Yamato Imperial Authority and the Chinkonsai: Theories on Imperial Authority in Folklore Studies; Searching for Common Ground for Origuchi's Theory on Chinkon and Documented History

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The study described in this paper yielded the following conclusions. When emperors Temmu and Jito ruled, a period characterized by supreme divine authority, the Onanesai (imperial accession ceremony) and Ise Jingū ceremonies did exist, but the Chinkonsai (ritual for placation of the soul) had yet to develop. The oldest document that mentions the Chinkonsai is the "Jogan-gishiki" (Procedures of the Jogan Era) compiled in the latter half of the 9th century. At that stage the five main elements of the Chinkonsai were: 1) sacred treasures; 2) a box of sacred garments; 3) a ritual in which a mikannagi (shrine maiden) stands on top of an upturned ukefune (tub) and strikes a spear ten times against the tub; 4) a ritual in which a high-ranking official ties cotton inside a box; and 5) a dance by maidens. There is a strong possibility that the traditions of 3) and 5) existed in Chinkonsai held under the 8th century Taiho Code. Although the ritual described in the "Jogan-gishiki" in which a high-ranking official ties cotton existed prior to the Taiho Code, at that stage it was not linked to the concept of "musubi" as represented by the words for "life-producing spirits" and "spirit." They became linked around the time when the kanjo (transfer of kami) to eight places was recorded in the "Engi Shiki" (Procedures of the Engi Era). Rather than being a ceremony for "musubi," it originally meant the "placation of the spirit" of an emperor. Prior to the Jogan era in the latter half of the 9th century which was a huge period of transition for the ancient state, a "ceremonial emperor," the child-emperor Seiwa, came into being with the backing of Fujiwara no Yoshifusa. At this point the Yamato rulers no longer needed "Izumo as the outside," which had been absolutely vital for them up until that time, for this was when they created a "secular emperor" system through the positions of "sekkant" and "nairan," thus creating a new "internal" outside.

The Chinkonsai, which was an imperial ceremony with spiritual powers, developed from its so-called post-Taiho Code first phase to a more evolved second-phase. The imperial rituals that were absolutely vital to the ceremonial emperor, who represented the Yamato sovereignty of the Chinkonsai, first began to develop during the reign of emperors Temmu and Jito, while the Chinkonsai itself emerged under Ritsuryo rule during the reign of Emperors Mommu, Gemmei and Gensho, and continued to develop further after Seiwa's reign. From this perspective, it is possible to reconcile Origuchi's Chinkon theory, which is based on the theories of "origin" and "original meaning," with
theory based on the interpretation of historical developments through the study of historical documents.

Key words: Onamesai, first-phase Chinkonsai, second-phase Chinkonsai, Jogan-gishiki, ceremonial emperor, musubi and musuki