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Johannes H. Wilhelm

Traditional Ecological Knowledge in the Beliefs of Japanese Fishing Villages: With Special Reference to Yoriiso (Miyagi) and the Sanriku Region

The fishermen looked at the same spot when they went fishing, looked at the same spot when they couldn’t go fishing, looked at the same spot when they abandoned the spot. They spent their lives looking at the same spot all the time. When a squid would not come, because it’s known for its excellence, looked at the same spot as the movements of the sea unfurled like a marble chart in his mind. Considering a fisherman gazing at the same spot, at the same time, being about another fisherman to reach a fishing spot before or after him ... and this way, days go by and then years, a fisherman’s life ended up in the bush with the same spot since his fatherly ancestor’s times. (Unami 1990: 69-70, transl. by author)

These poetic words by a scholar of Japanese folk-culture indicate that the same spot seems to mean more than just “mountain,” the colloquial meaning of this word in Japanese. Yama is an empirically observable feature of topography as much as specific knowledge about the environment. If using a metaphor, yama is rather a mirror in a fisherman’s mind that, more or less, tells him things about his surroundings. In case of yama, “the physical environment is infused with meaning, it is transformed into a landscape where the selected elements work metonymically for the whole.” (Kalland 2002: 149) In this sense, we can speak of yama as a fundamental element that constitutes a fisherman’s worldview. We can observe yama in many aspects of beliefs and customs in Japanese fishing villages, so we may assume that yama as a concept is rooted in local beliefs free of which this worldview is derived. Such a conception of environment in relation to belief is one basic element that has been addressed in a scientific field that is referred to as traditional ecological knowledge (TEK). TEK can be defined as

... a cumulative body of knowledge, practice and belief, evolving by adaptive processes and handed down through generations by cultural transmission, about the relationships of living beings (including humans) with one another and with their environments. (Nakeke 1999: 8)

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1. The small ROB (or “boat head”) is the chief of a fishing vessel and a very experienced fisherman with a high reputation in a fishing village but not a captain in the sense of western nautical hierarchy.

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Kalian already touched on the concept of *yama* (1995a: 247-248), but *yama in conception* to fishing is examined in this paper, and a detailed analysis of *yama* as concept in Japanese fishing culture is missing in Western languages. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to fill this blank field by examining aspects of beliefs in Japanese fishing villages focusing on how interdependencies and relationships between several levels of analysis is TEK.

As it is difficult to single out *yama* without referring to other concepts of fishing people, especially those that are rooted in local beliefs and customs, the paper follows a path from the general to the specific aspects related to *yama* in three steps. First, background information about theoretical concepts, basic terms and their interrelationships in the discourse on environmental knowledge are outlined. In addition, basic features and problems of Japanese coastal fisheries are put into the preceding theoretical context in order to understand the paper's objective. After this introductory part, the paper proceeds with beliefs of fishing people, beginning with the most popular concept *shikotan*. Here, basic features of Japanese fishing people's beliefs, whose way of life is characterized by a rough nature with its uncertainties, are demonstrated. Then, we will focus on beliefs and ceremonies in Yoritan *yama*, a typical fishing village in Miyagi Prefecture *yama*. In this section, social organization of a fishing village and some ceremonies and festivals (monchigai *yama* I*shita*) around New Year are picked up, to show several aspects and layers that are related to the concept of *yama* in (mountainous) beliefs. To avoid confusion, the paper concentrates on this single case study as much as possible; yet, at some points it was unavoidable to refer to other examples, such as those from surrounding areas of the Sashiki coast (1996). The third part is a description of the land-sea dichotomy in Japanese fishing culture to reveal basic characteristics of the *yama* concept. We will see that *yama* is not only essential for the cognition in coastal waters, but also serves as metaphor of boundaries, both, in real world (fishing rights or village boundaries) as much as boundary to the religious world (world of kami). The paper is concluded by a recapitulation of the major outcomes of this inquiry.

2. Data for this paper were collected through library research and direct observation (fieldwork and short-term visits) by the author (Nov. 2002-Feb, 2003 and Sept.-Oct. 2003). During fieldwork, qualitative interviews included in this collection is limited. It is noteworthy, due to the large pool of studies about folk-cultural traditions in the Sashiki region, and these preceding studies were very helpful for the author's own research. Yes, he is aware of the fact that many aspects of 'Japanese fishing religion' could not be handled without being superficial at certain points. Therefore, he is responsible for any reader's inconvenience caused by incompleteness and would like to be excused for this. The author would also like to express his gratitude to the following people: Atsuko Kalian (Oslo), whose critical advice was an inspiring source for the completion of this paper. Donald Wood (WISE), who kindly made the proofreading, which must have been a tough job due to the insufficient English vocabulary of the author. The always kind Yoshida Shizuru (Sakaiminato) introduced the author to study Yoritan. He introduced the author to Hida-Shikoku F.E.T.E.P who unfortunately fell in December. Ishida was author of most parts of the excellent OHI (1997, 2002 and 2003), and his detailed knowledge of local people and customs was invaluable during fieldwork. Last, but not least, the author is in great debt to the people of Yoritan.

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Though the beliefs outlined do not completely determine an individual's action and thus, do not have direct conservation effects on marine resources, they are capable of providing a normative matrix for orientation and action. In this sense, the given examples show how worldviews affect the way villagers operate in their surrounding environment. Much of contemporary resource management practices in Japanese coastal fisheries are rooted in a customary and sophisticated conceptualization of nature derived from beliefs. Therefore, the need to study resource management using methods of social sciences gives the study of local beliefs, i.e. religion, a prominent task.

Theory and Approach

In the last decades, ecological problems have gained attention worldwide. As a particular response, the scientific community has mirrored this trend in a discourse that addresses questions concerning the relationship of natural resources management and religion that is closely linked with problems about human and environment relationships. One outcome was the emergence of numerous papers dealing with indigenous or traditional management systems in contrast to, often widely enforced "scientific" natural resource management neglecting local traditions that were a priori seen as inappropriate. This new approach reflects the "growing awareness that there is a legitimate field of environmental expertise known as traditional ecological knowledge." (Freeman 1992) Berkes (1999: 13-14) considers TEK as "a knowledge-practice-belief complex that can be analyzed on four interdependent levels, yet, Kalian (2000) proposed a similar one that is made of three levels (Fig. 1). These "levels" are not seen as hierarchical, but rather as independent, i.e. they partly influence each other and none of them is in any way to be seen "superior" to the other.

Empirical Knowledge
Local Knowledge of Nature
Institutional Knowledge
Institutional Level 1
Traditional and Empor Straits Institution
Management Systems
Paradigmatic Knowledge
Institutional Level 2
Ethical and Local Knowledge
Wider

Figure 1: Scheme of analytical levels in TEK (Modification of Berkes 1999:13)

The first level is empirical knowledge that is "local knowledge of nature" (Berkes) acquired by empirical observations. It can be characterized as "practical knowledge," a pool of information that has been gathered and seen to be useful (and sometimes even essential) for handling situations in real life. For instance, one knows it be better to wear a raincoat or use an umbrella when going out on a rainy day. The
second level in which Kalland calls institutional knowledge meaning "knowledge embedded in their social institutions." (Kalland 2001: 325). Institutions are "the humanly devised constraints that structure human interaction" (North 1996: 360), and in turn, these constraints can be formal (laws, rules, etc.), informal (self-imposed codes of conduct, "common sense," etc.) and they can be the ways or the bodies that enforce them (courts, customary village groups, etc.). Coastal fishing rights in Japan as much as in the local Fishing Cooperative Associations (FCA), that assign sea territories (by using names and other inscriptions) as much as enforce local decisions are one good example. Village groups that manage local common lands or common property (the titheholds in Germany or the A, B in Japan) represent more informal ones. Bereks differentiate between two levels, territorial and resource management groups (level 2) and rural institutions (level 3), still, for the purpose of the paper they remain associated as institutional knowledge. The third level is denoted paradigmatic knowledge, which is "the ways they [i.e. people] interpret practical knowledge and construct coherent cosmologies" (Kalland 2000: 326) and can be characterized as knowledge put in a larger context. It is what Bereks would view by meaning a "larger conceptual cube, in which ethics are embedded." (Bereks 2001: 108) Kalland identifies "two different paradigmatics or ways of understanding and interpreting the environment." (Kalland 2000: 326) One is science, the evolution of empirical knowledge, in which data are collected by observations and put into a systematic order to make hypotheses that are either confirmed by experiments or are made based upon preceding hypotheses and theories. The other type of paradigmatic knowledge is local knowledge, which is "value-based... and contextual, or holistic." (Kalland 2000: 326-327). A geologist might see a mountain as a layered formation of minerals whereas a native (or indigenous resident) might regard it as a special place considered sacred, dangerous or very other way infused with meaning that is derived from a local cosmology (or belief). We see that jama, which will be our main objective, can be attached to all levels, still, we are able to identify interrelations between these levels, which makes jama an interesting case that is suitable for such an inquiry.

Nevertheless, some constraints are needed in connection to TEK, which itself emerged from a discourse about appropriate forms of natural resource use known as the tragedy of the Commons. (Hardin 1968) There exists a popular notion that religion and beliefs have a positive impact on environmental conservation. However, religious traditions show poor correlation in terms of sustainability or conservation of natural resources, especially concerning biodiversity. In fact, even if they had any kind of direct influence to sustainability or conservation, it would be marginal. Nonetheless, the normative function inheres in religious (or beliefs), can produce potent cultural symbols by supplying values that influence the individuals' decision in a given group (ethics). Berkes (2001: 118) remarks: "Religious traditions are important for the cultural transmission of traditional practices and for the development of worldviews and cultural values appropriate for them." Hence, religious traditions can surely have an indirect outcome, a qualitative impact on natural resource management. It is important to note, that human behavior is not determined by religious beliefs alone, but as well by many other things in real life. In a similar way, Kalland (2002: 147) argues. "We should not a priori assume that people's perceptions and norms toward nature are mirrored in their actual behaviour." There exists a strong notion in contemporary environmentalist argumentation that, for instance, "assumes a general harmony between human beings and nature in Asian worldviews, such as in philosophy and religious traditions, i.e. "people in the industrialized world are increasingly looking elsewhere for explanations and solutions to environmental problems. " (Kalland 2000: 315) In fact, there is no proof that the "nature loving" Japanese are better in preserving the natural environment (Kalland 1995: 3). A simplistic comparison or assessment of worldviews that are labeled Western, Eastern, and Native Americans is beyond serious debate and can be dangerous, too. That is why Bereks (2001: 116) insists on a qualified discussion of TEK and indigenous conservation.

However, it has been proposed that TEK, if carefully studied, can surely be an alternative complement to a rather "redescriptive" scientific approach in natural resources management, Bereks contends that an implementation of TEK into scientific methodology of resource management could lead to a "stewardship of nature, rather than its domination and control." (Bereks 1999: 64) Thus, he concludes:

Perhaps the most fundamental lesson of traditional ecological knowledge is that worldviews and beliefs do matter. Almost universally, the concepts and an ethic of sustainable, respectful human-nature relations, a sacred ecology, is part of the belief component of traditional ecological knowledge. (Bereks 1999: 64)

At this point, it seems useful to turn our focus to some considerations about contemporary Japanese Fisheries. There exists a variety of publications that touch on, though not always intentionally, several aspects of TEK in Japanese Fisheries. But, one can observe that nearly all add-ons institutional knowledge (fisheries administration, fisheries rights and licenses etc.). Some of them also deal with aspects that are predominant Japanese efforts to regulate resources can be characterized as "private," meaning resource management was practiced as outcome of a mixture of knowledge available to the household or management group. (McCaig and Jurjent 1996) for overview of problems related to the use/management of common property resources. (McCoy et al. 1990) or McCay and Jurjent (1996) for overview of problems related to the use/management of common property resources.
of empirical knowledge (e.g. Uraguchi 1974), however, we can say that paradigmatic knowledge in studies about Japanese fisheries has been addressed in a rather rudimentary way. This is due to the way language barriers have been addressed (Kalland 1990: 189).

The basic feature of modern Japanese fisheries is that legislation and administration are based on a blend of customary and formal law. Japan’s postwar fisheries law delegates many parts of local marine resource management to local fisheries cooperative associations (FCAs) and thus to its members, the fishermen. The Japanese-style delegation of decision-making is seen as a representational model of successful co-management. "Probably... the world's most sophisticated system of inshore fishery management..." (Cordell 1993: 33). Rich and detailed historical records make Japan a fortunate case for specialist to explore the emergence and change of maritime institutions, which can contribute both theoretically and methodologically to social anthropology in general and to applied anthropology in particular (Kalland 1990: 190).

Japan’s fisheries production is among the highest worldwide, but catches decreased since its peak phase around 1985. There are several reasons for this, such as the implementation of the United Nations Law of the Sea, but also diminished marine resources and socioeconomic changes. Yet, in this process, the coastal fisheries sector (including aquaculture) grew in terms of relative importance. Recently, however, Japan’s coastal fisheries are facing serious socioeconomic problems. Japan’s fisheries underwent a substantial transformation due to the country’s rapid economic shift to a high-tech country in the last few decades. This did not spare the coastal society where aging is one important issue. Local institutions, such as FCAs, were originally founded on traditional village-based groups, however, new generations also money sources to outflow causing financial difficulties. Today’s FCAs are part of community decision-making and the rational fisheries administration, yet, will probably further enhance the corrosion of traditional management practices that comes along with growing social anxiety of the rural society. An intact system of social institutions at the local level is a premise for Japan’s unique blend of traditional and modern management practices. Despite the fact that measures to stop the current socioeconomic development due to the urban rush are urgently needed, no substantial improvements can be observed by authorities. Their response to the problem of corroding local societies is only marginally implemented into policy guidelines resulting in half-hearted and rather ineffective revitalization measures. Kalland notes that "small-scale fisheries are often left out as losers... Their plea are seldom heard, not necessarily because of ill intent from the authorities, but because of ignorance" (Kalland 1990: 189) and therefore.

Rural people are to an increasing extent losing influence on the natural resources on which their way of life depends... What is needed when it comes to management of natural resources is therefore management bodies through which local interests, customary law... and knowledge of the environment can be accredited (Bruns and Kalland 1995: 10).

As a response to such emerging questions we now shift to this paper’s main objective, i.e. an inquiry into aspects of the beliefs in Japanese fishing villages to show interdependencies and relationships between several levels of analysis in TEEK. We will see, that these in metaphor for a boundary, a "zone of transition" (Kalland 1995a: 248), enabling fishing people to comprehend their surrounding world by splitting different spheres or domains.

Aspects of Fishing in Japan

Geographically, religion plays a vital role in everyday life of Japanese fishing villages. First of all, manifold kami are venerated in local shrines by (informal) processes of proper places. Temples (mura) are also important places of worship, especially for the dead. However, village groups that are mostly structured by gender and age affiliation to a certain generation are held to be part of religions as much as every day life of village society. On days of festivals, it is common to stop all fishing activities and often, such festivities mark days of ceremonial "opening" or "closing" of access to a specific sea territory or a particular species. Another characteristic of beliefs in fishing villages is the existence of manifest totems. Most of them stand in relation to ritual impurity that is associated with menstruation, death, or childbirth. 11

6 A nice study including aspects of folk-religion related to fishing activities is Akamori (1983) and also interested in belief and its effects to fishing efforts in "Toko-gawa Japan."

7 The Japanese term for co-management is ogen kei sekei gata, which means the form of a grid, which can be translated to resource management oriented fisheries. This is bit confusing, as a closer look at the definition reveals that ogen kei sekei gata rather refers to co-management than resource management. "Fisheries co-management is defined as sharing of responsibility and authority between the government and the community of local fisheries to manage a fishery." (Penney and Barnes 1997: 460)

8 For instance, in 1999, both for the latest Fisheries Census in Japan were collected, 41.7% of the total coastal fishing population was older than 65 years and those over 75 years increased more than 6.6% since the last census in 1994. In the same period, mortality fishery households increased by 12.1%, which means that the coastal population is moving toward depopulation. All data are taken from the preliminary report of the 10th Fisheries Census published by the MAFF on August 30, 2004. (http://www.maff.go.jp/ www/na/koyou6.htm, as of Feb. 10, 2005)

9 Efforts of such policy measures can be found in a publication by the statistical division in the bureau of the minister of agriculture, forestry and fisheries (Nihonryogakudo daijinsiki-bo 1983). A closer look reveals that most of them can either be characterized "green tourism," named "green tourism" (p. 153) and the like, to enhance ethnic harmony or represent budochan New, new buildings of questionable need that mostly benefit local construction companies.

10 The author refers to an exact definition of the term religion in this paper. The term is used to mean a set of belief and (ceremonial) practices of human groups that address a supernatural or divine being or power.

11 Taboos are only cursorily covered in this paper. For details see e.g. Osa (1969).
When freely associating the deities of Japanese fishing people are commonly those of Ebisu, Kani-gorō, Tai-gorō, Ryo-jin, and many more. However, their characters vary by region. Here, we will pick up probably the most prominent one of them, Ebisu, to explore deeper layers in the meaning and aids of Japanese fishing religion that lay beyond the popular image of this deity.

Ebisu is enshrined all over Japan as the deity of merchants and fishermen but also simply as a deity that brings fortune for anyone. Most manifestations or illustrations show the deity in the style of Ebisu Saburō (Ebisu Shiba-ten) (Illustration 1-a), i.e. as a voluminous laughing man with a fishing rod in one hand and a red fish in the other. Ebisu is often enshrined in pair with the Ebisu Hachiman (both are associated to the so-called Shichifukujin (七福神, seven spirits of fortune)). However, the Ebisu in most fishing villages differs significantly from this rather folklore iconography.

**Illustration 1: Types of Ebisu**

(a) A common Ebisu in the form of Ebisu Saburō (Ebisu Shiba-ten) on a label of a known Japanese beer. (b) An Ebisu-more in Mito. (c) An Ebisu more ("Ebisu-boat") made of three parts tied together. Each part's length is about 20 cm. The shrine is placed in the middle float that has the form of an ebisu (a wise being that of noblemen in ancient Japan). Sources: a) label of Taiheki beer, b) Kawanishi (2003: 13) and c) Makita (1984: 15).

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12. Japanese transcriptions of deities can vary. To avoid confusion the author only mentions the common ones.

13. The name Ebisu is seen to be rooted in the Shinto and makes Shinto (also sho or Shō, both ancient words for foreigner, stranger, sense of the northeast region today Tōhoku 東北). However, the etymology of the name Ebisu has not been made clear (Numa 1974: 14). Saburō is a common Japanese male name.

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Ebisu is usually enshrined in the kamidane (Shinto house-altar) of virtually every household in a fishing community. Here, the deity is depicted as an illustration of the popular Saburō type or by small rocks or stones (Illustration 1-b), and "invisible" or "discernable" Ebisu are possible, too. The stone, for instance, is seen as shintō (神道, "deity's body"); objects, symbols or medium in which the spirit of a kami is believed to reside) of Ebisu. Aside from such "private" veneration in households, Ebisu is also worshipped by a community. Such Ebisu was for instance a small rock that had been taken from the seabed, caught by incident in a net or a bottle that had been washed ashore. This can be continued with a third type, the Ebisu are. An are (切り身 or are (Illustration 1-c) is a wooden float that is tied to a fishing net, so that in this case it is more likely to be a divine attribute (spur of the sea; Sakurada 1980: 151). Replacement of such an Ebisu-boat or objects-Ebisu is possible when catches decline or when it has been stolen. Whales and sharks are also in many places regarded as Ebisu, because they often hunt schools of fish or are surrounded by them (Yamagata and Kurata 1938: 165). An interesting aspect of belief in Japanese fishing villages is that drifting corpses found at sea were regarded as deities—quite often manifestations of Ebisu—that brought luck to the fisherfolk if they were treated properly (Kalland 1955: 45). Thus, they were carefully venerated as Ebisu and buried in the village's graveyard. Drifting corpses attract fish (especially carnivorous species), but it is also known that artificial reefs (i.e. relatively huge rocks, concrete blocks or even scrap wooden ships, etc.) do as well. The outstanding expert on Japanese fishery-folklore (Numa 1974: 3) Sakurada Katsumaro (佐倉寛治) tells a related anecdote.

One day, a friend of mine visited a fishing village, where he picked up for a ride on a boat for markant soup-setting. By coincidence, the crew made a very nice catch that day. Furthermore, the catch lasted for the next two or three times the boat was soup-setting. The people in the village heard of this and considered my friend Ebisu. "Please take a ride on my boat," he was asked again and again by many and so spent a quite busy time over there. (1980:151-155, transl. by author)

We see that Ebisu is a deity with a complex character. First, Ebisu can be seen as a "visiting deity" (inoshitama 訪ね玉, "a stranger as god"); Yoshida 1981). The second characteristic is that of a "reverential designation of that power who grants the fisherfolk successful catches" (Numa 1974: 4). Here we can speak of Ebisu as a yamabiko (山行子, "attracting deity") inhabiting the function of a yamabiko (山行) (a kind of "Himmelpfeiler," where deities can descend to the real world) that attracts marine resources bringing wealth. This latter feature can also be read into the manifestation as a merchant's deity of commerce. We could, of course, simply see this as a kind of sympathetic magic, a method to call for good catches. This can also be so succinctly suggested that legends about the origin of fishing villages are often related to objects that were washed ashore. (1980:151-155, transl. by author)

14. It is noteworthy that legends about the origin of fishing villages are often related to objects that were washed ashore.

be observed in other parts the world because fishermen are dependent on migrating fish that behave only conditionally predictable. Yet, it is really that simple. There are also other interpretations of fishermen's rituals and taboos (Kulland 1999:41-42). Naumann compares the Eheio worship with hunting ceremonies, an interpretation that is worth referring to at this point, because we will deal with related aspects later in this paper.

By stating one basic component of the Eheio belief, Naumann enters her investigation through consulting ceremonies that can be characterized as "sending back" of (animal) spirits. One example is the erection of memorial stones for killed animals such as those for bears inscribed yama no kumiai (Yama no kumiai). Here, the yama no kumiai is conceptualized as guardian deity, i.e. as "owner and master of the hunting animals ... who grants us safety to the hunter ... [and] appears in the shape of an animal" (Naumann 1974: 7). Hunters, as much as fishermen, make offerings, in which the heart (or other entrails) that is thought to be the "seat of life" is offered to the "owner and master of the killed animal. One example is the ceremony of "first capture" (tsukuru no hana), which is called Senmon (1985), in which the first fish that is caught in the fishing season or within the space of New Year's ceremonies is "first offered to Eheio and then communicated [sic] by it to the [patron] god[s] of persons." (Naumann 1974: 6) This, in turn, is a common motive for the hunting and fishing customs of North East Asia and North America and "directly by the belief that the properly treated animal in its successor existence will place itself at the hunter's disposal" (Naumann 1974: 6). There are, for instance, the several ceremonies of Ainu, such as the amakusa, in which a bear (wooded-up as deity) is "sent home" in hope of his return. Another example is the use of "head knocking sticks" (kake-ki-si-ri), i.e. "wood to knock his head by Ainu to call the killed salmon. Salmon are believed to prefer being killed by the ceremonial kake-ki-si rather than by a stone or usual stick. In this way, they would return laws to be caught and killed again." (Naumann 1974: 11). By interpreting this conception of a "spirit of a species" to several aspects of Eheio as "stranger deity" Naumann comes to begin concluding her investigation: 16

... stories ... tell of the visit of an unknown man who, moreover, is his host to drop fishing by poisoning the pond or stream as the host was preparing the following

16. A similar memorial for fish is also mentioned by Naumann, in which "a host had to be given a stone or a post had to be erected if within one year a certain number (1000 or 10000) of salmon, bonito [sic] - or 90 like had been caught" (1974: 54). In terms of more formal resources such as this is an important point: the erected posts can be regarded as symbols to co-nominate relations in the same species. Resource stock.

17. Naumann interprets the offering of "first fish" to the deities as offering to the "cultural guardian-spirits ... of such species" (1974: 12) rather than to the soul of an individual animal and refers to the Archeology of Pahala (1961). "First fish" ceremonies are quite common among Malayan tribes of the North Pacific region (1974: 30). In case of the mammalian subsides, i.e. a fish that will return to its "home" river after laying off for the sea, the concept of "sending home" is interesting regarding the relationships between paradigmatic and empirical knowledge.

Although the mentioned types of Eheio worship do not directly affect people's ecological behavior by means of resource management, we can say, that Eheio as a archetypal metaphor expresses a specific attitude of fishing people toward nature as a religious cosmopolis. Using the terminology of resource management one could say that withdrawing fish from a resource pool is metaphorically compensated and commemorated) by the ceremony of "sending home" the spirit of a species, which, through this, is believed to come back for the benefit of the resource user (fisherman).

Yet, one aspect, the Eheio of drifting corpse, remains unanswered in Naumann's nonetheless enlightening paper. It is possible that Eheio thought influenced the vegetation of corpses as much as funerals for whales (Naumann 1974: 45. After investigating possible links to beliefs about ghosts and phantoms among fishing people, Sakurada concludes that these beliefs are also very old, however, he leaves this question deliberately unanswered for further research (1980: 166-169). We may conclude an answer to this question later in this paper after investigating particular characteristics of the yama no kumiai concept in beliefs.

Beliefs in a Fishing Village

An essential factor in the beliefs of Japanese coastal fishing culture is the concept of yama no kumiai. For instance, in many fishing villages a yama no kumiai is worshipped near an adjacent forest or inside a shrine, and others are located on boundaries of a settlement. Generally, the yama no kumiai in fishing communities is believed to be a female deity affecting numerous aspects of everyday life. For example, in many
provide a stable income, but give the communities and their inhabitants opportunities to invest in more efficient enterprises, such as capital intensive agriculture in the fisheries sector. The development of the plant has also meant that traditional customs (including traditional social institutions) could "survive" in contrast to many other Japanese regions without such third-party compensations. The latter enables us to study local and in part more traditional fishing culture and society even today.

In the following, some related aspects of beliefs and customs in a typical fishing village (Yorino, Miyagi Prefecture and surrounding areas) are described. We will see that yamae cannot be reduced to a toponymic fixture, but as concept rather symbolizes a "turning point" of another feature of yamae as "excessive female" that is woven into a complex system of beliefs and ceremonies.

Yorino (Map 1) is located on a cliffy headland at the eastern, pacific side of the Oshika peninsula 貴志半岛 (on the southern vertex of the Pacific Sankoku coastline 三陸海岸). The Kinkasan 新富山 island (490 m above sea level) dominates the Pacific side of the village. The landscape is characterized by cliffs and a rocky coastline with many small island-like bays and thus, there are natural limitations of space for settlements. Today the administrative district of Yorino includes the hamlet of Masami 镜（above 100 inhabitants in 25 households) adjacent to the western side of Yorino. However, natives regard both villages as different units as such that there are different FCAs in each with their own fishing rights. The main settlement of Yorino is located at the southern slope of the Amamomoriyama 王森山 (Map 1, A), which is the highest elevation on the cape-like Yorino peninsula (153 m). Since 1988, the Osogawa nuclear power plant (Map 1, C) had operated just a few hundred meters east of Yorino. The installation of this power plant resulted in enormous compensations paid to the surrounding communities as much as to each household. The payments met only

18. There are in fact many facets of the yamae no kama. Shibasaki comprehends yamae no kama as a multi-layered deity that can be a "mountain spirit" or a deity of hunting, fishing, agriculture, forestry, pharmacy or even one with explicit territory and power role (Shibasaki 1979: 172). Although, not focusing on the yamae no kama in fishing villages, Naumann (1963:18) presented a detailed study on several traditions of this deity. For the purpose of this paper, however, the yamae no kama is simply seen as found during folklore studies in Yorino and other places by the author, i.e. as an important deity in village life that is in several ways related to the mone-iwa.

19. According to contemporary legislation, women older than 18 must not work in tunnel construction (Auf der Heiden 1976: 64, 2; http://www.irk.com/04/041021/041040.TJH as of Jan. 15, 2003). Administration insists that this law is to protect pregnant women from hard and dangerous work, but a thorough look at the history shows that menstruating women were banned from such work at least since the Edo period because they were "virtually unequal." This can be seen in connection to beliefs of the yamae as female deity.

20. Yamae no kama (literally "place of yamae") denotes "a turning point" in Japanese and not a "mountain place."
with a specific group called yamunashiki-bō 山村氏族. At the same time, women because members of the jizugō-bō 地主氏族, the group of the children's guardian deity. Together these groups are called jizugō-bō 地主氏族 (women's group) to which the women belonging until the age of about 42. The jizugō-bō 妇人氏族 (women's association) is a much newer social institution and is not directly related to the yamunashiki-bō 山村氏族. Today, most of these women in Yorito are associated with both the traditional jizugō-bō 地主氏族 and modern jizugō-bō, i.e. no clear distinction of membership is drawn between the groups. We often find such overlaps between traditional and modern social institutions in Japanese fishing villages. Regarding male addends, addends belonging to the youth group (shiren-dō 青年部) until the age of 15. Then, they become members of the men's association, jizugō-dō 地主部 (a group, however, in many communities only the head of a household is allowed to join), yet, membership in many cases is differentiated in senior (full) and associate members. At the same time there is the volunteer fire brigade (shiren-dō 青年部), which is constituted of elder members of the shiren-dō and young members of the men's association (TRS 1984: 19). The men of the men's association are divided into the four age categories (TRS 1985: 50).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>Modern</th>
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Table 1: Scheme of traditional and modern groups in Yorito (Based on OHI 1985:19 with added data collected by the author during fieldwork).

22. In most cases denotes a social institution found in most Japanese villages that can be characterized as "cult groups," yet, the term kō can also denote a day of veneration for a specific deity or ō-shinto group, such as the Ōkunoin found in many fishing villages. They originate in Ōkunoin ceremonies in ancient times. During the Edo-period (1603-1868), they became a widespread social institution in many villages and can be characterized as gender specific ō-shinto groups. These have also been characterized as age groups (e.g. Norbeck 1973). To avoid confusion, these are simply called groups in the following.

23. Although in Yorito the yamunashiki-bō 山村氏族 and the jizugō-bō are regarded more or less the same, days of worship are different. There are communities on Ōkusha peninsula that clearly make differences between the two, i.e. younger (married) women belong to the jizugō-bō and later join the yamunashiki-bō. Membership restrictions in village groups have become more permissive in the last decades. The main reason is the lack of potential members due to social change. If there is only a female major share left, admission to the village group is usually not refused, yet, patrilocality is more common. Even cases of women in fire brigades are reported.

25. This is rather obvious in FCA fisheries management, where in most cases only elders as senior members have a vote in important decisions.

26. In the following, this group is denoted koryōsha. An in-between stage to be mentioned is that the foundation of koryōsha in this region approximately correlates with one of the major features that let the Tohoku region during Edo period in the following years 1641-1643, 1641-1655, 1732, 1753-1772, 1782-1787 and 1833-1839. We will refer to this phenomenon later. For Yorito, it is unclear to what extent the koryōsha as organization for mutual aid influenced local decision-making. De facto all village activities relied on the generosity of the village's headmen and donations of prosperous merchants. It is known, that headmen paid for festivals and the koryōsha carried expenses for infrastructural measures (e.g. construction of streets) in feudal times (OHI 1988: 978).
Children. Women were traditionally doing agricultural work in fishing villages. This division of labor by gender can be still observed in most fishing villages all over Japan today. On days of village festivals it is usual to stop working (including fishing) as village collective.

In Japan, New Year (正月 "Jô-ji") is next to the ancestor's festival (大晦日 "Tai-shiki") in summer, the most important part of the annual ceremonial cycle, the seasonal. A cycle of New Year ceremonies usually continues until no-shiki 

小年忌 (lit. small New Year). On January 15, in Yorisato, on the first day of the year there is the obligatory great meal. 元宵祭 (commonly known as laso hoshi 老月祭) at the local Homman shrine 神明祭 (Map 1, K5), and the first sunrise (最初の日の出) is regarded to be seen on top of Kaminomoriyama. Also kaze 流風 (ceremonial food offerings) are prepared by female members of a household in advance for these days of ritual renewal at the turn of the year. This ceremonial food is placed by male members in front of a household's kamidana 招魂神社 and later removed from there (also done by male) to be eaten by the family. The go-ezu-mortuary worship for Yorisato, the "first day visit" to several households of the community, is also customarily done in Yorisato by the mayor 居正 of a household. Also, division of actors by gender can be observed, however, there are other ceremonies in which this is more evident.

The "first ride on a boat" (初乗り "Jûrî no ri") is celebrated on the second day of a year. One important part of this ceremony is the veneration of the fudanaya 酫殿 (or 海神). Illustration 2, the guardian deity of a vessel. Its abode is usually a small wooden box with female hair next to it carried on an old, worn or even puppets and other objects inside (TR 1994: 44, Yoshihara 1981: 93), and on modern vessels it is also possible that there are two of them aboard, for example, one at front deck and one in the cabin, each "presented" at ceremonies, and, at last, "invisible" fudanaya are also known. Yet, on old style sailing boats, the box is mostly located below the mast of a vessel, where the shipbuilder installs the shrine. In some cases every day or before the launching. This place aboard is often called 内々 舟 (lit. "where many trees are" a forest or mountain) or 船内 神社 (Yoshida 1994: 148). In many Japanese fishing villages, people consider the fudanaya as a spirit that is embodied in female human beings, and there are even cases, in which women are the manifestation of a fudanaya.

27. Statistics show that a typical fishermen household's income is only by half compared of fishing-related income. Other economic activities are agriculture, forestry, seasonal work at other places and work as the service sector (mourners etc.). Another important source observed is that the amount of women working as "fishermen" is increasing roughly in the last couple decades. According to the Fisheries Census in 2001 (conducted by Japanese government in intervals of five years), a bit more than a half of all women belonging to fishing households were economically working on shore. This shift in gender labor relationship is mainly caused by the absence of younger men willing to work as fishermen. On the one hand, one can say that the gender barriers in Japanese fisheries are gradually opening.

28. Some fishermen join the New Year procession to the Kinkan island on this day.

dele. For this reason, a female's hair — containing elements of the yuru (i.e., wood, tree and the soil) — is believed to protect a vessel from being shipwrecked. In other places of Japan, the fudanaya is also said to bring good wind direction or even attract fish (Sakihara 1954: 162), an interesting analogy to Ebisu.29

Illustration 2: fudanaya

The photograph (a) shows a fudanaya ceremony in Kudanashita 國分寺 (Nippon Press) in New Year. A typical fudanaya (b) is a wooden box with objects inside. As illustration in the navigation guide Ono Ninko お野内 in Hiroshima (Hiroshima: 78) shows the fudanaya as goddess (a). Compare (c) Kawanishi 2001: 115, (b) Sakihara 1970 (and 1979) and 3 http://www.lib.kobe-u.ac.jp/eb/encyclopedia/entries/organizations/00102/112530090505. (map of May 5, 2005).

29. Interestingly, fishermen, on the other hand, often avoid taking a single woman aboard a vessel (Morita 1958: 2-227). See also Sakihara (1954: 134) and Yoshihara (1991: 93-97). In the Shimane region, especially pregnant women play an important role in ceremonies concerning fishing vessels. Yoshihara translates fudanaya as "gyôkô thinking of the boat" (1991: 92).

30. The Ebisu is endowed in every kamishima of a net-shed (網掛け漁具) (e.g., TSS 1984: 40-41). A special ceremony for the Ebisu is held in Yorisato on the 20th of January and October. In these ceremonies Ebisu is worshipped by offering rare crops from the sea and the sea together with saké 萬 in front of the kamidana and the fudanaya.
38

SINO-JAPANESE RELATIONS 30 (1 & 2)

As for Yorico, descriptions of her use is rudimentary, we instead refer to the one in Kesennuma 茨城(about 25 km northeast of Kesennuma) as described in Kawashima (2003: 71-73). The "swimming" in Kesennuma begins with a ritual purification of the vessel. Among others, the fishing vessel is turned towards southern direction so that the ship-owners (or crabs) can look at the mountains from shoreboard, while praying words like "May the same as god be visible to you?" or "Please show the name 薫ノ海 to the sea of the town 30 of Kesennuma."

The name 31 of the vessel 船 is a key figure in the fishing tradition of Kesennuma. The name serves as a talisman for good luck, and is believed to protect the crew from harm during their journey. It is also believed that the name will bring good fortune to the fishers who are able to catch more fish with it.

31. The 船 is a mythical animal and commonly associated with gold. There are legends in this region that tell stories of a deity found at 芝山 on the head of a ship (Choojirā 1991: 126). In Yorico, this festival was originally celebrated on Jan. 16, but shifted to Jan. 5 in 1951. The 32 may be due to changing local conditions. Native people who are living in modern areas and regularly visit the sea for their livelihood during the fishing season (head 33) may no longer visit the sea to hunt for fish. In this case, the ship is not used for hunting but rather as a decorative object.

32. The ship is a key figure in the fishing tradition of Kesennuma. The name serves as a talisman for good luck, and is believed to protect the crew from harm during their journey. It is also believed that the name will bring good fortune to the fishers who are able to catch more fish with it.

33. According to historical records, there were 295 villages living in Yorico 1774 and 277 persons in 1838 (Ohjiri 1991: 91). The death-rate of the local people was high. "For instance, in 1835, 7 persons were killed by sickness and 3 persons were killed by accident." (Ohjiri 1991: 91) This mortality rate seems to be accurate when compared with other historical data on mortality rates in this region.

34. However, another source (Hagiwara 1969: 357) reports that it is in 1835 a man called Watanabe Hidetsune 35 advanced from the sea to the land and was killed by a wave. This event is known as the "Matsuura incident" and is commemorated by the annual festival held on January 16 in Kesennuma. Watanabe was a local government official who was killed when he tried to cross the river to rescue a woman who was drowning. The incident is believed to be a symbol of the power of nature and the importance of respecting it.

35. The Matsuura incident is a ceremonial "sensing home to sea" that can be found in many Japanese fishing villages. Interestingly, "sensing home to sea" ceremonies are usually carried out at village boundaries that can be understood as ritual "sensing away" of negative elements from a village. A ceremony, typically depicted in local art, takes place on May 20, the official festival of the Kesennuma shrine. In many places at the coast of Japan, "sensing home to sea" ceremonies include a ceremony. For more on the Matsuura incident see (Shiozaki 1991: 115-123).
on the last day of the month, the Daiso-ri is called the "Last Stomach," referring to the children's group (kodomo-gumi) who are given food. In fact, the organization of the Daiso-ri by the kodomo-gumi (1998: 975-980) can be seen as an instruction and preparation (socialization) of the next generation for activities in the jirige-ri as there are many similarities between them. For instance, donations given to the children in the Daiso-ri for performance are donated to the local school, i.e., as much as the jirige-ri is seen by the local school's principal for the performance – donated to the local school, i.e., as much as the jirige-ri is seen by the principal for the performance – donated to the local school, i.e., as much as the jirige-ri is seen by the principal for the performance – donated to the local school, i.e., as much as the jirige-ri is seen by the principal for the performance.

At the end of the activities, the younger generation, and the older children are trained by members of the senior generation under surveillance of parents (members of the jirige-ri). Yet, part of the tradition is to maintain autonomy of decision by the kodomo-gumi. This sense to be slightly different from the older generation helps the younger generation to be more independent. An example of this is seen in the ceremony where the younger generation is responsible for making offerings to the spirits of the ancestors. This sense of independence helps the younger generation to be more autonomous and is an important part of the tradition.

The festival is a ceremony on January 6th that ritually opens the season for woodcutting. Male villagers cut down trees and chop them into sticks and stumps. These are bundled and offered with kitte-toki to the jirige-ri. Until 1951, this was the first time in a year to enter the jirige-ri, because the Daiso-ri was initiated from January 6th to January 5th in 1952.

A similar ceremony to the one held in the previous year is carried out on January 12th by women of the kodomo-gumi. This ceremony is held on January 12th by women of the kodomo-gumi. The ceremony is called the "kodomo-gumi" ceremony and is carried out by the full-fledged members of the kodomo-gumi who are responsible for the daily activities of the group. The ceremony is carried out by the full-fledged members of the kodomo-gumi who are responsible for the daily activities of the group. The ceremony is called the "kodomo-gumi" ceremony and is carried out by the full-fledged members of the kodomo-gumi who are responsible for the daily activities of the group. The ceremony is called the "kodomo-gumi" ceremony and is carried out by the full-fledged members of the kodomo-gumi who are responsible for the daily activities of the group. The ceremony is called the "kodomo-gumi" ceremony and is carried out by the full-fledged members of the kodomo-gumi who are responsible for the daily activities of the group. The ceremony is called the "kodomo-gumi" ceremony and is carried out by the full-fledged members of the kodomo-gumi who are responsible for the daily activities of the group.
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but also places are infused with special meanings. The “sending away” or “sending home” element in many other Japanese folk ceremonies, yet, we can observe similar motifs to the “sending back” of animal spirits that were entertained in connection to Ema belief.

Mindtrapping the Sea

At this point, it might be useful to turn our focus to generally consider the relation of fishermen to the sea, which is remarkably special. Mountains and other striking elevations, for instance, valuable landmarks for orientation and positioning at sea and for searching for suitable fishing spots or identifying and memorizing them. The myth of the conquering hunters from Hoze and Gendai 大航海 in the 140th century (compiled 711 A.D.) is a good example for describing this unique relationship.

As pointed out, the Ema is not simply a topographic aid to locate fishing grounds or one’s position but more a consecrated element of a fisher’s world view. This can be observed in a variety of words and phrases in the “fishermen language” in which yamai serves as a term in relation to space, skill, luck, or safety among others.

For instance, the highly skilled fishermen have an instinct for good fishing spots are said to be yamai ga hitsuyou (lit. “him yamai is good”), yama ga kari yoi (lit. “his yamai is hard”), yama ga sake (lit. “his yamai is detail”). In analogy a less talented fisherman is said to be yamai ga nashi yoi (lit. “his yamai is bad”), yama ga sake (lit. “he has no yamai”) or yama ga sake (lit. “his yamai is rough”). The observation for fishing spots is called yamai e tetsu (lit. “put up” or “arrange a yamai” referring to a certain position at sea or to the topography of a seashore.

44 This myth is known as Unwai to Yama hikari no koto との照明の神話. The element of competition as part of the yama to kari’s characteristics can be found in the Suido folktales of yama shi no kari (Kawasaima 1980 and Shibasaku 1939:117-119). In this tale, the one to kari is the god of the sea and the yama to kari compete by talking big about their properties. The yama to kari, as owner of vaulty “80,000 (514) = yamai no kari), the Unwai River, turns out to be the latter; whereas the one to kari owen where a is 0.000,000. In folk belief, it is good to tell the jealous yama to kari one would receive an offer below a demigod’s status. Once in Japanese culture denotes a fisher, the so-called the yamai, in Japanese literature, is the same category of sea animals, even though it is often used in a more general sense (Feder 1964:119-118). This also only suggests the idea of a spirit behind the sea, which would have interesting implications for the role of the sense of the difference animal spirits from the level of consciousness and empirical knowledge. An inquiry to this (usually very deep) topic must be dealt with in a separate part.

45. A clear definition of such art is difficult due to lack of systematic studies and different use in existing literature. Yamasaki and Kurihara (1985:11) explain as follows. The sea is in the target of which we are defined and put into a relationship (e.g. this position is where the sea is the main target from Y to Z). The yamai is the most common type of art, yet, there are many other classes and slightly differing methods that are accompanied.

* During yamai (fish) one defined a yamai as a basic point of definition. This was denoted yamai (fish, basic yamai), and by overlapping landmarks at the coast one could estimate a direction. By using distant mountains that were described as “sea” (lit. “suihai”) in points of definition one could estimate a distance. (Koyama 1971:116; trans. by author.)
accuracy can be even to positioning with radar or other devices when practiced by an experienced fisherman. Also, etc can be useful as a strategy to "hiding" and avoiding detection from other fishermen. The combination of the latter method with measuring depth "the undulation on the sea bed looks like a nautical chart. (Uozumi 1960: 67, transl. by author) With fishers lines "sinking" is common because it makes the seabed more "palatable," 2 spots can be assigned to specific depths. Though this method, a fisherman, by step by step, acquires knowledge about the topography of a seabed in a specific area, which is especially known to be a larger and therefore becomes to a more paradigmatic knowledge, however, this is nowhere worldwide so far. We can agree with Kawashima (1986: 78-79) that etc does not directly trouble a measure as objective of work. Though, there are exceptions. At least, the ethnology of etc originating from fishing (fishing line) seems plausible considering the described method to measure depth.

The etc during the traditional bonito fishery in Toki, which had been practiced throughout the Toki area until the late 19th, is well documented and can serve as an example of etc and veering of a yeast. This kind of fishery was carried out on the Sanriku-ōki area fishing ground, which is a large area east of the Oshika Peninsula. In this area, the Sanriku-ōki area is navigable by ships as long as the wind speed does not exceed 9 knots. Therefore, the existence of a shiroyama on the island dedicated to the Ōzakura Shrine (deity of the west wind) is not surprising. The sacred places on the island have had a function similar to village shrines in many settlements of the vicinity. For instance, an obligatory ritual of a crew heading to fish for bono (sea) was the "sai" (風日) "foraging for the sky" that included a procession to the Oshakura Shrine (also see Shiroyama on the Kintō Island).

The Sanriku-ōki fishing ground is one of the richest fishing grounds worldwide due to the collision of the warm Kuroshio Current sea current from south and the cold Oyashio Current sea current from northern waters. Before the invention of radar and other technologies that enabled easy positioning, fishers operating in Sanriku-ōki relied on yeast art, in which the Kinkasho, marking the northeastern end of the Sendai Bay, was surely the most important landmark. The distance to the coast could be estimated by observing the level of the Kinkasho "sinking" into the sea. These were several names to express the position from the coast:

When the coast of Kinkasho can be seen, then the position was called ni aki ni naka "sea under the two mountains." The farther the distance from Kinkasho, the positions were named accordingly ni ya ketsu ni no "sea under the two mountains" and ni to no "sea under the two mountains." (In the field, "ni ya ketsu ni no" was called on the two mountains.) Kinkasho was no longer visible, therefore, this was also called dairi "sea" (川) (drowning offshore) a rough sea (Sakurai 1980: 205). The observation at ya yoko was completely depending on the sea's experience and 46. The exact examination of ya yoko is unclear. The ya yoko is the name of a height (firemark) located on the southern side of Kinkasho and visible from sea.

46. The exact examination of ya yoko is unclear. The ya yoko is the name of a height (firemark) located on the southern side of Kinkasho and visible from sea.

We shall treat geographical knowledge in Japanese fishing villages.
sembles rituals among ancestors (Nauama 1974: 7).\footnote{47}

The deep religiosity aboard a ketsura was also expressed in several other ceremonies and rituals. For instance, there is a ketsura that had been cooked by the kobeki,\footnote{47} rice was first served to the funadama on the lid of the rice pot.

There is another similar ritual called awabi おたま (lit. "tortoise fish"), which is not documented for Yoritani, but many other fishing communities in the Shikoku coast (e.g. Kawashima 2001: 172-173). The awabi was done when the crew had to stay offshore overnight, called oki dome 當社 on tama 大社 おたま in (lit. "overnight stay at off-shore" and "overnight stay on a boat," resp.). When rice was cooked by the kobeki, he first ritually washed himself with seawater and then put some of the rice on the lid of the rice pot using a wo- 徳 rice spoon. The rice on the lid was then applied to a roughly prepared stick with seaweed. This stick was then lit with fire and served as ceremonial torch. While holding up the torch, the kobeki climbed on a box near the mast of the vessel and began a recitation;

Oohhitu ô-ôtsu no treasures of Takahatu in the land of his. I offer this to his Benefactor of Kirkawa, his Daimyo of the excellent age of all ages... [other deities related to wakamono follow]. Please let us meet with nice fish tomorrow, and give us a good wind. (Kawashima 2001:172; transl. by author)\footnote{48}

47. Nauama (1974: 7) seems to confuse ten 瓦 (tiled, however, if read rōo then meaning inner organs (entrails) in general) with ke 瓦 (beet). Both of her references do not mention liver. Seki (1949: 353) notes ten 茄 (today written as 宮) and Mahda (1934: 236-237) generally refers to yatable 瓦 (entrails), oki 當 (tortoise) and namagami 祷 (filed backbone).

48. The kobeki 祷 is colloquially does not a young man serving as cook and doing chores aboard a vessel. Yet, a ketsura is more that he. He serves for funadama of ceremonies and rituals during a voyage. Even if shipwrecked, a kobeki is believed to survive (Yasutani and Yoshida 1938: 20), and at the Sakamoto shrine a kobeki (here a boy aged 12 to 16) was regarded to be married with the funadama (Kawashima 2001: 170). It is interesting to note that he was sometimes seen as wife of the funadama, which might be less grounded on gender-specific religious concerns. As younger at the bottom of hierarchy aboard and doing jobs that is done by "fathers" at least, attributing femininity could be understood as caring, too.

49. Ofuda おふだ also means offering all fishing activities when atsukasa 祷止 (lit. "stopped off-shore").

50. We will not go too much into depth with each of these deities, however, their transcensions should be noted. The Go就近神 is an ancestor often revered in coastal areas as motifs in mountains. Takahatu-gongō 歌舞伎 refers to a shrine on top of the Takahatu mountain (Kawashima 2001: 45) on the Sakata island of the islands of Minakata 日本狭州 and Onisakata 日本狭州, which is an important place of funadama worship. The Ōyakō 大蛙 (lit. "grand-frog") is a "fishing deity." In Yuraku Daimyoji refers to the Ame 神社 enthroned on top of the Ame-nezumi. In other oral traditions of the region ōyakō 大蛙 or Rōgen 獅子 are mentioned, too. Both are mythological fishing deities in the shaper of a frog. It is unclear it should be mentioned that ōyakō refers to a mystical castle at the seabed as can be seen in the story of Ushumake 僑式街 in the Onisakata and Ōsumakata in Tsuramakate as shrine. This is interesting regarding several tales among fishermen (Kawashima 2001: 37-79). Heihachi (male), for instance, is a taboo word, which has to do with the vision of snakes as messengers of ōyakō (Kawashima 2001: 46), as much as the beliefs that the funadama abores certain animals, like snakes and monkeys (Oda 1989: 116). Also, dropping metal objects into the sea is that (what is happened to Yumazachi) is a taboo among fishermen of Sakata, which must be followed by an "apologizing ceremony" using me 前 (lit. "form me") and some prayers in magakugyo (magnetizing), on which the fishermen themselves illustrate the box object. The taboo of dropping metal objects into the sea can be observed in Yorkshire (UK) (Rogers 1986: 53).
can identify the effects of fisherman use more or "insane" a certain bad situation by reducing tensions. In Shumali, the "maii miih" is performed by the wives of the fishing crew, who make offerings (in 1972) at the local deity, which is often the place where ancestors are worshiped. In some cases, a ceremonial "confession" (shonoo - h'miih's) is practiced, too. The name miih can be associated with stations by site shamans and can possibly be seen as a symbol of times, when female shamans were more common.

During shumisuboru katjun, the skemi-un stems as medium to comminurate with the other world. It is believed to adjust things and phenomena in this world by declining riches. Before a vessel leaves the harbor, the wives of the fishing crew visit a local skemi-un taking along an emu or to a guardian statue and some rice in a special package. There, the skemi-un performs a trance, in which the emu and the rice are specially purified (purified) with a ceremonial package. This can be an emu or to a woodmiih (skemi) or similar, too. During their stay, auxiliary gods and prophecies about which catch and rice fishing grounds as much as customs to prevent disasters are given. When the offering is over, the wives receive the purified emu and rice along with the package (or skemi-un) that the skemi-un used for her ceremony. After returning home, the mirror and visionary package (or skemi-un) are installed near the vessel's quarters, and the purified rice is stored in a small vessel's store. The wives also report the skemi-un's prophecies. (Kumeta 1969: 188)

Summarizing this section, the "miih" denotes more than just a topographic feature. The "miih" is rather a fundamental, though very complex, concept in Japanese fishing culture. The "miih" in belief (paradigmatic knowledge) is attached with females that is woven into a complex system of belief elements. The "miih" can serve as point of origin at sea, which points to the epistemological component in TEK. However, the "miih" is also institutional knowledge when used as a means of defining fishing territories and rights.

Conclusion

One aspect of beliefs in Japanese fishing villages, the "miih", was singled out to examine interdependencies and relationships between several levels of TEK. This involved also some basic features of religiosity among Japanese fishing people, which we have done through an interpretation of the common notion of Eishi. In other words, the "miih" deities that bring back wealth and fortune, we found an understanding as guardian and species spirit (Archeologist) that is possibly traceable back to prehistoric times. The latter is a basic characteristic of many other forms of beliefs related to fishing, as could be seen in case of the shumisuboru or the familoo. Yama is also given a prominent place in religious practice in a village, which was illustrated in Yoko's New Year ceremonies. Yama-in local belief is not simply a place of recreation, but also involves social aspects such as affiliation to village groups. In case of Dashiki, we could further see how the transmission of tradition to succeeding generations works in practice. A look at the specific relationship of fishermen to the stench reveals that yama can be found at all three levels of TEK. Yama is empirical knowledge when serving as point of orientation or sea area, institutional when used to define fishing rights and paradigmatic in ceremonies and Vegetations. In addition, female attributes are often part of yama as a paradigm. The dichotomy of sea and yama pervades the cognition of the physical world and space at sea. Yet, this dichotomy is observable in the 48 prayers or the allocation of gender-attributes such as the ambute as husband-wife of the foundation or the role of the fisherman's wives and the skemi-un during men miih. At both realms, the profane and the sacred, yama, furthermore, serves as metaphor for boundaries from here to there or from here to there. Boundaries can be both vertical and horizontal. Yama is a vertical boundary when considering its place that is close to the sea shore (miih) or even when measuring the sailing with fishing lines (yama). However, the yama etymology reminds us to differentiate between several types of yama. It is a horizontal boundary when looking at the yama as dashiki's location in Yoko's near the demarcation to Mami. As Kalland noted, yama "denotes a zone of transition and it is therefore potentially dangerous" (1995a: 248). For instance, women carry the ability to give birth (to the unborn coming from the unknown), however, they are "carefully-stigmatized" with aches to avoid danger. In this sense, the yama beyond the yama can be regarded as region of the unknown, a threatening place where both the dead and unknown reside. The vegetation as Eishi in case of corpses found at sea might point to a belief concept derived from the sea as yama, implying that the corpses found in a "transitive zone" needed an accurate treatment to maintain order between heaven (this world) and there (the world beyond). Through such maintenance of order in this world the wild and chaotic nature becomes to a certain degree controllable, as this is what Kalland characterizes as "taming nature" (1995a: 246-251). Thus, the concept of yama either contains dynamic interdependencies of elements in the physical world with its counterparts in the sacred other world. In terms of resource management, the conception of yama does not directly invoke resource conservation. However, threats involving a stop of fishing activities accidentally decrease fishing efforts so that this can be characterized as "passive" resource management (Kalland 1995b: 313). In addition, the distinctive empirical knowledge of local environment as seen in "fish" hearing or site-related operations, to a certain degree indicate a vector from empirical to paradigmatic knowledge. This suggests the existence of a value system in Japanese fishing culture, which is not simply utilization, but deeply rooted in a specific worldview. In such a sense, yama can serve as example of what Kalland characterized as "dialectic" relationship between paradigmatic and empirical knowledge (2000a: 325). The fact
that aims, when defining fishing grounds, is the instruction of knowledge can have far reaching implications for policy-making, too. Therefore, the author is convinced that further studies on beliefs of fishing people can surely contribute to formulate more efficient resource management policies in future. Recently, the importance of tradition in terms of marine resource management has been re-discovered by authorities to a certain degree (e.g., Wattanabe 2005), still, we have to see if this trend will result in a true interest of barter economy for rural needs and culture. The author cannot hide being skeptical about this.

References


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