei-zukuri* 神明造り." Kimura also analyzed the scale of measurement used and found it was "an auspicious, slightly longer Wei *shaku* than the type used in the period 240 to 248." This scale,

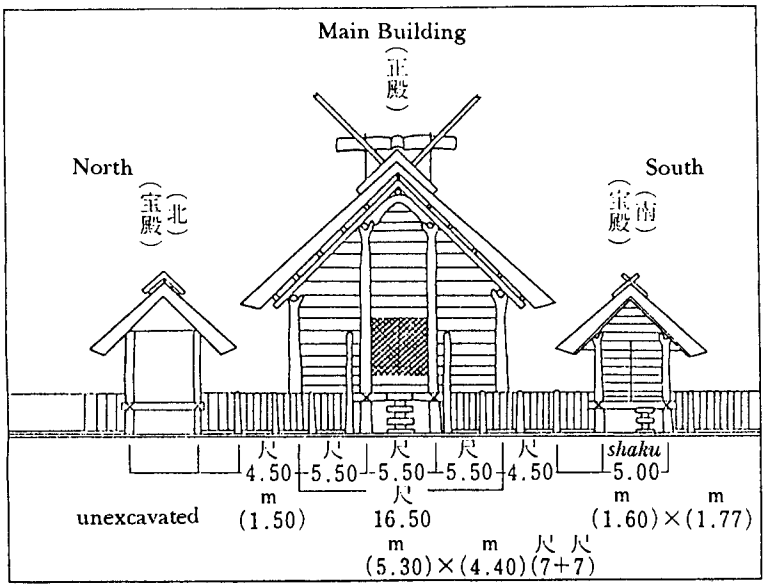


Fig. 1. Reconstruction of Buildings at Makimuku Site.

which, Kimura says, "was called the Lu Ban *shaku*, also the North Star *shaku*, imperial *shaku*, or copper *shaku*," had a numerical value of slightly under 32 cm.

If this is true, the Makimuku building is of considerable historical importance. The use of a Wei scale in the first half of the third century; the construction of a shrine-type building with that scale; the presence of secondary halls with this building, both having their principal axes aligned in the same direction: all of these mark significant points of departure from Yayoi architecture. If these were sanctuaries, or ritual halls, then they were the first such independent religious structures, and they provide some idea of the ritual revolution.

It seems also that there was a massive raised-floor building on a sand dune at Nagase Takahama in Tottori Prefecture (TOTTORI-KEN KYŌIKU BUNKA ZAIDAN 1983). Among the large number of Early Kofun buildings, the structure of building no. 40 is very unusual (fig. 2). It was a square building over 5 m long on each side, with a surrounding quadrangular fence 16 m long on each side and a front section that was apparently a stairway. The post holes are large—2 m to 3 m in diameter—suggesting a tall building over 10 m high. There is no definite evidence to prove that this was a shrine to some kami, but at least this much is certain: it was a building for other than everyday usage, and it contained a miniature bronze mirror.

Though there are only a few such examples, a case of one section of a settlement being set aside as a possible "ritual place" is found in the Hariekawakita site in Asahichō, Shiga Prefecture, which dates from the end of the Yayoi and the very beginning of the Kofun periods (fig. 3). Here, a fence was built between two dwelling clusters, and inside this was an oval area, 35 m to 40 m long on the major axis and 23 m long on the minor axis, surrounded by a board fence. In addition to boards of about 50 cm in width buried 6 m apart within the oval, it seems there also are remains of a building (SHIGAKEN MAIZŌ BUNKAZAI SENTĀ 1980). Although it remains to be proved that this was a place of ritual, it is nevertheless a feature that shows promise.

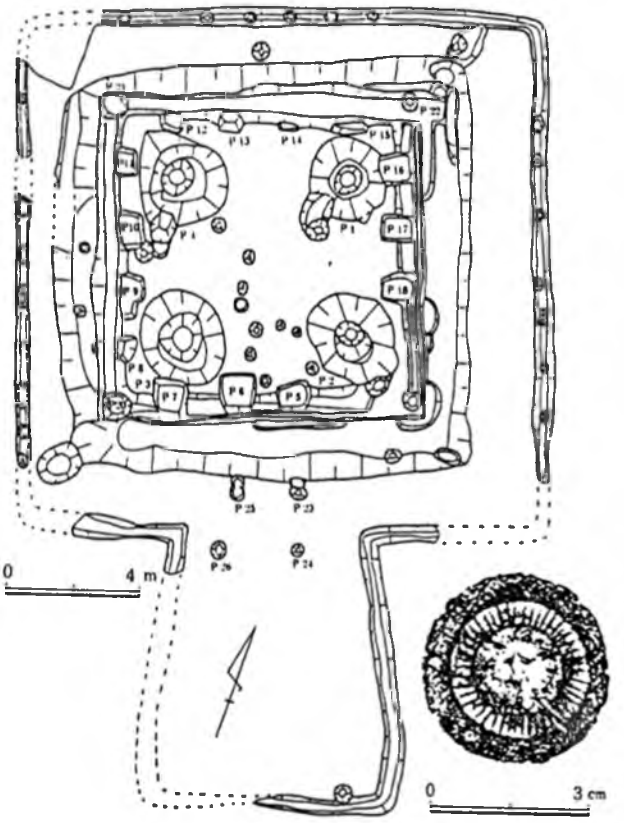


Fig. 2. Mirror and Remains of "Building No. 40" at Nagase Takahama.

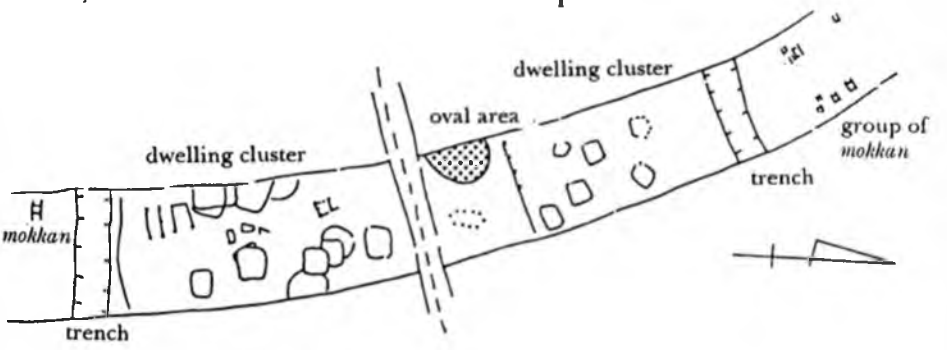


Fig. 3. A "Ritual Place" in a Settlement from the Fourth Century; Harie Kawakita Site, Asahichō, Shiga Prefecture.

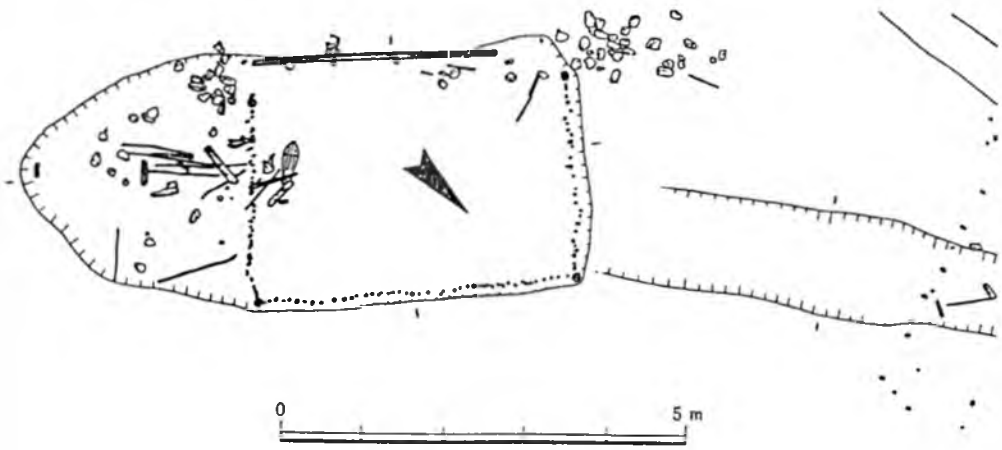


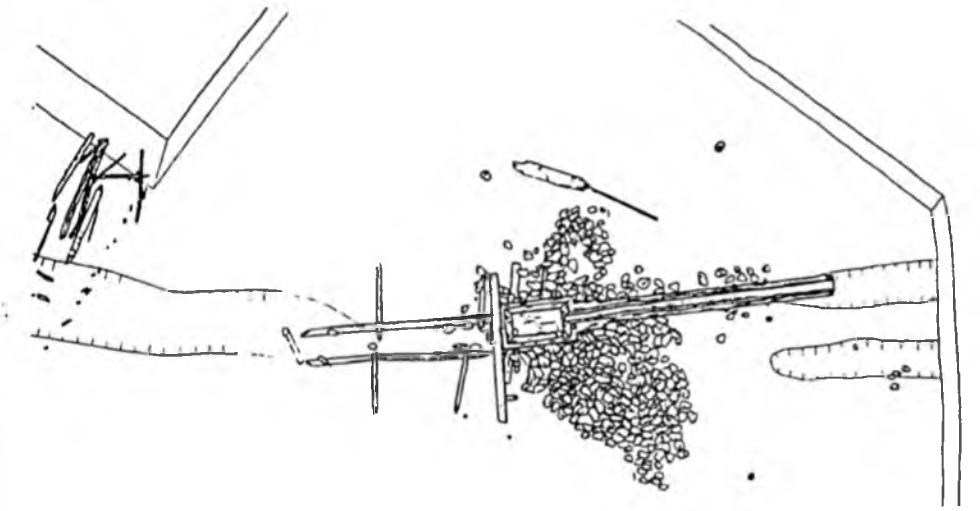
Fig. 4. Aqueduct System; Hattori Site, Shiga

BRINGING IN PURE (SACRED) WATER: AQUEDUCT SYSTEMS

At the Hattori site in Moriyama City, Shiga, there was an Early Kofun aqueduct system set up within a river channel some distance away from a settlement (fig. 4). Pebbles were spread over an area of roughly 3 m, with a large trough, or tub, in the center. On the upstream end of the trough, perpendicularly set boards were used to adjust the water flow, while at the downstream end over 4 m of pipes were laid down. A scattering of small post holes in the stone-covered section suggests the existence of a temporary building. About 12 m towards the upstream end from the stone-covered section there is a structure, surrounded by stakes and boards forming a 3 x 4 m rectangular area. Apparently the center of the rectangle was sunk about 40 cm. It is conceivable that water brought down from further upstream was purified here for use in religious ceremonies and sent to the stone-paved section (possibly a ritual place?). There are no particular ritual artifacts. The general absence of pottery would suggest that the area was not used by large numbers of people for eating and drinking.

Very similar works were found at the Makimuku site (fig. 5). At the edge of the hill on the northern side of the third-century Makimuku "city"[2] we find two aqueduct systems that intersect, and a raised-floor building measuring approximately 1.8 x 1.5 m. Channel A connects two troughs over a meter long on each side, surrounded by a layer of stones; Channel B passes from a stone-paved area through wooden pipes. As at

[2] TERASAWA (1991) provides a useful summary of why some archaeologists see Makimuku as Japan's first city.



the Hattori site, boards were placed at the mouth of the wooden pipes to adjust the volume of water flow. Channels A and B are laid out parallel to each other, in an east-west direction. In addition, there is a water-supply channel formed by an open ditch that runs perpendicularly into Channel A, and the trough has a U-shaped section cut into it so that water can pass through; at Channel B it enters the lower layer of paved rock, to pass under the Channel B pipe. What this indicates is that the aqueduct system extended over an even wider area, and that buildings were set up between intersecting channels.

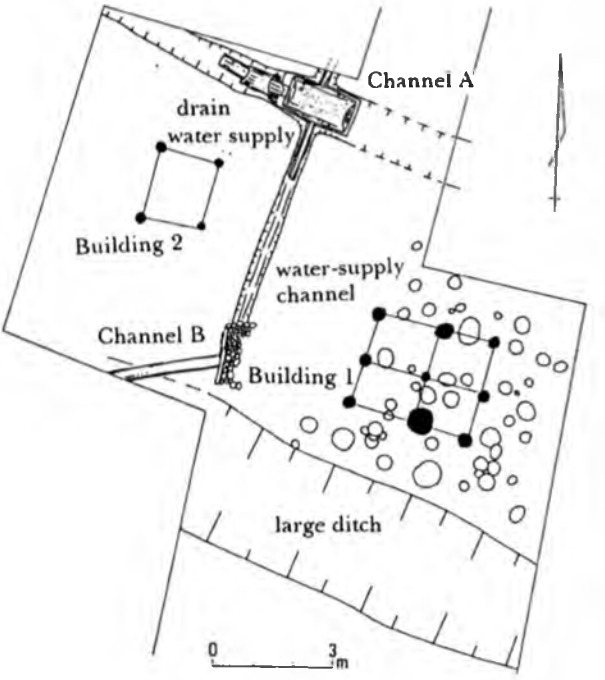


Fig. 5. Aqueduct System; Makimuku Site.

Aqueduct systems were made continuously into the fifth and sixth centuries. At the Nishi-no-tsuji site in Higashi Osaka City there was a stone pavement next to one part of the single waterway. At the Mitsudera I site in Gunma-chō, Gunma, water was

brought into the residential compound of an aristocratic family by means of an aqueduct bridge and channeled to a paved-stone area; the talc replicas clustered there lead us to think that this was a ritual place.

At the Kaminomiya site in Sakurai City, Nara, we find an integrated aqueduct system in which water was channeled from a rockwork spring-fed pond to a late-sixth-century aristocratic residence through a stone conduit that led to a paved-stone area. It would appear to be a garden pond within a private residence, a descendant of ritual sites dating back to the third century.

CROWING COCKS AND UPRIGHT PILLARS

Inside the moats bordering the narrowest part of the Makimuku Ishizuka *kofun* stood several plain-wood pillars 20 cm in diameter, while in the moat around the circular rear section of the mound were placed two vermilion-lacquered roosters made of wooden boards (fig. 6). There is a possibility that arc-ornamented discs were hung on the pillars, and the wooden roosters were no doubt used during the wake ceremony to pray for the dead person's return to life. So-called "wooden *haniwa*" figures have been attested to in Early-phase small mounds, such as at the Hattori site in Moriyama City, while clay *haniwa* in the shape of roosters have been found in such early *kofun* as the Tsukōshōgake mound in Ogōri City, Fukuoka.

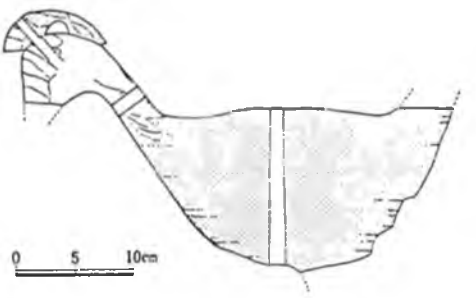


Fig. 6. Rooster-shaped Wooden Board.

These findings shed light on the new rites that came onto the scene with the advent of the keyhole-shaped mounds. The purging of Yayoi rites and the introduction of new rituals were promoted under Himiko's initiative in the first half of the third century, opening the curtain on a new age.

Ritual Localities

I have pointed out that during the period of "ritual revolution" in the third century, ritual halls began to be erected and ritual sites enclosed for the purpose of carrying on kami-cult activities in a certain fixed location. In this section I wish to consider other forms of kami-cult activities.

ALTARS WITHIN THE HOME

At the Takatsuki Minami site in Takatsuki-chō, Shiga Prefecture, there is a sixth-century pit dwelling that has along one of its inner walls a meter-long altar, made by laying down a layer of pebbles. Scattered on the altar are talc comma-shaped beads (*magatama*), cylindrical beads, and perforated discs (mirrors), though it appears that these were normally hung on the branches of trees. The difference between this and other dwellings is that it contained six stone spindle whorls, leading us to believe that it was a house where garments for the kami were woven.

The custom of worshipping the kami of the house by placing miniature pottery vessels inside the dwelling is known from Yayoi sites, beginning with the Hashibara site in Okaya City, Nagano. In a separate trend, dwellings with talc objects inside the house increase in number from the latter half of the fifth century. This is believed to be a move in the direction of the large offerings of talc ritual objects seen at other ritual sites, although there was a village at the Oisehara site in Kawagoe City, Saitama, where numerous talc objects were placed on mounds of earth inside dwellings. TATEISHI (1989, p. 393) reports:

> Of the 68 houses [from the mid-fifth century (Late Izumi to Early Onitaka type Haji ware)], 43 produced mortar-shaped beads, stone replicas, or ritual-related artifacts. Mortar-shaped beads were found in 22 of the houses. . . . The total number of ritual artifacts excavated from dwelling remains at Oisehara is: 13 comma-shaped beads (7 of them replicas), 9 perforated discs, 5 stone replicas of swords, 3 spindle whorls, 3 cylindrical beads, 597 mortar-shaped beads, and 1 unidentified object.

Still, TATEISHI goes on to say, only "the one perforated disc dug up from the floor of house no. 45 is identified with certainty as an example [of a ritual object] associated with a dwelling," and of the others he is of the opinion that "almost nothing was found in a state that would enable us to hypothesize ritual activities" (1989, p. 393).

I would question this position, however. While his warning against the too-ready connection of these objects with rituals is one that deserves to be heeded, is it really likely that the talc objects, scattered so naturally about the settlement, were treated as rubbish? Judging from the examples of bowls buried with five mortar-shaped beads in them that have been found in several sites (the Saiseikai Hospital site in Sakurai City, the Hatawaki site in Gunma Prefecture, etc.), I have my doubts.

Tateishi makes a negative judgment about dwelling no. 47, saying, for example, "We dug up 127 mortar-shaped beads and 2 cylindrical beads. [fig. 7] shows those whose position we could identify. The 64 mortar-shaped beads in the part where the concentration occurred are thought to definitely accompany the remains of a dwelling. But no pottery or

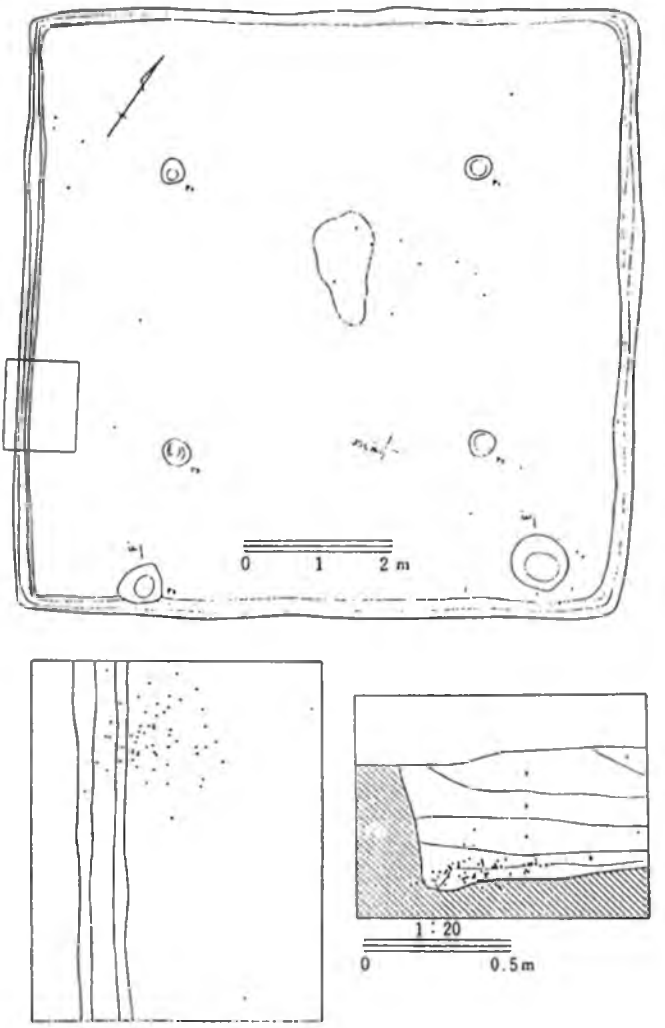


Fig. 7. Mortar-shaped Beads in the Remains of a Dwelling; Oisehara Site, Saitama Prefecture.

other ritual artifacts were found, and it was not an excavational context where we could hypothesize indoor rites" (1989, p. 200). This conclusion is based on careful excavation and study, and is deserving of respect, but I would like to examine it a little more closely. When one looks at the cross section in fig. 7, one sees that the mortar-shaped beads are concentrated above and below the surface that was the original floor of the pit. It is, as Tateishi pointed out, an excavational context accompanying a residence. As far as possibilities go, it can be hypothesized that a necklace for actual use, made of a chain of mortar-shaped beads, was

placed there; *or*, that a rite of hanging such beads and wooden and other ritual objects was performed there. But it is difficult to accept the idea of a talc mortar-shaped-bead necklace for everyday use, during a period when these were being mass produced for ritual use (see below, under Ritual Objects). I would consider it an example of a place for indoor rites, including a rite accompanying the abandonment of a dwelling.

RITUAL LOCALITIES IN RESIDENTIAL COMPOUNDS AND VILLAGES

One autumn early in the sixth century the village of Nakasuji, near present-day Shibukawa City, Gunma, was destroyed in seconds as the result of a pyroclastic flow caused by the eruption of Mt Haruna (ŌTSUKA 1988). In one of the residential compounds in the settlement there are four low houses (pit dwellings) and two one-story houses (surface dwellings). Rituals were carried out both within and without the compound. These seem to have been celebrations of the autumn harvests.

Inside the compound pebbles covered an area of 1.8 x 2.5 m alongside a fence; in the center of this area were placed several 50-cm-sized rocks from the riverbed. It seems that wild boar were sacrificed on these riverbed rocks, for around the spot were boar teeth and three talc mortar-shaped beads. In front of the rocks stood Haji bowls. The rituals were no doubt held by those who lived in the compound.

About 10 m southeast of the compound was the village's ritual place. A foundation platform was arranged in an asymmetrical ellipse 4.6 x 7.7 m in size; in the center of this was an empty space thought to be the place of the celebrant. Immediately east of the platform was a 1.5 x 2.5 m oval rock arrangement, in the center of which were placed three large pots. Between the large pots and the rock arrangement were eight Haji bowls; Haji jars, small jars, pedestaled bowls, bowls, and pots were also found in the vicinity. Inside the bowls were fifteen talc mortar-shaped beads.

On the south side of the celebrant's place were three riverbed rocks of 40 to 60 cm in size. This, it seems, is where the wild boar were offered up. It is clear that in the village of Nakasuji in the early sixth century there were separate ritual places set up for the people of the settlement and the people of the residential compound.

Diverse places for cultic celebrations can also be found within the mid-sixth-century village of Kuroimine, Komochimura, Gunma. One apparent ritual site was in a 10-meter open space surrounded by dwellings. In the center of this space was a dish-shaped depression containing a rock arrangement about 1.5 m in diameter and over ten Haji bowls, pedestaled bowls, jars, and so on. The vessels contained a quantity of talc mortar-shaped beads (HORAGUCHI and NOTO 1985).

Subsequently, six clusters of residential compounds linked by roads

were found. Among the areas painstakingly surveyed was one compound with evidence of cultic activity in the form of pottery placed at the base of a tree; another was a ritual place at a crossroad (ISHII 1990).

One site where ritual objects were buried together within a settlement is the Oisehara in Kawagoe City, Saitama, where a concentration of talc replicas was found in a building-free space at the edge of a mid-fifth-century dwelling area. The replicas included 7 comma-shaped beads, 41 talc perforated discs, 65 talc sword-shaped objects, 1,999 talc mortar-shaped beads, and 148 grams of siliceous siltrock very similar to green tuff. There were also thousands of pottery fragments that could not be reconstructed. It is not clear whether this was a ritual site; what *is* certain is that village rites were performed here using large quantities of talc replicas, as in *kofun* rites. It demonstrates that rites involving large and varied offerings of special ritual objects—a practice that became widespread in the fifth century—were commonly performed at sites other than tomb mounds.

A fifth-century altar was discovered on a hilltop at the edge of the Kusayama site village in Matsuzaka City, Mie Prefecture (SHIMOMURA 1983). The ritual area is 8 x 9 m, with a 1-meter-high square altar. The ritual objects used here were clay dolls, animals, and beads; these lacked the uniformity found in stone products. Perhaps a form of worship took place that had its roots in the soil?

Another cultic celebration using clay objects was the one that took place at the Narai site in Shijōnawate City, Osaka. A square moat, 40 m on a side, surrounded a ritual locality at which rites were performed continuously throughout the fifth and sixth centuries. Within the area six horses were sacrificed; possibly it was the special ritual place of a group of horse breeders, though there is nothing particularly different about the ritual objects used (see SEGAWA 1991).

Village rituals also included large, regular celebrations held at ritual sites with altars. A portion of the cultic celebrations that were held in Kuroimine in early summer, and in Nakasuji in autumn, have begun to take concrete shape.

CULTIVATED-FIELD RITUALS

Agricultural rituals occurred at various times, from the preseason rites in early spring to the harvest festivals in autumn. Rituals to the field kami were varied: in an extremely unusual sixth-century example (at the Hatawaki site in Takasaki City, Gunma) roosters were painted on field embankments, while more common rituals involved the placing of miniature clay vessels at water spouts, etc. Putting talc ritual objects into bowls and the like and floating them down irrigation channels probably formed part of the same rite.

THE OCEAN, MOUNTAINS, RIVERS, AND ROADS

People rowed out into the ocean and navigated with the "mountains as landmarks." They went up and down rivers to get from one place to another. They traveled on roads and prayed to the kami of the passes. The ocean, mountains, rivers, and roads are not only places where kami reside, but also places where men and gods continually travel back and forth (see KOJIMA 1991; KIRIHARA 1991). The *Hitachi no kuni fudoki* describes the entrance into Hitachi Province (present Ibaragi Prefecture) by a trunk road in Enoura: "When couriers and the like were making their first visits to the province, they first rinsed their mouths and hands, then faced east and did reverence to the great kami of Kashima, after which they were able to enter" (*NKBT*, p. 45). It has been quite impossible, however, to ascertain by archaeological data any place from which people worshipped at a distance the Kashima Shrine, which is about forty kilometers away.

The presence of ritual implements at an excavation does not necessarily prove that it was the location of a ritual site. Concentrations of ritual objects may be found at a certain spot in a river without meaning that there was a cult of the river kami there, nor can it be said that there was a cult of the mountain kami just because related items are excavated on a mountaintop. Bearing this caution in mind, I would nevertheless like to interpret the following cases in light of the spot where ritual objects were excavated.

CULTIC CELEBRATIONS OF TREES

A giant camphor tree stood on the bank of the Miyamae River in Matsuyama City, Ehime; 10 m high and with a root network 28 m in diameter, it had a diameter of 2 m at breast level. Scattered over an area more than 50 m wide around its base was an enormous quantity of third-century pottery and clay artifacts (EHIME MAIZŌ BUNKAZAI CHŌSA SENTĀ 1986). There was a total of approximately 2,500 ceramic vessels on the site, of which pots, with over 1,000 found, formed the largest category by far; other items numbering over 200 each were jars, bowls, cups, and small round-bottomed jars. An additional feature of the site was the comparatively large amount of non-local pottery and miniature vessels.

Non-local pottery totalled 41 items, a little less than 2% of the total; the largest percentage was from the Kinki, Kibi, and San'in areas—in other words, from regions east of Matsuyama. The miniature pottery, 61 vessels in all, made up a little more than 2% of the whole; the fact that over half this number comprised items for personal dining use (in the bowls and cups categories) marks this as different from other examples (SUDŌ 1986, p. 347).

The compilers of the Miyamae River site report seem not to have viewed this as a place where "river-kami religion" or simple rites were practiced, but rather as a port, in view of the fact that it is located near a river mouth and that many items came from other areas. The character of the site need not lead one to posit a port, however; it makes more sense if we assume it to have been a central settlement in the Matsuyama Plain, a "city" equipped with a ritual place and a market. As for the nature of the rites performed there, the concentration of pottery items around the giant tree suggests elements of sacred-tree religion; it is also difficult to reject "river-kami religion" elements if we attach significance to pottery incised with what appears to be a dragon, found at the same spot (SUDŌ 1986, p. 350). Rituals with several elements were probably performed here over a period of more than a hundred years. At the time of cultic celebrations, food might have been cooked with people from other regions (as suggested by the many pots from other areas), and the principal event may have comprised the ritual eating of food together with the kami (as suggested by the miniature bowls and cups). The area around the giant tree was a place for depositing utensils used during the cultic celebrations over the years.

In a legendary tale about the origin of the place-name Katsura-no-sato, found in a *Yamashiro no kuni fudoki* fragment, mention is made of *yutsu katsura no ki* 湯津桂の樹, where *yutsu* means "religious purification" and the tree is considered to be a sacred tree, one to which the kami descends (*NKBT*, p. 420). While it is not clear what sort of rites took place at the base of such sacred trees, they probably reflected a religious belief that existed in all parts of the country.

Even in the village rituals that we discussed earlier, pottery vessels containing food were offered at the base of trees in settlements and residential compounds. The sixth-century examples from the Nakasuji and Kuroimine sites in Gunma were probably also cases of this.

RITUAL OBJECTS FLOATED DOWN RIVERS

There are numerous examples of ritual objects being unearthed from rivers;[3] examples include third- and fourth-century objects from the Miyamae River and the ancient Makimuku River, fifth-century objects from the ancient Furu River (Tenri City, Nara), sixth- and seventh-century objects from the Motomiya River (Ōyagawa site in Shizuoka City), and artifacts from the "Hieda River" (Hieda site in Yamato Kōriyama City, Nara).

The "Hieda River" is a buried river on the south side of the Heijō Capital site; excavation has yielded about 100 items each of: pottery with

[3] On river rituals, see also OKITA 1991.

India-ink paintings of human faces; horse-shaped clay figurines; dolls (*hitogata*); ritual wooden blades (*igushi*); miniature ovens; etc. (NAKAI 1978). It was a purification river in which the inhabitants of the Heijō Capital floated objects downstream to ward off illnesses and calamities; it was not related to a river-kami cult.

The rites that were performed on a sandbank in the ancient Makimuku River throughout most of the third century and the first half of the fourth century are also difficult to describe as belonging to river-kami religion (ISHINO 1985). Pottery and wooden products used for the rites were of two types: Makimuku 1 to 3 (Kinki V; Early and Late Shōnai), deposited in pits on the sandbank; and Makimuku 4 (Furu 1), deposited in the river. There were an estimated 92 pits on the sandbank. All the pits were dug to the level where water seeped in, indicating that they were used for drawing clean water. There are two places where raised-floor buildings, 2 m square, were built beside a pit. Probably the rite was performed inside the building, and after the rite was completed the ritual objects used to draw clean water were buried within the pit. Because specialized ritual objects had not been developed fully in the Makimuku 1 to 3 phases, many of the utensils used for the rites were for everyday use. Listed below are the contents of Tsuji Area pit no. 4 at Makimuku, where the largest number of items were found (ISHINO and SEKIGAWA 1976).

pottery: 21 jars, 37 pots, 18 broad bowls (*hachi* 鉢), 7 pedestaled bowls, 6 jar stands, 5 clay vessel supports;

wooden objects: black-lacquered round bow, pestle, weaving implements, stool, ladle, spatula, vermilion-covered pedestaled bowl, black-lacquered tray, broad bowl with handles, thin chopstick-shaped sticks, basket, winnow, boat, bird boat, ceremonial staff, stick with a round head, board, stakes, posts, split wood, natural wood, gourd skin, and wisteria vine;

a large quantity of rice chaff.

Pit no. 4 contained a comparatively large number of pottery items from other areas of the country. Particularly noteworthy are the 3 Kawachi-type, 10 Tōkai-type, and 3 San'in/Hokuriku-type pots; among the other items were found one San'in-type sandglass-shaped stand and 5 clay vessel supports. Most of the wooden items were represented by single specimens, but things like stakes, split wood, and natural wood numbered close to a hundred items.

Classified according to functions, the items buried in pit no. 4 fall into the following categories:

foodstuffs: a large quantity of rice

cooking utensils: pestle

containers: winnow, basket

rice-cooking utensils: pots, clay vessel supports
eating utensils: clay vessels, wooden vessels (large pedestaled bowls, trays)
weaving implements: warp roller, cloth roller, etc.
ceremonial implements: wooden bird-shaped boat, wooden boat, ceremonial staff
others: large quantity of split wood and natural wood

On the basis of the archaeological evidence, it is thought that during the cultic rituals the celebrants hulled rice, boiled it, and heaped it in bowls. Following the ritual they had a communal meal with the kami. The weaving implements probably indicate that new cloth was woven for the ritual occasions.

The set of buried items found in Makimuku Tsuji pit no. 4 includes a large number of utensils similar to those used in the later Niiname harvest festivals. Thus, though the ritual performed at the site had many elements of an agricultural rite, it would seem more fittingly described (giving due weight to the large quantity of non-local pottery items) as, to use Okada Seishi's phrase, a *Niiname osukuni girei* , that is, a ritual involving joint offerings of food by powerful regional families as part of the Niiname festival. The Niiname *osukuni* ritual most certainly was held in all "cities" from at least the first half of the third century, or the Early Shōnai phase. A "city" was where the local king had his residence, and all the requisites were present for performing the Niiname *osukuni* ritual.

The section on Saka Province in *Hizen no kuni fudoki* tells of cultic kami worship using human and horse figurines (*NKBT,* p. 393):

> There is a kami that makes the [Saka] river turbulent upstream, so that it kills half of those who make their way on it. When Ōarata, the ancestor of the lord of the province, sought answers through divination, the two Earth Spider women, Ōyamadame and Sayamadame, said that "if they took earth from the village of Shimoda, made human and horse figures, and performed a rite in honor of the kami, the latter would be appeased." Ōarata acted in accordance with these words and did honor to the kami, whereupon the kami accepted the rite and was at last appeased.

The clan chieftain, in other words, inquired of the local shamanesses how to pacify the turbulent kami, and the shamanesses suggested that the people worship the kami by making human and horse figurines from the local soil. When the powerful clan did as suggested, the kami became peaceful.

From the latter half of the fifth century clay ritual objects were used along with talc ones, and from the latter half of the sixth century they replaced the talc objects. The principal clay ritual objects were human

and horse figurines, with the largest quantity being recovered from a river at the Ōyagawa site in Shizuoka City.

Over one kilometer northeast of the Ōyagawa site is the Shiroyama Shrine, in the vicinity of which the local road starts rising. Could this have been the domain of a "turbulent kami"? The ritual objects found in the river date up to the Heian period; as the other traditional names (Shinmeibara 神明原 and Motomiyagawa 元宮川) for this site attest, it was the "field of the kami," the "original-shrine river"—in other words, a purificatory river where ritual objects were washed downstream. A clay vessel from the site with the character "kami" 神 written on it in black ink indicates this quite plainly.

The section on Ibo County in the *Harima no kuni fudoki* tells how, because the kami residing in the mountains used to "hinder people on their way through, so that half died, half survived," people put up a shrine at the foot of the mountains and built a house to make saké for the kami. They held a festival in which they drank saké and floated down the river in boats while ramming into one another (*NKBT*, p. 293). It would seem that examples similar to that of Ōyagawa, in which a road-obstructing kami was worshipped in a river, were not rare.

A certain pattern can be seen in the human and horse figurines of Ōyagawa. The human figures' legs are spread in a U shape, while the horse figures' backs are rounded. Put together, they represent riders on horseback, with the riders being large and the horses small. There may be a connection with the straw horse-and-rider figures that appear in all parts of the country as part of torch processions to rid rice paddies of noxious insects. People walked in procession along the embankments of the paddies, carrying straw dolls in the middle of the procession; when the procession ended the dolls were burned. A very similar ceremony was the praying-for-rain ceremony in China called the *zaoshensong* 早神送, described in the *Shanhaijing* 山海経 :

> In ancient times, when the ageless, long-lived Emperor Huang fought with the evil god Chiyou, the latter invoked the spirit of wind and rain and caused trouble with fierce rainstorms. Thereupon Emperor Huang used his daughter to entice Ba, the spirit of sunshine, down from Heaven. But then it became impossible for Ba to return to Heaven, and as a result he was permitted to abide in the north. . . .This spirit, Ba, was 2 *shaku* tall, and his eyes were on top of his head. In China Ba was considered a sickness-producing spirit, and that is why, it seems, ceremonies for sending him north were common. (TAKAHASHI and SENDA 1991)

What is of most interest in that description are the words "2 *shaku* tall, and his eyes were on top of his head." Clay human figurines come in various sizes and shapes throughout the country, but there are ten figures

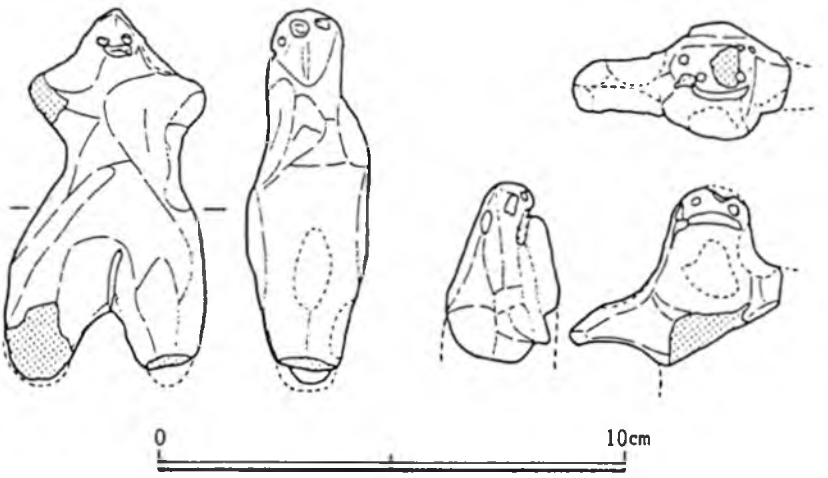


Fig. 8. Clay Figurines with Eyes on Top of Head; Ōyagawa Site.

of small physique with eyes on their heads found among the numerous clay human figurines at Ōyagawa (fig. 8). The fact that several very similar figures were found in one place indicates that they were not made that way by accident. Is there not, then, a possibility they represented Ba, and can we not suppose that ceremonies based on Chinese ideas (Daoism) were performed to drive away noxious insects?

Clay figures mounted on clay horses are known at the third-to-fifth-century Dal-Verzin-tepe site in Uzbekistan. It is thus possible that Chinese ideas also reached Dal-Verzin-tepe, a third-century Buddhist site of the Kushan Court.

INDIGENOUS KAMI WORSHIPPED ON MOUNTAINTOPS: MT MIWA

Mt Miwa, located in Nara Prefecture, is one of the classical mountains of Japan. It is the "Mimoroyama of Kannabi/Kannabiyama in Mimoro" of the *Man'yōshū*, and the mountain where the deity Opo-mönö-nusi-nō-kami wished to be worshipped, according to the *Kojiki*. Even long after his death, the ruler of the third-century "city" Makimuku, which grew up at the foot of Mt Miwa, appears to worship the mountain from afar: when one stands on the circular rear section of the early-third-century keyhole-shaped Makimuku Ishizuka *kofun* (referred to above) and looks out across the square front section, one's line of sight leads directly to the top of Mt Miwa. There are also two raised-floor buildings alongside the pits where ritual objects were placed in the ritual site in the Tsuji Area of the Makimuku site; both buildings face Mt Miwa. Though the

evidence is circumstantial, it would seem that the ritual site was determined, and Mt Miwa worship firmly established, when Makimuku "city" was built from around the end of the second century through the first half of the third century.

The words of *Harima no kuni fudoki*, in the section on Ibo County, indicate that the mountaintop kami were worshipped from the foot of the mountain: "They built a shrine at the base of the mountain, where they respectfully worshipped the kami that resides on the top of the mountain, the son of the Great Kami of Iwa" (*NKBT*, p. 291). The *Hitachi no kuni fudoki*, however, in the section on Namekata County, states "[A peg signifies that] from this point upwards is the place of the kami; parts below this [peg] can be made into fields for human cultivation" (*NKBT*, p. 55). This indicates that the earlier kami occupants were moved to the mountaintop while new land was opened up—in other words, it shows a process of new kami taking over the foot of the mountain.

Let us apply this idea to Mt Miwa. It was not Opo-mönö-nusi-nö-kami's desire to be worshipped on Mt Miwa; rather, he was moved there, and the ones who moved him were newcomers to the foot of the mountain, the newcomers of the Makimuku 1 phase and later the very same people who were to carry out the "ritual revolution" discussed earlier.

Still, this stage of "ritual revolution" was contradictory in that the newcomers recognized the kami on Mt Miwa even on the occasion of the Niiname *osukuni* ritual, and also venerated Mt Miwa at the time of their deaths. These contradictions were probably resolved in two stages: first, the shift in orientation of the Hashihaka mounds in the latter half of the third century, so that the keyhole-shaped tombs have Mt Miwa to their sides instead of to their front; and second, from the latter half of the fourth century to the first half of the fifth century, the burial in taboo areas of *komochi magatama* 子持勾玉 (large comma-shaped bead with several smaller ones attached) and ornamental stone objects carved in the shape of a Y(fig. 9).

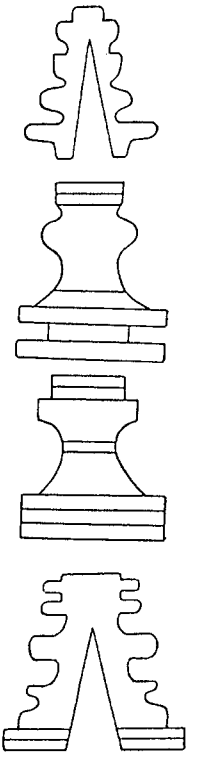


Fig. 9. Ornamental Stone Objects on Mt Miwa.

Even so, the *kami* of Mt Miwa continued to hold such divine authority that, when a series of epidemics occurred in the reign of Emperor Sujin, a supposed descendant of Opo-

mönö-nusi-nö-kami named Opo-tata-neko was named to worship the deity on Mt Miwa (see the section in the *Kojiki* on Sujin [65]). The Makimuku site has pits (the Tsuji Area pits) in which are placed large pots of Sue ware produced in Suemura in Osaka in the latter half of the fifth century. By this time the "city" of Makimuku was already finished, but the Mt Miwa rites prescribed by Opo-tata-neko had probably been performed on the former "holy land."

MOUNTAIN RELIGION FOUND THROUGH EXCAVATIONS

Excavations have proved that *iwakura* 磐座 (large rocks considered the abodes of kami) were not objects of megalithic worship, but the sites of mountain religion. The *iwakura* at the Nishiōmuro Maruyama site in Gunma, for example, is a natural rock over 2 m wide, and strewn around it were large quantities of talc ritual objects from the sixth century. This is of great significance in that it shows the worship of Mt Akagi took place not only on the side of the mountain itself, but also on distant hills. This evidence provides food for thought about the extent of the sphere of religious activities directly connected with mountain religion.

THE OCEAN AND *IWAKURA*

The Munakata Shrine on the island of Okinoshima was a state ritual site in the Sea of Genkai. As I have discussed this site elsewhere (ISHINO 1990, pp. 137–43; see also SADA 1991), I will not describe it in detail here. I merely wish to mention that, when I visited the island in May 1983 with the permission of Munakata Shrine, two things deeply impressed me: the ablutions that all the people made in the ocean, with their palms pressed together, and the encounter with mountain ascetics (*shugenja*) praying at the *iwakura*. Both of these activities reflect the fact that this area is still considered sacred – that the rock is a dwelling of the kami.

Of all the *iwakura*, the one at Utaki in Okinawa is the most awe-inspiring. One steps from the bright summer sunlight into a world of darkness and stillness, and traces of worship can be seen here and there. The giant rocks reach over 10 m in size.

On Chikubushima, an island in Lake Biwa mentioned in a fragment of the *Ōmi no kuni fudoki*, there are even today piles of unglazed earthenware upon which pious men and women have written their prayers, starting under the shrine hall and leading right down to the lakeside. In other places people make miniature boats out of wood or clay and pray to the kami for safe passage over the sea, or offer pendant paper strips to the kami of the sea at caves facing the ocean. On the eastern coast of the Izu Peninsula there are many such ritual sites, many of which face

the ocean; the main shrine where worship is offered is Shirahama Shrine (Mishima Shrine) in Shimoda City, where the Hitatsu festival is held (ŌBA 1970).

BLOCKING THE ROADS

The *Fudoki* passage cited earlier, which relates how the violent kami block roads and kill half of those who travel on them, represents a view accepted in many parts of the country. As a result, rites directed toward the kami of roads and mountain passes were common, and much evidence has been found during excavations. One of these places is Misakatōge Pass in Achimura, Nagano Prefecture, where large quantities of talc ritual objects, including mirrors, swords, and beads, were offered.

Ritual Objects: Offerings of Talc Ritual Sets

In the fifth century rites appeared in which talc perforated discs, talc sword-shaped objects, and talc mortar-shaped beads were used in units of ten thousand. Since the work of TAKAHASHI (1919), the perforated discs, sword-shaped objects, and mortar-shaped beads have been considered substitutes for mirrors, swords, and cylindrical beads, respectively. ŌBA (1970, pp. 111ff.) carried research in this area further on the basis of archaeological investigation and documentary evidence.

Takahashi drew attention to the tiny holes in the sword-shaped objects and assumed that they were for hanging the objects from tree branches. Ōba went a step further and saw the perforated discs and mortar-shaped beads as the objects hung on the *sakaki* tree as mentioned in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*. The *Nihon shoki* section on Emperor Keikō, for example, says that before meeting the emperor Lady Kamunashi pulled up a *sakaki* and hung eight handfuls of swords on the top branches, eight spans of mirrors on the middle branches, and eight spans of beads on the lower branches; the section on Emperor Chūai tells how Kumawani, ancestor of the lord of Tsukushioka, hung ten handfuls of swords on a 500-branch *sakaki* to show his allegiance.

We find examples of *sakaki* trees in pits at the Hasshi-in site in Yamato Kōriyama City in Nara, where ritual objects from the latter half of the third century to the fourth century (Late Shōnai to Furu 2) are buried (FUJII 1980). A cluster of pottery buried over several occasions was found inside a square pit (no. 15) 12 m on a side, with many small branches from *sakaki* trees. Talc objects were not yet hung on these *sakaki*, but they are extremely interesting as early instances of *sakaki* use as mentioned in Japanese literature.

The period of mass production of talc objects, from the second half of

the fifth century into the sixth century, was apparently encouraged under the leadership of the "great kings" (emperors). The 300,000 items at the Soga site in Kashihara City, Nara, give us a glimpse into this activity (SEKIGAWA 1983). It seems that at the Soga site they made all sorts of objects from various types of stone material (principally talc), which were then supplied to all parts of the country. Examples of places that were on the receiving end of these goods are the well-known Katonboyama tomb mound in Sakai City, Osaka, with 20,000 talc objects, and the Nonaka tomb in Fujiidera City, Osaka, where the surrounding moat yielded 40,000 mortar-shaped beads and many sword-shaped objects, perforated discs, and comma-shaped beads (FUJIIDERA-SHI KYŌIKU IINKAI 1990). When we look at the quantities that result from excavations where wet-sieving is conducted, we realize that finding 300,000 damaged items in one section of a production site is not very astounding.

In all parts of the country talc artifacts are being excavated in vast numbers at various kinds of ritual sites: on shrine premises, at the foot of mountains, at mountain passes. In any given site hundreds of thousands of ritual objects were used, and buried, over the span of many decades. From the second half of the fifth century to the first half of the sixth century, ritual object sets—comprising talc perforated discs, sword-shaped objects, and mortar-shaped beads—became popular and spread throughout the country. This phenomenon was possibly connected with the move described in the memorial to the Liu Song by the king Wakatake (Opo-Patususe-nö-waka-take, the Emperor Yūryaku): "In the east, [our forebears] conquered fifty-five countries of hairy men; and in the west, they brought to their knees sixty-six countries of various barbarians" (TSUNODA and GOODRICH 1951, p. 23). It is thought that the Yamato political authority enforced, as it subjugated powerful clans throughout the land, a Yamato model of rites symbolized by talc ritual sets. This was made possible by the expansion of "official ritual-object factories" such as was found at the Soga site.

Summary

In the first half of the third century, new rituals recorded in the *Wei zhi* as *guidao* 鬼道 were introduced by Himiko. The nature of the *guidao* is not clearly known, but I have surmised that they were reflected in the appearance of something new in the archaeological remains, something not for everyday use and not found in the Japanese archipelago during the Yayoi period.

The remains of the structures I described at the Makimuku site (third c.) and the Nagase Takahama site (fourth c.) were, I believe, shrines of some type; the aqueduct systems of the Makimuku and Hattori (fourth c.) sites I view as facilities to provide clean water for offerings to the

kami. Examples of ritual objects accompanying clean-water systems continue on into the fifth century (Mitsudera I site in Gunma) and the sixth century (Uenomiya site in Nara).

The most representative non-utilitarian structures in the first half of the third century were probably the keyhole-shaped tomb mounds. On top of the Mesuriyama mound in Nara (fourth c.) were placed large cylindrical *haniwa*, resembling huge round pillars and positioned similarly to pillars in a building (ISHINO 1990, p.61); the remains of a four-pillared building situated over burial facilities have been identified on an even earlier site (third-century Nishitani 3 mound in Shimane). I stressed that new ideas based on Chinese thought were being adopted together with tomb mound construction.

In the fifth century large quantities of the same sorts of talc ritual objects came to be used at tomb mounds as well as ritual places. Particularly from the latter half of that century and throughout the sixth century, ceremonies in which large offerings were made of perforated discs (mirrors), swords, and mortar-shaped beads became standard, and this practice spread throughout the country under the leadership of the Court. This development is thought to be a forerunner of the *ritsuryō* rituals.

In addition to these major Kofun-era ritual trends, I examined various examples in which recent excavations have clarified the nature of rites held in houses, residential compounds, and villages. In the Takatsuki Minami site in Shiga (sixth c.) an altar was situated in the center of a house; at the Nakasuji site in Gunma cultic celebrations were conducted both in one small ritual place within the compound and on a foundation platform within the village.

Various rituals were also conducted away from the settlements, to the myriad kami of the ocean, mountains, rivers, and roads through mountain passes. The large quantities of ritual objects buried at the feet of mountains or in riverbeds give a hint of the scale of these rituals. In an attempt to determine the ritual content of these cults, I attempted an analysis of ritual places and ritual objects on the basis of information in the *Kojiki*, *Nihon shoki*, *Fudoki*, and other documents. This issue is being studied by many scholars, but what is important from the archaeological point of view is that a comparison with actual ritual places and objects must be done on the basis of careful excavation.

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