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FOLK MUSIC OF JAPAN

Recorded by Edward Norbeck

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Folk Music of Japan

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FOLK MUSIC OF JAPAN

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES ON THE RECORDINGS
BY EDWARD NORBECK

THE ABUNDANT FOLK MUSIC OF JAPAN MAY BE CLASSIFIED UNDER SEVERAL MAJOR HEADINGS, RELIGIOUS SONGS, WORK SONGS, BALLADS, CHILDREN'S SONGS, AND DANCING SONGS SUNG AT FESTIVALS, WEDDING BANQUETS AND OTHER FEASTS. UNDER THESE CATEGORIES ARE A GREAT NUMBER OF REGIONAL SONGS, THE ORIGINS OF MANY OF WHICH HAVE LONG AGO BEEN LOST IN ANTIQUITY. SINGING AMONG RURAL PEOPLE IS MOST FREQUENTLY DONE DURING LEISURE TIME, AT FESTIVALS, WEDDING BANQUETS, AND AT OTHER FEASTS, SUCH AS THOSE HELD AFTER COMPLETING THE ERECTION OF A NEW HOUSE.

OUTSTANDING AMONG THE RELIGIOUS MUSIC IS THE KAGURA. THIS TERM IS THE NAME OF A SHINTO RITUAL DANCE, AND THE MUSICAL AND LYRICAL ACCOMPANIMENT TO THE KAGURA DANCE FORM ARE ALSO KNOWN BY THE SAME NAME. ACCORDING TO JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY THE KAGURA ORIGINATED IN MYTHICAL TIMES: AMATERASU-O-MIKAMI, THE SUN GODDESS, OFFENDED BY THE INSULTING BEHAVIOR OF HER BROTHER GOD SUBA-NO-O-NO-MIKOTO, RETIRED TO A CAVE AND DARKNESS PREVAILED IN THE LAND. A COUNCIL OF "EIGHT MILLION GODS" THEREUPON DECIDED THAT SEVERAL OF THEIR NUMBER SHOULD LURE THE SUN GODDESS FROM HER CAVE BY DANCING IN FRONT OF IT. HER CURIOSITY AROUSED BY THE SOUNDS OF THEIR MUSIC AND MERRYMAKING, THE SUN GODDESS EMERGED FROM THE CAVE AND LIGHT WAS BROUGHT BACK TO THE WORLD. THIS LURING DANCE OF THE GODS IS TRADITIONALLY THE FIRST PERFORMANCE OF ANY KIND OF DANCE EVER GIVEN IN JAPAN. THE KAGURA IS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH THE CLASSICAL DRAMA FORM, NO, AND UNTIL VERY RECENT YEARS WAS PERFORMED IN ELABORATE FORM (CALLED MIKAGURA) AT THE IMPERIAL COURT. BUT IT IS ALSO FOLK MUSIC AND DANCE AND THE PROPERTY OF THE PEOPLE. THE HIGHLY STYLIZED LYRICS OF KAGURA DEAL ALWAYS WITH THE ANCIENT DOINGS OF THE FOUNDING GODS OF JAPAN. KAGURA DANCING IS CHARACTERIZED BY ITS SYMBOLISM, AND EMPHASIZES MOVEMENTS OF THE HANDS AND ARMS RATHER THAN THE FEET. DANCERS ARE ELABORATELY COSTUMED AND OFTEN WEAR MASKS. A PERFORMANCE OF KAGURA MAY EXTEND OVER MANY HOURS.

IN FORMER DAYS THERE APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN A VERY GREAT NUMBER OF SONGS ASSOCIATED WITH WORK. FISHERMEN SANG OR CHANTED AS THEY PULLED IN NETS; WOMEN SANG AS THEY WORKED AT THEIR WEAVING LOOMS, AND BOATMEN CHANTED AS THEY ROWED. THERE WAS USUALLY NO ACCOMPANIMENT, OF COURSE, EXCEPT THE SOUND OF WORK IMPLEMENTS OR THE CLAPPING OF HANDS. EVERY OCCUPATIONAL CLASS OF FOLK HAD ITS SONGS, AND ALTHOUGH MOST OTHER JAPANESE MUSICAL FORMS SEEM IN LITTLE DANGER OF EXTINCTIONS, THESE ARE THE SONGS WHICH ARE NOW RAPIDLY VANISHING. WITH THE INDUSTRIALIZATION AND MODERNIZATION OF JAPAN MANY OF THE OLD OCCUPATIONS HAVE VIRTUALLY DISAPPEARED AND THE OLD SONGS ARE IN MANY INSTANCES NOW REMEMBERED ONLY BY AGED PERSONS.

IN THE CHILDREN'S WORLD THERE ARE A NUMBER

OF SONGS, INCLUDING TRADITIONAL LULLABIES, NURSERY RHYME-LIKE SONGS, AND LITTLE SONGS SUNG WHILE PLAYING GAMES. SOME OF THESE ARE NATIONALLY KNOWN AND OTHERS ARE LOCALLY RESTRICTED IN THEIR SPREAD. AMONG THE BEST KNOWN OF THESE ARE BALL-BOUNCING SONGS.

AMONG THE MOST INFORMAL OF ALL SONGS ARE THE BALLADS AND DANCING SONGS SUNG AT FEASTS AND UPON OTHER HAPPY SOCIAL OCCASIONS. ALMOST EVERY AREA OF JAPAN HAS ITS OWN FOLKSONGS EULOGIZING A MOUNTAIN, A STREAM, SOME OTHER OBJECT OF NATURE, OR THE PRODUCTS OF ITS COUNTRYSIDE. A GOOD NUMBER OF THESE SONGS HAVE BECOME NATIONALLY KNOWN, IN PARTICULAR THROUGH THE AGENCY OF URBAN GEISHA WHO SING THEM IN SOMEWHAT CHANGED STYLE AS A SOPHISTICATED FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT.

THESE SONGS ARE THUS THE COMMON PROPERTY OF PERSONS OF ALL WALKS OF LIFE. LOVE SONGS ARE NOT UNCOMMON AMONG THESE INFORMAL BALLADS. IN THE MOST BACKWARD AND ISOLATED AREAS OF JAPAN OBSCENE SONGS, OFTEN INVOLVING DOUBLE ENTENDRE, ARE STILL KNOWN. ON THE MERRY OCCASIONS WHEN SUCH SONGS (NOW, FOR THE MOST PART, A THING OF THE PAST) WERE SUNG, THEY APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN REGARDED AS AMUSING AND NATURAL RATHER THAN FRANKLY OBSCENE.

DANCING SONGS SUNG DURING FESTIVALS AND AT PARTIES EXIST EVERYWHERE. SOME OF THESE, SUCH AS HARVEST SONGS AND RICE-PLANTING SONGS, ARE ALLIED WITH THE WORK SONGS DESCRIBED ABOVE, BUT MAY BE DISTINGUISHED FROM THEM BY THE FACT THAT THEY WERE ONCE RELIGIOUS SONGS. TODAY THESE SONGS ARE PRINCIPALLY FORMS OF RURAL AMUSEMENT WITH LITTLE OR NO RELIGIOUS CONNOTATION FOR THE AVERAGE PERSONS.

NOTABLE AMONG THE DANCING SONGS ARE THOSE SUNG AT BON, THE ANNUAL BUDDHIST FESTIVAL OF THE DEAD OBSERVED THROUGHOUT ALL OF JAPAN. BON SINGING AND DANCING HAS LONG BEEN ALMOST ENTIRELY RURAL, ALTHOUGH THE RELIGIOUS CEREMONIALS OF BON ARE OBSERVED BY CITY DWELLERS AS WELL AS COUNTRY PEOPLE. IN THE CITIES THE DATE OF BON IS FROM JULY 13TH TO 15TH OF THE GREGORIAN CALENDAR, BUT IN THE COUNTRY ITS OBSERVANCE IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ANCIENT LUNAR CALENDAR. ALTHOUGH BON IS A RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL, FEW OF THE BON DANCING SONGS NOW BEAR ANY RELATIONSHIP TO RELIGION. BON DANCING AND SINGING AS IT NOW EXISTS IS ALMOST SOLELY A FORM OF RURAL RECREATION. THE THEMES OF THE SONGS MAY BE EXTREMELY VARIED, AND INCLUDE TRADITIONAL TALES OF THE DOINGS OF HEROES AND OF THE SUFFERINGS OF THE VIRTUOUS. BON DANCING AND SINGING HAS LONG BEEN DYING OUT IN JAPAN, AND THE RESIDENTS OF MANY RURAL COMMUNITIES NO LONGER DANCE AND SING DURING THIS SEASON. THERE IS LITTLE DANGER, HOWEVER, OF THE EXTINCTION OF THIS FORM OF MUSIC AND DANCE AS IT IS WITTINGLY PERPETUATED IN A NUMBER OF COMMUNITIES, IN PART BECAUSE OF LOCAL PRIDE IN THE ACCOMPLISHED PERFORMANCES OF ITS PEOPLE AND IN PART TO SERVE AS "TOURIST" ATTRACTIONS FOR THE PEOPLE OF SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES. GOOD BON DANCING AND SINGING ARE GREAT ATTRACTIONS.

BON DANCING AND HOME OR INFORMAL SOCIAL DANCING IS FAR LESS STYLIZED THAN THAT OF THE KAGURA AND USUALLY INVOLVES GREATER EMPHASIS UPON MOVEMENTS

OF THE FEET. DANCERS ORDINARILY TAKE POSITIONS BEHIND ONE ANOTHER FORMING LINES OR CIRCLES. DANCE ROUTINES ARE SIMPLE AND INVOLVE MOVEMENTS OF THE HANDS, ARMS, AND FEET IN TIME WITH HEAVILY ACCENTUATED DRUM BEATING OR THE CLAPPING OF HANDS. DANCING IS MOST FREQUENTLY DONE AFTER DARKNESS HAS FALLEN. DANCERS FREQUENTLY WEAR THE COSTUMES OF BYGONE DAYS, AND IT IS COMMON TO MASK THE FACE WITH TOWELS OR CLOTHS. FOR REASONS NOW OBSCURE, IN SOME COMMUNITIES MEN WEAR THE COSTUMES OF WOMEN AND WOMEN THE COSTUMES OF MEN WHILE DANCING.

A LARGE VARIETY OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, MANY OF THEM OF CHINESE ORIGIN (AND SOMETIMES ULTIMATELY OF NEAR EASTERN PROVENIENCE), COMPRISE WHAT ARE CALLED THE NATIVE INSTRUMENTS OF JAPAN. THOSE MOST COMMONLY THE PROPERTY OF FOLK ARE DRUMS, CLAPPING STICKS, BAMBOO FLUTES, THE THREE-STRINGED SAMISEN AND THE THIRTEEN-STRINGED KOTO. THE KOTO, A TYPE OF DULCIMER, IS MORE THE INSTRUMENT OF THE MIDDLE-CLASS HOME. THE GUITAR-LIKE SAMISEN IS THE INSTRUMENT OF THE PEOPLE, AND SINCE ITS INTRODUCTION FROM THE ASIATIC MAINLAND BY WAY OF THE RYUKYU ISLANDS ABOUT 400 YEARS AGO IT HAS EVERYWHERE IN JAPAN BECOME THE INSTRUMENT FOR THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF POPULAR SONGS. (1)

THE JAPANESE FOLK MUSIC HERE REPRODUCED WAS SELECTED FROM EIGHTY-ODD RECORDINGS MADE DIRECTLY IN THE FIELD DURING 1950-51 IN AN AREA OF JAPAN CENTERING ABOUT OKAYAMA PREFECTURE. A FEW OF THE SONGS OF MORE DISTANT AREAS ARE INCLUDED. THE SELECTIONS ARE TO A LARGE MEASURE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FOLK MUSIC OF ALL OF JAPAN. BECAUSE SOME OF THE TYPES OF FOLK MUSIC, ESPECIALLY THE KAGURA AND BON DANCING SONGS, MAY BE EXTREMELY LENGTHY, ONLY RELATIVELY SHORT EXCERPTS FROM THEM ARE REPRODUCED HERE.

SADO OKESA: A LOVE SONG, WHICH ORIGINATED ON THE ISLAND OF SADO IN THE SEA OF JAPAN. THIS IS A MUCH-LOVED FOLKSONG WHICH HAS LONG BEEN KNOWN EVERYWHERE IN JAPAN. IT HAS UNDERGONE CONSIDERABLE CHANGE FROM ITS ORIGINAL FORM, AND NOW OFTEN APPEARS IN THE REPERTOIRES OF URBAN GEISHA WHO RENDER THE SONG IN INDIVIDUALISTIC STYLE. IT IS SUNG HERE AS A LOVE SONG BY AN OKAYAMA CITY GEISHA WITH SAMISEN ACCOMPANIMENT. THE VERSION OF THE LYRICS REPRODUCED HERE EXPRESS THE LONGING OF A GIRL FOR HER LOVER.

WAKA: A TYPE OF CLASSICAL POEM OF 31 SYLLABLES, COMPOSED BY THE SINGER AND RECORDED INFORMALLY AT A PARTY. THE COMPOSITION AND RECITATION OF WAKA IS A SOPHISTICATED FORM OF EXPRESSION AND ENTERTAINMENT QUITE OUTSIDE THE REALM OF WHAT IS ORDINARILY CALLED FOLK MUSIC. THE STYLE OF SINGING IS INDIVIDUAL BUT FOLLOWS TRADITIONAL PATTERNS. IN THIS WAKA, A CLOUD DRIFTING IDLY AND GENTLY WITH THE BREEZES IS LIKENED TO THE FEELING OF WELL-BEING WHEN ONE IS RELAXED AND AT PEACE WITH THE WORLD.

THE METALLIC SOUNDS ARE CAUSED BY THE SINGER'S INADVERTENTLY PUSHING PORCELAIN DISHES CONTAINING FOOD AGAINST THE MICROPHONE.

EXCERPTS FROM BITCHU KAGURA: THIS IS THE KAGURA (SEE FOREGOING NOTES) OF THE TOWN OF NARIWA, WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THE OLD PROVINCE OF BITCHU, IN WHAT IS TODAY OKAYAMA PREFECTURE. IT WAS COMPOSED DURING THE TEMPO PERIOD, ABOUT 120 YEARS AGO, BY A NARIWA SCHOLAR OF THE NO DRAMA AND THE CLASSICAL WRITINGS SUCH AS THE KUJIKI (712 A.D.) UPON WHICH THE THEMES OF NO DRAMA ARE BASED. IN THE SHORT EXCERPT WITH LYRICS REPRODUCED HERE, THE GOD BUSA-NO-O-NO-MIKOTO AND THE GODDESS INADAHIME OF THE MYTHICAL AGE ARE CONVERSING. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS ARE A BAMBOO FLUTE AND DRUMS.

TO THE VILLAGERS OF NARIWA AND VARIOUS SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES THIS MUSIC, SINGING, AND DANCE ARE TRADITIONAL AUTUMN ENTERTAINMENT.

1. FOR ADDITIONAL DATA ON JAPANESE MUSIC, MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, AND DANCE, SEE KATSUMI SUNAGA, JAPANESE MUSIC, JAPANESE GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS, TOURIST LIBRARY: 15, 1936, AND KABU MATIDA, ODORI (JAPANESE DANCE), JAPANESE GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS, TOURIST LIBRARY: 22, 1938. SEE ALSO HISAO-TANABE, "MUSIC IN JAPAN", INAZO NITOE, ED., FOREIGN INFLUENCES IN MODERN JAPAN, UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS, 1931, PP. 469-523.

EXCERPT FROM OMIYA ODORI: LITERALLY "GREAT SHRINE DANCE", OF FUKUDA VILLAGE, OKAYAMA PREFECTURE. THIS IS BON (SEE FOREGOING NOTES) MUSIC, SUNG AND DANCED AT THE VILLAGE SHINTO SHRINE, AND IS LOCALLY FAMOUS. ALTHOUGH ORIGINALLY RELIGIOUS IN NATURE, IT HAS NOW BECOME PRINCIPALLY A FORM OF ENTERTAINMENT. FUKUDA SHRINE IS SOMETIMES CALLED OMIYA (GREAT SHRINE), FROM WHICH THE NAME OF THIS MUSIC IS TAKEN. THE HISTORY OF OMIYA ODORI IS UNKNOWN, AND LOCAL PEOPLE COMMONLY SAY THAT THE MUSIC HAD ITS ORIGIN IN THE MYTHICAL AGE OF THE GODS. THE MEANING OF THE LYRICS OF ONE OF THE SEVERAL PARTS OF THIS LONG ODORI IS NOW ALSO UNKNOWN. THE ONLY INSTRUMENT IS A DRUM IN THE SHAPE OF A WOODEN BUCKET WHICH IS BEATEN WITH A PIECE OF HEAVY ROPE. IT IS THE CUSTOM OF VILLAGE PEOPLE TO MASK THEIR FACES WITH CLOTHS WHILE DANCING TO THIS MUSIC.

SHIMOTSUI-BUSHI: RECORDED IN THE FISHING VILLAGE OF SHIMOTSUI ON THE INLAND SEA. THIS SONG IS SAID TO HAVE ORIGINATED AS A SEA CHANT, SUNG WITHOUT MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT BY BOATMEN OF FEUDAL LORDS OF THE 17TH TO 19TH CENTURIES AS THEY TRANSPORTED THEIR MASTERS TO EDO (TOKYO) VIA THE INLAND SEA. SHIMOTSUI WAS A WELL-KNOWN STOPPING PLACE EN ROUTE. THE SONG HAS CHANGED CONSIDERABLY THROUGH THE YEARS, AND HAS BECOME NATIONALLY KNOWN IN A FORM MORE POPULARIZED AND MODERNIZED THAN THAT OF THIS RECORDING. IT IS HERE SUNG BY A LOCAL GEISHA, WITH THE ACCOMPANIMENT OF SAMISEN AND A CHORUS, AS PERFORMED AT AN ANNUAL SHIMOTSUI FESTIVAL. THE LYRICS DESCRIBE AND EULOGIZE SHIMOTSUI.

KAGURA-BAYASHI: LITERALLY, "KAGURA RHYTHM", ANCIENT FESTIVAL MUSIC OF SUIMON VILLAGE, LOCATED IN THE DELTA OF A RIVER IN OKAYAMA PREFECTURE. THIS IS A VARIANT TYPE OF KAGURA, THE ONLY LYRICS OF WHICH ARE THE REPETITION OF THE (NOW) MEANINGLESS SHOUT WHICH CAN BE HEARD. THE ORIGIN OF THIS MUSIC IS UNKNOWN AS IS ITS SIGNIFICANCE BEYOND THE FACT THAT ITS NATURE IS RELIGIOUS (SHINTO). IT IS TRADITIONAL AND IS PLAYED AND SUNG (BUT NOT UTILIZED AS DANCE MUSIC) AT THE ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF THE VILLAGE TUTELARY GODS. FOLLOWING OLD CUSTOM, VILLAGE MUSICIANS AND A CHORUS OF PRE-ADOLESCENT BOYS PERFORM THE KAGURA-BAYASHI WHILE SEATED OR STANDING IN A BOAT WHICH SLOWLY CIRCLES THE SHORE OF THE SMALL COVE ON WHICH THE VILLAGE IS LOCATED. MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS ARE THE BAMBOO FLUTE, DRUMS, AND THE TAMBOURINE-LIKE SHIRIGANE.

ASHIMORI ONDO: "ASHIMORI CHORUS", FESTIVAL MUSIC OF THE VILLAGE OF ASHIMORI, OKAYAMA PREFECTURE, OF A NATIONALLY POPULAR AND RELATIVELY MODERN STYLE. THIS MUSIC HAS CLEARLY CHANGED AS A RESULT OF CONTACT WITH THE WEST AND REPRESENTS A BLEND. THE LISTENER MAY HEAR CLEARLY THE SOUNDS OF A VIOLIN, AND THE CAREFUL LISTENER MAY BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY AN ACCORDION. NATIVE INSTRUMENTS ARE THE DRUM AND SAMISEN.

ISHIYA-BUSHI: STONECUTTERS' SONG, FROM THE ISOLATED ISLAND OF KITAKI IN THE INLAND SEA, WHERE MANY WORK SONGS ARE STILL KNOWN AND SUNG. THE SOUND OF SLEDGES POUNDING AGAINST STONE IS HEARD IN THE BACKGROUND. THE ORIGIN OF THIS SONG AND THE CONNOTATION OF SOME OF ITS LYRICS ARE TODAY UNKNOWN. TO THE AVERAGE URBAN JAPANESE THE LYRICS AS SUNG HERE IN THE LOCAL DIALECT ARE UNINTELLIGIBLE. A FREE TRANSLATION IS AS FOLLOWS:

KITAKI IS A GOOD PLACE
IT FACES TO THE NORTHWEST
WITH A GENTLE BREEZE FROM FUKUYAMA

A WOMAN TUCKS UP HER SKIRT
AND STEPS INTO THE SHALLOWS
IN THE DEPTHS SHE UNTIES HER WAISTBAND

HOWEVER LOW HER BIRTH MAY BE
IF I FALL IN LOVE WITH HER
PURIFIED WITH THE TIDE, I TAKE HER TO MY BED

IF YOU ARE BUYING BUILDING STONES
BUY THE STONES OF KITAKI
FOR QUALITY AND VALUE

FROM EARLY IN THE MORNING
UNTIL THE END OF DAY
THE STONECUTTER SOUNDS THE HAMMER

ITOKURI-UTA: SPINNING SONG, KITAKI ISLAND. SUNG BY WOMEN WHILE SPINNING. THE LOUD, WHIRRING NOISE IN THE BACKGROUND IS PRODUCED BY THE SPINNING WHEEL. HOME HANDICRAFTS SUCH AS SPINNING HAVE BECOME UNCOMMON AND SONGS SUCH AS THIS ONE WHICH ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THEM HAVE BECOME RARE.

ALTHOUGH THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT OF THE ANTIQUITY OF THIS SONG, IT APPEARS FROM THE WORD "PHOTOGRAPH" (SEE STANZA 5, BELOW) THAT THE LYRICS HAVE CHANGED IN THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT PAST:

HE IS ABLE TO SING
THOUGH HE YET BUT A FLEDGLING
AND HIS VOICE DOES NOT REACH EVERY CORNER

IF I WERE A BIRD
I WOULD SING FROM HER HOUSETOP
AND LET HER HEAR MY SONG OF LOVE

A DYER'S APPRENTICE MADE AN ERROR
HE DYED A DARK BLUE
WHERE HE MUST DYE A LIGHT YELLOW

A SONG IS FORMED BY INTELLECTS
A CLOTH IS FORMED BY A LOOM
AN ABACUS WHICH MULTIPLIES IS FORMED
BY REEDS

THINKING OF MY DARLING
I GAZE AT HER PHOTOGRAPH WITH LONGING
AND CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHY IT DOES NOT
SPEAK

THE CHERRY BLOOMS IN MARCH
SWEET FLAGS OPEN IN MAY
PLUMS GROW OLD EVERY YEAR THEY BLOSSOM

MARITSUKI-UTA: BALL-BOUNCING SONG, SUNG BY KITAKI ISLAND GIRLS. BALL-BOUNCING SONGS USUALLY INVOLVE COUNTING AND MAY INCLUDE SUCH MEANINGLESS OR ONOMATOPOETIC SOUNDS AS THE TEN! TEN! OF THIS SONG. TENJIN IS A GOD, DEIFIED HERO OF JAPAN'S PAST.

TEN! TEN! TEN! AT THE FESTIVAL OF TENJIN
TEN! TEN! I PURCHASED A BALL
TEN! TEN! PURCHASED A BALL
WHERE SHALL WE BOUNCE THE BALL?
UNDERNEATH THE PLUM TREE
UNDERNEATH THE TREE

TEN! TEN! TEN! THE STEPS TO THE SHRINE
OF TENJIN
STEP BY STEP WE COUNT THEM
COUNT THEM UP TO TWENTY
LET'S BOUNCE AS MANY TIMES AS THERE
ARE STEPS
AS MANY TIMES AS THERE ARE STEPS

EXCERPTS FROM SHIRAIISHI ODORI: BON MUSIC OF SHIRAIISHI VILLAGE LOCATED ON AN ISLAND OF THE SAME NAME IN THE INLAND SEA. SEVERAL TRADITIONAL AND VERY LENGTHY TRAGIC AND HEROIC TALES SET TO MUSIC ARE COLLECTIVELY KNOWN AS SHIRAIISHI ODORI. INCLUDED AMONG THESE ARE YAMADO NO TSUYU (THE DEWDROPS OF YAMA), ISHIDO MARU (AN HEROIC TALE ABOUT A YOUNG MAN), AND SAI-NO KAWARA (OF BUDDHIST THEME).

LOCAL HISTORY RELATES THAT THE SHIRAIISHI ODORI WAS AT ITS GREATEST HEIGHT ABOUT 250 YEARS AGO. ITS ULTIMATE ORIGIN, HOWEVER, APPEARS TO BE A MUCH EARLIER DATE, AND TO STEM IN PART FROM JORURI, A TYPE OF RECITATION OF HEROIC TALES WHICH BEGAN ABOUT THE 13TH CENTURY. SOME PER-SONS SUGGEST THAT THE MUSIC AND DANCE ORIGINATED AT THE TIME OF THE WAR BETWEEN THE MINAMOTO AND TAIRA CLANS IN THE 12TH CENTURY AS A PRAYER FOR THE SPIRITS OF THE SOLDIERS KILLED IN BATTLE. AN ALTERNATE NAME FOR THIS MUSIC AND DANCE IS EKO ODORI, "PRAYER DANCE". THE ONLY MUSICAL INSTRUMENT IS A LARGE DRUM, BUT A WOODEN STICK IS ALSO USED TO ACCENTUATE DANCING RHYTHM BY STRIKING IT AGAINST THE BOARD OF A SMALL PLAT-FORM OR STAGE UPON WHICH THE SINGERS STAND.

THE SHIRAIISHI ODORI IS LOCALLY FAMOUS, AND DURING 1951 SHIRAIISHI PERFORMERS PARTICIPATED

IN A BON MUSIC AND DANCE RECITAL IN TOKYO AS ONE OF THE FINEST VILLAGE BON ODORI GROUPS IN JAPAN.

USUHIKI-UTA: MORTAR-GRINDING SONG, OF SHIRAIISHI VILLAGE. THIS ANCIENT SONG, SUNG HERE BY THREE WOMEN AND ONE MAN, ALL AGED, IS SAID FORMERLY TO HAVE BEEN SUNG WHILE OPERATING REVOLVING STONE MORTARS TO MAKE FLOUR FROM GRAIN. THE LYRICS INCLUDE A TYPE OF DOUBLE ENTENDRE OR PLAY UPON WORDS WHICH IS PECULIARLY JAPANESE. THIS SONG IS TODAY CONSIDERED INDECENT. A TRANSLATION OF THE LAST VERSE ILLUSTRATES THE USE OF DOUBLE EN-TENDRE:

WASHI TO OMAE WA
HIKISU MYŌTO
IRETE MAWASEBA
KO GA DEKIRU

YOU AND I ARE A COUPLE
JUST LIKE THE STONE MORTAR
PUTTING SOMETHING IN AND MOVING IT
ABOUT
FLOUR IS MADE (OR, A CHILD IS CONCEIVED)

EXCERPT FROM MATSUYAMA ODORI: "MATBUYAMA DANCE", RECORDED IN THE TOWN OF TAKAHASHI, IN THE OLD PROVINCE OF BITCHŪ (OKAYAMA PREFECTURE). THE CASTLE OF THE FORMER FEUDAL LORDS OF THE TAKAHASHI AREA WAS CALLED MATSUYAMA, FROM WHICH THIS BON DANCING SONG TAKES ITS NAME. THIS MUSIC IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN INTRODUCED SHORTLY AFTER 1744 BY A LORD ITAKURA FROM ISE WHEN HE WAS GRANTED THE LOCAL FIEF, AND IT IS IN THE STYLE OF ISE SONGS. THE LYRICS ARE SUNG BY AN ADULT MALE LEADER AND A CHORUS OF CHILDREN, WITH FLUTE AND HANDCLAPPING ACCOMPANIMENT. A TRANSLATION OF THE OPENING VERSES IS AS FOLLOWS:

WHEN IN THE CASTLE ARCHERY GROUNDS
THEY DO THE DANCE OF BITCHŪ TAKAHASHI
MATSUYAMA
IT BECOMES A MOONLIGHT PICTURE

THE YOUNG GIRLS COVER THEIR HEADS
IN THE FASHION OF NEBAN-KAMURI
THEIR RED SLEEVE-TIES GLOW IN THE DARK

AS THEY MOVE THEIR HANDS WHILE DANCING
THEIR FRAGRANT PERFUMES ARE WAFTED ABOUT
AS THEY MOVE THEIR BODIES WHILE DANCING
THEIR DANCING SHADOWS TURN WITH THEM

THE MEN HIDE THEIR FACES WITH TOWELS
IN THE FASHION OF HANAHŌ-KAMURI
BUT THEY CANNOT HIDE THEIR VOICES AND
THEIR BEARDS

EXCERPT FROM URASHIMA ODORI: OF THE TOWN OF TAKAHASHI (SEE NOTES ON PREVIOUS SELECTION). THIS IS A BON DANCING SONG WITH A SPECIAL APPEAL FOR CHILDREN AS IT RECOUNTS AN OLD FAIRYTALE CALLED URASHIMA TARŌ. A BOY OF LONG AGO RIDES ON THE BACK OF A TURTLE TO A FAIRYLAND AT THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA WHICH IS PRESIDED OVER BY A FAIRY PRINCESS. AFTER THREE WONDERFUL YEARS IN THIS LAND THE BOY BECOMES NOSTALGIC FOR HIS OLD HOME AND ASKS TO BE ALLOWED TO RETURN. HIS REQUEST IS GRANTED AND HE IS TRANSPORTED BACK TO HIS VILLAGE BY THE TURTLE, ONLY TO FIND HIS RELATIVES AND FRIENDS LONG DEAD AND HARDLY REMEMBERED. HE THEN DISCOVERS THAT HE HAS BEEN AWAY THREE CENTURIES INSTEAD OF THREE YEARS. HE OPENS A PANDORA'S BOX GIVEN TO HIM AS A PARTING GIFT WITH THE INJUNCTION THAT IT BE LEFT CLOSED, AND WITHERS AWAY TO A PILE OF DUST.

VOCALISTS ARE THE SAME AS IN THE FOREGOING SELECTION.

EDITOR: HAROLD COURLANDER
PROD. DIR. MOSES ASCH

WORLD RECORDS INTERNATIONAL LTD.

AMERICANA 10"

- FA2001 S. Dance, Flute Pete
- FA2002 Xmas Carols, Summers
- FA2003 Daring Corey, Seeger
- FA2004 Take This Home, Sadelbly 1
- FA2005 Am. Flings, Seeger
- FA2006 Washband Band, Terry
- FA2007 Cumberland Gap, Clayton
- FA2009 Creole Songs, Van Vey
- FA2010 Lonesome Valley, Seeger, others
- FA2011 Dent Row, Guthrie
- FA2013 RR Songs, Houston
- FA2014 Rock Hill, Line, Landbly 2
- FA2019 Sea & Logger Sings, Fakin
- FA2021 Seeds of Love, Summers
- FA2022 Cowboy Ballads, Cisco Houston
- FA2023 Solomon Valley, Lemmon
- FA2024 Leadbelly Legacy 3, Early years
- FA2025 Ohio Valley, Bluebelly
- FA2028 Get On Board, Folkmasters
- FA2030 Monroe McGhee, Blues
- FA2032 Martha's Vine Song, Sings
- FA2034 Easy Rider, Leadbelly 4
- FA2035 Harmonica, Sonny Terry
- FA2036 Morrison Songs, Hill
- FA2037 Anglo-American, Nye
- FA2038 Negro Spirit, Hill, Reed
- FA2039 Joe Hill Sings, Glazer
- FA2040 Smoky Mtn., Lunford
- FA2041 Lady Gay, Summers
- FA2042 Hard Travelin', Houston
- FA2043 Samper, Summers
- FA2044 Easy Laidy Summers
- FA2045 Gooding-Off Suite, Seeger
- FA2046 N. & Blues, Robertson
- FA2049 Peggy Seeger, Hays
- FA2050 Little Jugitive, Eddie Manson
- FA2070 Ottawa, Ill., ...

SONGS OF THE STATES 10"

- FA2106 Mass., Clayton
- FA2110 Virginia, Clayton
- FA2112 N. Carolina, Bluestein
- FA2128 Tex., Nye
- FA2132 Minnesota, Bluestein
- FA2134 Kansas, O'Byern
- FA2136 Kentucky, English

AMERICAN HISTORICAL # 10"

- FH2151 Revolution 1, House
- FH2152 Revolution II, House
- FH2163 War 1812, 1, House
- FH2164 War 1812, 2, House
- FH2175 Frontier, Seeger 1
- FH2176 Frontier, Seeger 2
- FH2187 Civil War, Nye
- FH2188 Civil War 2, Nye
- FH2189 Heritage USA 1, Morrison
- FH2190 Heritage USA 2, Morrison
- FH2191 Heritage Speeches 1, Kurlan
- FH2192 Heritage Speeches 2, Kurlan

MUSIC U.S.A. 10"

- FA2201 Cntry Dances, Seeger, Terry
- FA2202 Creole Sings, Van Vey
- FA2204 Span. Sngs., S. Hill, I.urd
- FA2215 Penn. Dutch Sngs.
- FA2220 Songs, Baby Dodds
- FA2222 Mary Lou Williams, Clayton
- FA2263 Art Tatum Trio

AMERICANA 12"

- FA2305 Ballads Reliques, Nye
- FA2310 Anglo-Am. Ball., Clayton
- FA2312 Sea Songs, Hill
- FA2314 Banjo, Scroggs Style
- FA2315 Stoneman Family Banjo
- FA2316 Ritchie Family, Ohio
- FA2317 Mt. Music of Kentucky
- FA2318 Mt. Music, Bluebelly
- FA2319 Am. Ballads, Seeger
- FA2320 Fav. Amer., Seeger
- FA2321 Fav. Amer., Seeger
- FA2322 Fav. Am., S. Seeger
- FA2324 Walk in Sun, Robinson
- FA2328 Cntry Blues, Rooney
- FA2327 McKee, Terry, Blues
- FA2330 Walt Robertson
- FA2333 Women's Love Songs, Marshall
- FA2334 Mrs. Love Songs, Ross
- FA2338 American Ballads, O'Byern
- FA2346 Cisco Houston, FolkSongs
- FA2348 Andrew Rown Summers, Songs
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- FA2356 Old Harp Singing
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- FA2397 New Lost City Ramblers, V. 2
- FA2407 FolkMasters
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- FA2412 Seeger as Carnegie, Terry
- FA2418 Bob Cain, Hill, Concert
- FA2421 Trad. Blues #1, R. McChes
- FA2428 Ritchie, Brand Concert
- FA2438 Foe the Jug, Clayton
- FA2439 Nonesuch, Seeger, Hamilton
- FA2448 Freedom Songs, Nye, McAdams
- FA2452 Sing with Pete Seeger
- FA2453 Love Songs, Seeger
- FA2454 Rainbow Concert
- FA2461 Music New Orleans, 1, St. Music
- FA2462 Music New Orleans 2, Eureka Band
- FA2463 Music New Orleans, 3
- FA2464 Music New Orleans 4, Jazz Trio
- FA2465 Music New Orleans 5, Flowering
- FA2476 Snouse Lagin, Seeger
- FA2480 Songs Open Road, Clouton Houston
- *FA481 Sound for Clouton, Guthrie

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- FN2511 Hootenanny Tonight
- FN2512 Hootenanny Tonight
- FN2524 Hootenanny, Malvina Reynolds

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- FA2601 South Jersey Band
- FA2605 1-Man Band, Blackman
- FA2610 Music from South 1
- FA2611 Music from South 1
- FA2652 Music from South 3
- FA2653 Music from South 4
- FA2654 Music from South 5
- FA2655 Music from South 6
- FA2656 Music from South 7
- FA2657 Music from South 8
- FA2658 Music from South 9
- FA2659 Been Here & Gone (Music fr South 10)
- FA2671 6 & 7/8 String Band

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- FJ2803 Anth. 3, New Orleans
- FJ2804 Anth. 4, Jazz Singers
- FJ2805 Anth. 5, Chicago
- FJ2806 Anth. 6, Chicago 2
- FJ2807 Anth. 7, New York
- FJ2808 Anth. 8, Blues
- FJ2809 Anth. 9, Piano
- FJ2810 Anth. 10, Blues & K.C.
- FJ2811 Anth. 11, Addenda

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- FA2941 Leadbelly Legacy 1
- FA2942 Leadbelly Legacy 1
- FA2951 Am. Folkmusic 1
- FA2952 Am. Folkmusic 2
- FA2953 Am. Folkmusic 3

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- FW3001 O'Canada, Mills & 12"
- FW3002 Irish Rebellion, House

- FW3006 Scottish War Ballads, Dunbar
- FW3007 Israel Army Sngs., Hill
- FW3008 Recording Indians, Barbeau
- FW3009 Newfoundland, Readeck
- FW3008 Amer. FolkSongs, John Lomax
- FW3015 Folk Songs Sussex, Eng.
- FW3017 Scottish FolkSongs, Holland
- FW3018 Irish FolkSongs, Holland
- FW3024 Boogie Woogie, Memphis Slim
- FW3030 Indian Bagas, Balakrishna
- FW3031 Am. Guit. Banjo-Guitars
- FW3035 Memphis Slim, Vol. 2
- FW3038 Tambourines to Glory
- FW3040 Handy Blues, Handy
- FW3044 Guy Carawan Sings
- FW3048 Guy Carawan II
- FW3050 Guy Carawan III
- FW3057 Brownie McGhee, Blues
- FW3060 French Canals, Labrecque
- FW3062 Joe Lamb, Bagtime Piano
- FW3064 Eng. Sng., Shirley Collins
- FW3068 Sng., W. Pa., Richman
- FW3076 Neherberg Sngs., Kunez
- FW3085 Blind Willie Johnson
- FW3086 Big Bill Broonzy Story
- FW3092 Story of Theodor Herzl

FOLKWAYS SPECIAL 12"

- FT3602 Instr. of Orchestra
- FT3704 John Cage, Indeterm., 2-12"
- FS3801 Jewish Life, documentary
- FS3810 Buell H. Kazee
- FS3811 Big Bill, Billie McGhee
- FS3818 Ballads, Bruce Van Ronk
- FS3822 Lightnin' Hopkins, Mills
- FS3823 Furry Lewis, Blues
- FS3828 Pete Seelie, banjo
- FS3829 Alvin Karpis, 1932
- FS3837 Accordion, Tony Lavelli
- FS3844 Bahamas Music, Spencer 1
- FS3845 Bahamas Music, Spencer 2
- FS3846 Bahamas Music, Intr. 3
- FS3851 Indian Summer FolkSong (Seeger)
- FS3852 Camerounian Story
- FS3855 Dahomey Story, Kolinski
- FS3857 Piano Pieces, Gershwin, Kern
- FS3858 John Cage, Mehan
- FS3859 My True Love, vocal, sac.
- FS3860 Picasso Film Music
- FS3861 Henry Jacobs, Folk Songs
- FS3862 Walbridge, program 1
- FS3863 Courlander's Almanac
- FS3864 Seeger & Rooney Interview
- FS3865 Gregorian Chants, documentary
- FS3866 W. Coleville Story
- FS3870 The Vesp. of St. Francis
- FS3872 Rawhide, No. 1
- FS3873 Rawhide, No. 2
- FS3881 Nat'l Anthems 1
- FS3882 Nat'l Anthems 2
- FS3890 Telemann Sng., Wolff

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- FM4001 Wolf River Songs
- FM4002 Songs from India
- FM4003 Great Lakes Indians
- FM4004 Folk songs of Yugoslavia
- FM4006 Nova Scotia Folkmusic
- FM4007 Lappish folk music
- FM4008 Folkmusic of Norway
- FM4009 Lithuanian Songs S. A
- FM4011 Drum Dance, Carriacou
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- FE4506 Music of World's People, 3
- FE4507 Music of World's People, 4
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- FE4520 Music from Italy
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- FH5233 Folk Ballads, Vol. 1 & 2, Nye
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- FH5255 Days of '49, Illinois - Faier
- FH5258 Pittsburgh, Pa., Schmetz
- FH5259 Depression Sngs., N.C. Ramblers
- FH5281 Songs of Suffragettes, Knight
- FH5282 Talking Union, Seeger
- FH5283 Folk Songs of Indeterm., 1-12"
- FH5284 Missoury Flings, Gansler
- FH5485 Ballad Saccho-Vanzetti, Guthrie
- FH5486 Untypical Folk Music, Speeches
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- FH5488 New York 15, Schwartz
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- FH5492 A Dog's Life, Schwartz
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- FH5496 Songs of Civil War, 2-12"

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- FX6101 Sounds of Pol. Am. Speeches
- FX6104 Sounds of Self-Identity
- FX6105 Sounds of Camp, documentary
- FX6120 Sounds of Pol. Am. Rain Forest
- FX6121 Sounds in the Sea
- FX6122 Sounds of New Music Southwest
- FX6123 Vox Humana, vocal extension
- FX6124 Sounds of Animals, zoo & farm
- FX6125 Sounds of New Music
- FX6126 Sounds of Carnival, Music
- FX6127 Sounds of Medicine
- FX6130 Sound Pattern
- FX6136 Short version of FX6007
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- FX6141 Sounds of African Hues
- FX6152 Sounds Steam Locomotives, 1
- FX6153 Sounds Steam Locomotives, 2
- FX6154 Sounds Steam Locomotives, 3
- FX6155 Sounds N. Y. Central Locomotives
- FX6160 Sounds of New Music
- FX6166 Sounds N. Amer. frogs
- FX6170 Sound Effects, No. 1
- FX6178 Insect Sounds

FX6200 Sounds of Satellites

FX6250 Sounds of Science Fiction

STEREO 12"

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- FD6502 Folk Dances World's Peoples, 2
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- FD6504 Folk Dances World's Peoples, 4
- FD6510 N. Amer. Indian Dances

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- FW6806 Songs & Dances Armenia
- FW6807 Songs & Dances Switzerland
- FW6808 Calypso & Merengues
- FW6809 Jewish French Songs
- FW6810 Argentine Folk Songs
- FW6811 Haitian Folk Songs
- FW6812 Chinese Classic Music
- FW6814 Songs & Dances of Greece
- FW6815 Folk Songs, Mexico
- FW6816 Guitar Solo, Montoya
- FW6817 Scottish Bagpipe
- FW6818 Irish Popular Songs
- FW6819 Irish Jigs & Reels
- FW6820 Russian Chorus, Ptainsky
- FW6821 Northwest, Heurnsford
- FW6822 Haitian Gaitan, Caseus
- FW6823 Folk Songs, House
- FW6824 Gospel Songs, Bahamas
- FW6825 Carnatic, D. Kusevitch
- FW6826 Jewish Folk Songs, 2, Olf
- FW6827 Jewish Folk Songs, 3, Olf
- FW6828 Ukrainian Christmas Songs
- FW6830 Songs and Dances of Basque
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- FW6833 Creole Songs of Haiti
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- FW6838 Irish Folk Songs, Noorman
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- FW6843 German Songs, Schlamme
- FW6844 Swedish, Sven-8, Taube
- FW6845 Xmas Songs of Many Lands, Mills
- FW6846 Jamaican Folk Songs, Bennett
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- FW6880 Man of the Wide World, Samuels
- FW6891 Songs of Four Continents
- FW6912 Bantu Choral oik Songs
- FW6913 Mexican Folk Songs
- FW6914 Calypso with Lord Invader
- FW6915 Italian Folk Music, Songs
- FW6916 French Folk Songs
- FW6917 English Folk Songs, Coppard
- FW6918 Duet Songs of French Canada
- FW6919 Czechoslovak Folk Songs
- FW6920 Flamenco Guitar, Escobar
- FW6922 German Fav. Sngs., Wolff
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- FW6925 Songs Lebanon & Egypt
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- FC7011 Bigger Fishes, Seeger
- FC7012 Animal Songs in Eng., Mills
- FC7020 Schoolyards, Seeger, others
- FC7021 Animal Songs, 2, Mills
- FC7022 Animal Songs, 2, Mills
- FC7023 Activity Songs, German
- FC7025 World, Stone
- FC7026 All Year Long, Stone
- FC7027 This Land is Our Land
- FC7028 Camp Songs, Seeger, Others
- FC7029 Skip Rope Games
- FC7030 Folk Songs for Camp
- FC7036 Children Songs, Richardson
- FC7051 Animal Songs, Seeger
- FC7053 American Xmas Songs, Seeger
- FC7054 World Songs, Am. Rain Forest
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- FC7065 Downtown Story, songs & sounds
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- FC1103 Tales from West Africa
- FC1104 Dream Keep, Hughes
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- FC1107 Uncle Bouqui, Haiti
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Ashimori Ondo
Itokuri-Uta
Shiraishi Odori
Urashima Odori
Shimotsui Bushi

Ethnic Folkways Library

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

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