

ing and accompaniment (“Hagoromo”), and two pieces from the classical shakuhachi repertory (“Kokū” and “Tsuru no sugomori”) perhaps played by Higuchi Taizan.

Recordings such as the ones reissued on this CD are perhaps not of sufficiently high quality to allow one to lie back in the easy chair and partake in sheer aesthetic delight, but for the scholars or other listeners who wish to make good use of their facility of imagination these wax cylinders are real treasures. The explanatory notes by Ingrid Fritsch, well known for her outstanding work on Japanese shakuhachi music and the various groups of Japanese blind musicians, are a model of what such work can be. The engineers, too, have done more than one might expect, providing faithful reproductions of antiquated sources that now stand a good chance of survival. A further publication of the Japan collection of Lachmann (1924–1925) and Schünemann (1924) has been announced. An additional ten years of technological development no doubt meant far more than it does now and I look forward to hearing what has so long remained tantalizing but out of reach.

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GONICK, GLORIA GANZ. *Matsuri! Japanese Festival Arts*. With contributions by Yo-ichiro Hakomori, Hiroyuki Nagahara, Herbert Plutschow. UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, Textile Series, No. 6. Los Angeles: UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History, 2003. 256 pages. Maps, illustrations, list of *matsuri*, glossary, bibliography, index. Cloth US\$75.00; ISBN 0–930741–91–9. Paper US\$40.00; ISBN 0–930741–92–7. (Distributed by University of Washington Press, Seattle WA 98145–5096 USA)

Sometimes a book title clinches the content’s atmosphere in a single word. *Matsuri!* (with exclamation mark) is precisely such a title. Together with the cover’s bright colors the title well reflects the sentiment of someone who is just about to join in the gaudy commotion of a *matsuri* and shouts this word.

Matsuri! is not a description or an analysis of a particular *matsuri* (festival). Although many common features of *matsuri* are introduced they provide mainly the background or context for a discussion of the book’s main topic: the textiles used at *matsuri*, their colors, design, types, and last but not least their cultural history. The book was published on the occasion of an exhibit under the same title at the UCLA Fowler Museum held from 13 October 2002 to 9 February 2003. Responsible for the exhibit was Gloria Ganz Gonick, the editor and main author of this volume. “The book has been an ambitious undertaking exploring several aspects of *matsuri* from an interdisciplinary perspective,” writes Director Marla C. Berns in her foreword (8). The ambition has produced an admirable result. It highlights an aspect of *matsuri* that inevitably strikes the eye of every participant and onlooker alike but is hardly ever addressed, namely what people wear, their “close art” (11), and reveals some astonishing historical aspects of features often considered to be “typically Japanese.” Frankly

speaking, Gonick's chapter "Imported Textiles in *Matsuri*" was the book's most fascinating part for me. For some years scholars have paid attention to Japan's trading connections during the centuries of her supposedly total seclusion, especially to the connections with the continent via the so-called "northern route." Gonick traces these hidden routes carefully and demonstrates or hints at how the imported materials eventually found their way into a prominent place at a *matsuri* and to the masses. It would be the subject of another fascinating study to look into the strategies and stratagems used to sidetrack the severe laws forbidding any contact with the outside world.

Matsuri! admirably succeeds in making the reader aware of the variety and striking beauty of textiles used for *matsuri*. It also offers descriptions of *matsuri* from different points of view in order to call up the world where the textiles come to life. Several authors contribute to this purpose: Herbert Plutschow, "Politics and Theater in *Matsuri*"; Yō-ichiro Hakomori, "The Sacred and Profane in *Matsuri* Structures"; Hiroyuki Nagahara, "The Symbolic Meaning of the Inscriptions of Japanese Festival Jackets." Gonick's own contribution, besides her discussion of the textiles, is an enthusiastic general description of *matsuri*, a condensation of her personal experiences at some of the more spectacular *matsuri* throughout the country. Her focus on what catches the eye may perhaps be responsible for her overemphasis of the celebratory aspect (*sairei*) over the ritual aspect (*shinji*) of a *matsuri*. The *shinji* is the inconspicuous ritual to invite the kami. Most *matsuri* participants may not even know about it, but without it the celebration would lack its very *raison d'être*. In this respect Plutschow is right when he says that "a *matsuri* without a deity is unthinkable" (57). However, there is certainly a tendency today that "ordinary Japanese now think of festivals as merrymaking events" (Nagasaki Iwao, Foreword, 10). Because this aspect is implicit in the *sairei* character of a *matsuri* it would have also been worth mentioning the modern commercial use of the term *matsuri* and some of the new forms of *matsuri* that clearly do without a kami but still rely on traditional pageantry such as the Nagoya Festival or the Awa Odori in Kōenji (Tokyo) and other places.

Nagahara contributes a clear presentation of the origin, forms, and uses of Japanese script. This will be generally useful to readers without previous knowledge of Japanese. Hakomori professes to discuss the "sacred" and "profane" in some of the structures used at a *matsuri*, but in my view it is not quite clear what this means for the structures because he appears to discuss space more than the structures. A more serious problem is his interpretation of *shintai*, a term he translates as "conductor" and mentions as one of its examples a tree with a sacred rope around its trunk (80). A *shintai*, however, is not so much the "conductor" as the material representation ("sacred embodiment") of a kami. I do not know of an example where a tree is a *shintai*, but there are innumerable examples of trees functioning as *yorishiro*, as "conductors" for the kami to arrive in this world. He also offers an unusual interpretation of the *torii*, the shrine gate, as being "regarded as useful in helping to draw the kami down to the sacred precincts" (80). The ordinary view is for the *torii* to function as a marker dividing profane from sacred space in a horizontal direction and not as a *yorishiro* which emphasizes vertical direction.

The kinds of problems mentioned here are part of much of the text as far as it describes *matsuri* as a phenomenon. On the one hand specific statements are made without reference to the concrete reason for such statements, and on the other the same statements are held to have general significance. It is always possible that exceptions to usual interpretations exist, but considering the variety of *matsuri* it can be quite misleading to assume that a feature in one of them is representative for all the others. Even if such statements are not completely wrong, they are misleading especially for those without experience of *matsuri* and their variations.

As mentioned above, Gonick has done painstaking research to trace the routes of historical materials, but in relation to some questions concerning features in Japan she seems to be less rigorous. In her quite interesting discussion of banners, for example, she says that "cloths

attached to [...] trees to mark their sacred significance were an early form of Japanese banner [...]. This practice eventually evolved into the attaching of cloth banners to tall poles" (100). The cloths and banners mentioned do to some extent have a similar function, but how can it be demonstrated that banners "eventually evolved" out of those cloths? A similar but more complicated problem we find in the discussion of the *shishi mai* (lion dance) and its relation to *shika mai* (deer dance) or even *gongen mai*. First, Gonick mentions that *shishi* is sometimes translated as "lion-dogs" and writes correctly that "lions never inhabited Japan: the concept and popular dance were imported long ago from China" (124). However, in the concluding chapter she says that these "lion dances" "began as *shika odori*, or deer dances, and were performed in deer masks" (245) without any explanation as to how this happened if "concept and popular dance" were imported from China. Second, supposed there was such a development how did "deer" (*shika*) and "lion" (*shishi*) become related? According to the author portrayals of animals threatening the crops were used to appease them. Among these animals, the portrayals of deer and boar were "often transformed later into the more dramatic lion-dogs" (245). There is no concrete proof for any of the statements mentioned, but there is a hint of where part of the problem might have originated. Gonick says that the "term *shika* used to refer to all kinds of wild beasts, particularly wild boars" (126). The fact is, however, that the term *shishi* is used to refer to the meat of deer and wild boar (*inoshishi*) particularly in northern Japan, which happens to be one of the main areas of *shika odori*. In Hanamaki, Iwate Prefecture, a center for this dance, although despite being called *shishi odori* it is written with the character for deer. How, then, is it that in an area already familiar with the term *shishi*, it was used for dances representing an animal that was in ordinary parlance referred to as *shika*? To my mind the simple assertion of a supposedly historical development does not solve this question.

Gonick makes a laudable effort to provide Japanese terms where it seems to be useful. Although it may be a burden to some, it is a helpful device for those with some knowledge of Japanese. Yet some of the transcriptions are not without problems. In the caption linked to a photograph showing banners at the entrance to a shrine it is said that the banners are inscribed with "Kaido jinja gozen mae." I am not sure what *gozen* should mean here, but a close look at the picture shows that the characters that are supposed to be read as *gozen* should most probably be read as something like *gohō*, since the second character in the combination is the character for "treasure" (*takara*) (103, Fig. 4.11). A misreading that results in mistaken information is found in the legend to Fig. 4.30. We are told that the horse banner is "inscribed with the name and crest (*mon*) of Aoiaso Shrine" (112). The crest is probably that of the shrine, but the name is not: it is the name of the banner's donor, a certain Nakamura Moriyoishi. In her description of the acrobatic performances of firemen during New Year the author refers to these performances as *dezomichi* (173 and 175). There is no such term. The performance she reports about is called *dezome shiki*, "ceremony of the first outing." In the interview with Mr. Hatanaka one gets the impression that he said that the number four is never used on *matsuri* garments because "four is *shin* in Japanese, which also means death" (147). It is true that the number four is not used, but its (Chinese) reading is not *shin* but *shi*, the latter being the same sound as that for the term meaning "death."

The points I have mentioned certainly do not detract from the fascination this volume will have for the viewers, but they are disturbing for the specialist. Yet, in spite of some problems, Gonick has to be commended for showing the beauty of the trappings of *matsuri* that many take for granted.

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HONDA KATSUICHI. *Harukor: An Ainu Woman's Tale. Voices from Asia.*
Translated by Kyoko Selden. Foreword by David L. Howell. Berkeley: