Theatrical Space as "Apparatus"
—Festival and Performing Arts of Mimi Shrine—

Hashimoto Hiroyuki

In this paper, attempts are made to comprehensively understand the festival held on May 1 every year at Mimi Shrine located at Miyashiro, Mihama-chō, Mikata-gun, Fukui Prefecture and, using this festival as the text, to elucidate the mechanisms how the theatrical imagination had worked out through various “apparatuses” that are arranged in the festival space. In consequence, it can be understood that the festival space itself, the topos where the festival is held, functions as the cultural apparatus to offer the opportunity for the district=audiences to experience the archaic chrono-topos. Also, one can be convinced why a form of such theatrical framework has been taken.

First, the historical background of Mimi Shrine and the surrounding areas will be discussed. Referring to the folklores told from generation to generation in this region, how the community villages were united under the cosmological order will be shown. Furthermore, it will be gradually clarified that such schema is reproduced in the form of the drama in the festival space at Mimi Shrine in the process to introduce the configuration and the present state of the ceremonial organization.

In other words, in the core of the discourse that composes the festival, there exists an image of a different nature arrived from the outside, and the process to accept such heterogeneous image is symbolized in the various levels of ceremonies being performed in the festival space. Moreover, a sharp sensitivity to the human body is dramatized everywhere in the festival of Mimi Shrine and it is inseparably related to the cosmology that stipulates the very basis of the festival of Mimi Shrine. This clearly indicates that the ceremony itself has a quite dramatical character.

The argument proposed in this paper should be passed over to the study, “Reality performed”, in which analyses have been made focusing on the performing art played in the festival of Mimi Shrine.