

JAPAN: An Interpretation

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6. The Communal Cult

AS by the religion of the household each individual was ruled in every action of domestic life, so, by the religion of the village or district the family was ruled in all its relations to the outer world. Like the religion of the home, the religion of the commune was ancestor-worship. What the household shrine represented to the family, the Sintō parish-temple represented to the community; and the deity there worshipped as tutelary god was called *Uzigami*, the god of the *Uzi*, which term originally signified the patriarchal family or *gens*, as well as the family name.

Some obscurity still attaches to the question of the original relation of the community to the Uzi-god. Hirata declares the god of the *Uzi* to have been the common ancestor of the clan-family,—the ghost of the first patriarch; and this opinion (allowing for sundry exceptions) is almost certainly correct. But it is difficult to decide whether the *Uzi-ko*, or “children of the family” (as sintō parishioners are still termed) at first included only the descendants of the clan-ancestor, or also the whole of the inhabitants of the district ruled by the clan. It is certainly not true at the present time that the tutelary deity of each Japanese district represents the common ancestor of its inhabitants,—though, to this general rule, there might be found exceptions in some of the remoter provinces. Most probably the god of the *Uzi* was first worshipped by the people of the district rather as the spirit of a former ruler, or the patron-god of a ruling family, than as the spirit of a common ancestor. It has been tolerably well proved that the bulk of the Japanese people were in a state of servitude from before the beginning of the historic period, and so remained until within comparatively recent times. The subject-classes may not have had at first a cult of their own: their religion would most likely have been that of their masters. In later times the vassal was certainly attached to the cult of the lord. But it is difficult as yet to venture any general statement as to the



earliest phase of the communal cult in Japan; for the history of the Japanese nation is not that of a single people of one blood, but a history of many clan-groups, of different origin, gradually brought together to form one huge patriarchal society.

However, it is quite safe to assume, with the best native authorities, that the *Uzigami* were originally clan-deities, and that they were usually, though not invariably, worshipped as clan-ancestors. Some *Uzigami* belong to the historic period. The war god Hatiman, for example,—to whom parish-temples are dedicated in almost every large city,—is the apotheosized spirit of the Emperor Ozin, patron of the famed Minamoto clan. This is an example of *Uzigami* worship in

which the clan-god is not an ancestor. But in many instances the *Uzigami* is really the ancestor of an *Uzi*; as in the case of the great deity of Kasuga, from whom the Fuziwara clan claimed descent. Altogether there were in ancient Japan, after the beginning of the historic era, 1182 clans, great and small; and these appear to have established the same number of cults. We find, as might be expected, that the temples now called *Uzigami*—which is to say, Sintō parish-temples in general are always dedicated to a particular class of divinities, and never dedicated to certain other gods. Also, it is significant that in every large town there are Sintō temples dedicated to the same *Uzi*-gods,—proving the transfer of communal worship from its place of origin. Thus the Izumo worshipper of Kasuga-Sama can find in Osaka, Kyōto, Tōkyō, parish-temples dedicated to his patron: the Kyūsū worshipper of Hatiman-Sama can place himself under the protection of the same deity in Musasi quite as well as in Higo or Bungo. Another fact worth observing is that the *Uzigami* temple is not necessarily the most important Sintō temple in the parish: it is the parish-temple, and important to the communal worship; but it may be outranked and overshadowed by some adjacent temple dedicated

to higher Sintō gods. Thus in Kitzuki of Izumo, for example, the great Isuimo temple is not the Uzigami,—not the parish-temple; the local cult is maintained at a much smaller temple . . . Of the higher cults I shall speak further on; for the present let us consider only the communal cult, in its relation to communal life. From the social conditions represented by the worship of the Uzigami to-day, much can be inferred as to its influence in past times.

ALMOST every Japanese village has its Uzigami; and each district of every large town or city also has its Uzigami. The worship of the tutelar deity is maintained by the whole body of parishioners,—the Uziko, or children of the tutelar god. Every such parish-temple has its holy days, when all Uziko are expected to visit the temple, and when, as a matter of fact, every household sends at least one representative to the Uzigami. There are great festival-days and ordinary festival-days; there are processions, music, dancing, and whatever in the way of popular amusement can serve to make the occasion attractive. The people of adjacent districts vie with each other in rendering their respective temple-festivals (*maturi*) enjoyable: every household contributes according to its means.

The Sintō parish-temple has an intimate relation to the life of the community as a body, and also to the individual existence of every Oziko. As a baby he or she is taken to the Uzigami—(at the expiration of thirty-one days after birth if a boy, or thirty-three days after birth if a girl)—and placed under the protection of the god, in whose supposed presence the little one's name is recorded. Thereafter the child is regularly taken to the temple on holy days, and of course to all the big festivals, which are made delightful to young fancy by the display of toys on sale in temporary booths, and by the amusing spectacles to be witnessed in the temple grounds,—artists forming pictures on the pavement with coloured sands,—sweetmeat-sellers moulding animals and monsters out of sugar-paste,—conjurers and tumblers exhibiting their skill. . . . Later, when the child becomes strong enough to run about, the temple gardens and groves serve for a playground. School-life does not separate the Uziko from the Uzigami (unless the family should permanently leave the district); the visits to the temple are still continued as a duty. Grown-up and married, the Uziko regularly visits the guardian-god, accompanied by wife or husband, and brings the children to pay obeisance. If obliged to

make a long journey, or to quit the district forever, the Uziko pays a farewell visit to the Uzigami, as well as to the tombs of the family ancestors; and on returning to one's native place after prolonged absence, the first visit is to the god. . . . I have more than once been touched by the spectacle of soldiers at prayer before lonesome little temples in country places,—soldiers but just returned from Korea, China, or Formosa: their first thought on reaching home was to utter their thanks to the god of their childhood, whom they believed to have guarded them in the hour of battle and the season of pestilence.

THE best authority on the local customs and laws of Old Japan, John Henry Wigmore, remarks that the Sintō cult had few relations with local administration. In his opinion the Uzigami were the deified ancestors of certain noble families of early times; and their temples continued to be in the patronage of those families. The office of the Sintō priest, or "god-master" (*kannusi*) was, and still is, hereditary; and, as a rule, any *kannusi* can trace back his descent from the family of which the Uzigami was originally the patron-god. But the Sintō priests, with some few exceptions, were neither magistrates nor administrators; and Professor Wigmore thinks that this may have been "due to the lack of administrative organization within the cult itself."¹ This would be an adequate explanation. But in spite of the fact that they exercised no civil function, I believe it can be shown that Sintō priests had, and still have, powers above the law. Their relation to the community was of an extremely important kind: their authority was only religious; but it was heavy and irresistible.

To understand this, we must remember that the Sintō priest represented the religious sentiment of his district. The social bond of each community was identical with the religious bond,—the cult of the local tutelar god. It was to the Uzigami that prayers were made for success in all communal undertakings, for protection against sickness, for the triumph of the lord in time of war, for succour in the season of famine or epidemic. The Uzigami was the giver of all good things,—the special helper and guardian of the people. That this belief still prevails may be verified by anyone who studies the peasant-life of Japan. It is not to the Buddhas that the farmer prays for bountiful harvests, or for rain in time of drought; it is not to the Buddhas that thanks are rendered for a plentiful rice-crop—but to the

¹The vague character of the Sintō hierarchy is probably best explained by Mr. Spencer in Chapter VIII of the third volume of *Principles of Sociology*: "The establishment of an ecclesiastical organization separate from the political organization, but akin to it in its structure, appears to be largely determined by the rise of a decided distinction in thought between the affairs of this world and those of a supposed other world. Where the two are conceived as existing in continuity, or as intimately related, the organizations appropriate to their respective administrations remain either

identical or imperfectly distinguished . . . If the Chinese are remarkable for the complete absence of a priestly caste, it is because, along with their universal and active ancestor-worship, they have preserved that inclusion of the duties of priest in the duties of ruler, which ancestor-worship in its simple form shows us." Mr. Spencer remarks in the same paragraph on the fact that in ancient Japan "religion and government were the same." A distinct Sintō hierarchy was therefore never evolved.



ancient local god. And the cult of the Uzigami embodies the moral experience of the community,—represents all its cherished traditions and customs, its unwritten laws of conduct, its sentiment of duty. . . . Now just as an offence against the ethics of the family must, in such a society, be regarded as an impiety towards the family-ancestor, so any breach of custom in the village or district must be considered as an act of disrespect to its Uzigami. The prosperity of the family depends, it is thought, upon the observance of filial piety, which is identified with obedience to the traditional rules of household conduct; and, in like manner, the prosperity of the commune is supposed to depend upon the observance of ancestral custom,—upon obedience to those unwritten laws of the district, which are taught to all from the time of their childhood. Customs are identified with morals. Any offence against the customs of the settlement is an offence against the gods who protect it, and therefore a menace to the public weal. The existence of the community is endangered by the crime of any of its members: every member is therefore held accountable by the community for his conduct. Every action must conform to the traditional usages of the Uziko: independent exceptional conduct is a public offence.

What the obligations of the individual to the community signified in ancient times may therefore be imagined. He had certainly no more right to himself than had the Greek citizen three thousand years ago,—probably not so much. To-day, though laws have been greatly changed, he is practically in much the same condition. The mere idea of the right to

do as one pleases (within such limits as are imposed on conduct by English and American societies, for example) could not enter into his mind. Such freedom, if explained to him, he would probably consider as a condition morally comparable to that of birds and beasts. Among ourselves, the social regulations for ordinary people chiefly settle what must *not* be done. But what one must not do in Japan—though representing a very wide range of prohibition—means much less than half of the common obligation: what one must do, is still more necessary to learn. . . . Let us briefly consider the restraint which custom places upon the liberty of the individual.

FIRST of all, be it observed that the communal will reinforces the will of the household,—compels the observance of filial piety. Even the conduct of a boy, who has passed the age of childhood, is regulated not only by the family, but by the public. He must obey the household; and he must also obey public opinion in regard to his domestic relations. Any marked act of disrespect, inconsistent with filial piety, would be judged and rebuked by all. When old enough to begin work or study, a lad's daily conduct is observed and criticised; and at the age when the household law first tightens about him, he also commences to feel the pressure of common opinion. On coming of age, he has to marry; and the idea of permitting him to choose a wife for himself is quite out of the question: he is expected to accept the companion selected for him. But should reasons be found for humouring him in the event of an irresistible aversion, then he must wait until another choice has been made by the family. The community would not tolerate insubordination in such matters: one example of filial revolt would constitute too dangerous a precedent. When the young man at last becomes the head of a household, and responsible for the conduct of its members, he is still constrained by public sentiment to accept advice in his direction of domestic affairs. He is not free to follow his own judgment, in certain contingencies. For example, he is bound by custom to furnish help to relatives; and he is obliged to accept arbitration in the event of trouble with them. He is not permitted to think of his own wife and children only,—such conduct would be deemed intolerably selfish: he must be able to act, to outward seeming at least, as if uninfluenced by paternal or marital affection in his public conduct. Even supposing that, later in life, he should be appointed to the position of village or district headman, his right of action and judgment would be under just as much restriction as before. Indeed, the range of his personal freedom actually decreases in proportion to his ascent in the social scale. Nominally he may rule as headman: practically his authority is only lent to him by the commune, and it will remain to him just so long as the commune pleases. For he is elected to enforce the public will, not to impose his own,—to serve the common in-

terests, not to serve his own,—to maintain and confirm custom, not to break with it. Thus, though appointed chief, he is only the public servant, and the least free man in his native place.

Various documents translated and published by Professor Wigmore, in his "Notes on Land Tenure and Local Institutions in Old Japan," give a startling idea of the minute regulation of communal life in country-districts during the period of the Tokujawa Sōguns. Much of the regulation was certainly imposed by higher authority; but it is likely that a considerable portion of the rules represented old local custom. Such documents were called *Kumi-chō* or "*Kumi*-enactments"; they established the rules of conduct to be observed by all the members of a village-community, and their social interest is very great. By personal inquiry I have learned that in various parts of the country, rules much like those recorded in the *Kumi-chō*, are still enforced by village custom. I select a few examples from Professor Wigmore's translation:

"If there be any of our number who are unkind to parents, or neglectful or disobedient, we will not conceal it or condone it, but will report it. . . ."

"We shall require children to respect their parents, servants to obey their masters, husbands and wives and brothers and sisters to live together in harmony, and the younger people to revere and to cherish their elders. . . . Each *kumi* [group of five households] shall carefully watch over the conduct of its members, so as to prevent wrongdoing."

"If any member of a *kumi*, whether farmer, merchant, or artizan, is lazy, and does not attend properly to his business, the *ban-gasira* [chief officer] will advise him, warn him, and lead him into better ways. If the person does not listen to this advice, and becomes angry and obstinate, he is to be reported to the *tosiyori* [village elder]. . . ."

"When men who are quarrelsome and who like to indulge in late hours away from home will not listen to admonition, we will report them. If any other *kumi* neglects to do this, it will be part of our duty to do it for them. . . ."

"All those who quarrel with their relatives, and refuse to listen to their good advice, or disobey their parents, or are unkind to their fellow-villagers, shall be reported [to the village officers]. . . ."

¹Down to the close of the feudal period, the mass of the population throughout the country, in the great cities as well as in the villages, was administratively ordered by groups of families, or rather of households, called *Kumi*, or "companies." The general number of households in a *Kumi* was five; but there were in some provinces *Kumi* consisting of six, and of ten, households. The heads of the households composing a *Kumi* elected one of their number as chief,—who became the responsible representative of all the members of the *Kumi*. The origin and history of the

"Dancing, wrestling, and other public shows shall be forbidden. Singing and dancing-girls and prostitutes shall not be allowed to remain a single night in the *mura* [village]."

"Quarrels among the people shall be forbidden. In case of dispute the matter shall be reported. If this is not done, all parties shall be indiscriminately punished. . . ."

"Speaking disgraceful things of another man, or publicly posting him as a bad man, even if he is so, is forbidden."

"Filial piety and faithful service to a master should be a matter of course; but when there is any one who is especially faithful and diligent in these things, we promise to report him . . . for recommendation to the government. . . ."

"As members of a *kumi* we will cultivate friendly feeling even more than with our relatives, and will promote each other's happiness, as well as share each other's griefs. If there is an unprincipled or lawless person in a *kumi*, we will all share the responsibility for him."²

The above are samples of the moral regulations only: there were even more minute regulations about other duties,—for instance:

"When a fire occurs, the people shall immediately hasten to the spot, each bringing a bucketful of water, and shall endeavour, under direction of the officers, to put the fire out. . . . Those who absent themselves shall be deemed culpable."

"When a stranger comes to reside here, enquiries shall be made as to the *mura* whence he came, and a surety shall be furnished by him. . . . No traveller shall lodge, even for a single night, in a house other than a public inn."

"News of robberies and night attacks shall be given by the ringing of bells or otherwise; and all who hear shall join in pursuit, until the offender is taken. Any one wilfully refraining, shall, on investigation, be punished."

FROM these same *Kumi-chō*, it appears that no one could leave his village even for a single night, without permission,—or take service elsewhere, or marry in another province, or settle in another place. Punishments were severe,—a terrible flogging being the common mode of chastisement by the higher authority. . . . To-day, there are no such punishment; and, legally, a man can go where he pleases. But as a matter of fact he can nowhere do as he

Kumi-system is obscure: a similar system exists in China and in Korea. (Professor Wigmore's reasons for doubting that the Japanese *Kumi*-system had a military origin, appear to be cogent.) Certainly the system greatly facilitated administration. To superior authority the *Kumi* was responsible, not the single household.

²"Notes on Land Tenure and Local Institutions in Old Japan" (*Transactions Asiatic Society of Japan*, Vol. XIX, Part I.) I have chosen the quotations from different *kumi-cho*, and arranged them illustratively.

pleases; for individual liberty is still largely restricted by the survival of communal sentiment and old-fashioned custom. In any country community it would be unwise to proclaim such a doctrine as that a man has the right to employ his leisure and his means as he may think proper. No man's time or money or effort can be considered exclusively his own,—nor even the body that his ghost inhabits. His right to live in the community rests solely upon his willingness to serve the community; and whoever may need his help or sympathy has the privilege of demanding it. That "a man's house is his castle" cannot be asserted in Japan—except in the case of some high potentate. No ordinary person can shut his door to lock out the rest of the world. Everybody's house must be open to visitors: to close its gates by day would be regarded as an insult to the community,—sickness affording no excuse. Only persons in very great authority have the right of making themselves inaccessible. And to displease the community in which one lives,—especially if the community be a rural one,—is a serious matter. When a community is displeased, it acts as an individual. It may consist of five hundred, a thousand, or several thousand persons; but the thinking of all is the thinking of one. By a single serious mistake a man may find himself suddenly placed in solitary opposition to the common will,—isolated, and most effectively ostracized. The silence and the softness of the hostility only render it all the more alarming. This is the ordinary form of punishment for a grave offence against custom: violence is rare, and when resorted to is intended (except in some extraordinary cases presently to be noticed) as a mere correction, the punishment of a blunder. In certain rough communities, blunders endangering life are immediately punished by physical chastisement,—not in anger, but on traditional principle. Once I witnessed at a fishing-settlement, a chastisement of this kind. Men were killing tunny in the surf; the work was bloody and dangerous; and in the midst of the excitement, one of the fishermen struck his killing-spike into the head of a boy. Everybody knew that it was a pure accident; but accidents involving danger to life are rudely dealt with, and this blunderer was instantly knocked senseless by the men nearest him,—then dragged out of the surf and flung down on the sand to recover himself as best he might. No word was said about the matter; and the killing went on as before. Young fishermen, I am told, are roughly handled by their fellows on board a ship, in the case of any error involving risk to the vessel. But, as I have already observed, only stupidity is punished in this fashion; and ostracism is much more dreaded than violence. There is, indeed, only one yet heavier punishment than ostracism—namely, banishment, either for a term of years or for life.

Banishment must in old feudal times have been a very serious penalty; it is a serious penalty even

to-day, under the new order of things. In former years the man expelled from his native place by the communal will—cast out from his home, his clan, his occupation—found himself face to face with misery absolute. In another community there would be no place for him, unless he happened to have relatives there; and these would be obliged to consult with the local authorities, and also with the officials of the fugitive's native place, before venturing to harbour him. No stranger was suffered to settle in another district than his own without official permission. Old documents are extant which record the punishments inflicted upon households for having given shelter to a stranger under pretence of relationship. A banished man was homeless and friendless. He might be a skilled craftsman; but the right to exercise his craft depended upon the consent of the guild representing that craft in the place to which he might go; and banished men were not received by the guilds. He might try to become a servant; but the commune in which he sought refuge would question the right of any master to employ a fugitive and a stranger. His religious connections could not serve him in the least: the code of communal life was decided not by Buddhist, but by Sintō ethics. Since the gods of his birthplace had cast him out, and the gods of any other locality had nothing to do with his original cult, there was no religious help for him. Besides, the mere fact of his being a refugee was itself proof that he must have offended against his own cult. In any event no stranger could look for sympathy among strangers. Even now to take a wife from another province is condemned by local opinion (it was forbidden in feudal times): one is still expected to live, work, and marry in the place where one has been born,—though, in certain cases, and with the public approval of one's own people, adoption into another community is tolerated. Under the feudal system there was incomparably less likelihood of sympathy for the stranger; and banishment signified hunger, solitude, and privation unspeakable. For be it remembered that the legal existence of the individual, at that period, ceased entirely outside of his relation to the family and to the commune. Everybody lived and worked for some household; every household for some clan; outside of the household, and the related aggregate of households, there was no life to be lived—except the life of criminals, beggars, and pariahs. Save with official permission, one could not even become a Buddhist monk. The very outcasts—such as the Eta classes—formed self-governing communities, with traditions of their own, and would not voluntarily accept strangers. So the banished man was most often doomed to become a *hinin*,—one of that wretched class of wandering pariahs who were officially termed "not-men," and lived by beggary, or by the exercise of some vulgar profession, such as that of ambulant musician or mountebank. In more ancient days a banished man could have sold

himself into slavery; but even this poor privilege seems to have been withdrawn during the Tokugawa era.

We can scarcely imagine to-day the conditions of such banishment: to find a Western parallel we must go back to ancient Greek and Roman times long preceding the Empire. Banishment then signified religious excommunication, and practically expulsion from all civilized society,—since there yet existed no idea of human brotherhood, no conception of any claim upon kindness except the claim of kinship. The stranger was everywhere the enemy. Now in Japan, as in the Greek city of old time, the religion of the tutelary god has always been the religion of a group only, the cult of a community: it never became even the religion of a province. The higher cults, on the other hand, did not concern themselves with the individual: his religion was only of the household and of the village or district; the cults of other households and districts were entirely distinct; one could belong to them only by adoption, and strangers, as a rule, were not adopted. Without a household or a clan-cult, the individual was morally and socially dead; for other cults and clans excluded him. When cast out by the domestic cult that regulated his private life, and by the local cult that ordered his life in relation to the community, he simply ceased to exist in relation to human society.

How small were the chances in past times for personality to develop and assert itself may be imagined from the foregoing facts. The individual was completely and pitilessly sacrificed to the community. Even now the only safe rule of conduct in a Japanese settlement is to act in all things according to local custom; for the slightest divergence from rule will be observed with disfavour. Privacy does not exist; nothing can be hidden; everybody's vices or virtues are known to everybody else. Unusual behavior is judged as a departure from the traditional standard of conduct; all oddities are condemned as departures from custom; and tradition and custom still have the force of religious obligations. Indeed, they really *are* religious and obligatory, not only by reason of their origin, but by reason of their relation also to the public cult, which signifies the worship of the past.

It is therefore easy to understand why Sintō never had a written code of morals, and why its greatest scholars have declared that a moral code is unnecessary. In that stage of religious evolution which ancestor-worship represents, there can be no distinction between religion and ethics, nor between ethics and custom. Government and religion are the same; custom and law are identified. The ethics of Sintō were all included in conformity to custom. The traditional rules of the household, the traditional laws of the commune—these were the morals of Sintō: to obey them was religion; to disobey them, impiety. . . . And, after all, the true significance of any religious code, written or unwritten, lies in its expression of social duty, its doctrine of the right and wrong

of conduct, its embodiment of a people's moral experience. Really the difference between any modern ideal of conduct, such as the English, and the patriarchal ideal, such as that of the early Greeks or of the Japanese, would be found on examination to consist mainly in the minute extension of the older conception to all details of individual life. Assuredly the religion of Sintō needed no written commandment: it was taught to everybody from childhood by precept and example, and any person of ordinary intelligence could learn it. When a religion is capable of rendering it dangerous for anybody to act outside of rules, the framing of a code would be obviously superfluous. We ourselves have no written code of conduct as regards the higher social life, the exclusive circles of civilized existence, which are not ruled merely by the Ten Commandments. The knowledge of what to do in those zones, and of how to do it, can come only by training, by experience, by observation, and by the intuitive recognition of the reason of things.

AND now to return to the question of the authority of the Sintō priest as representative of communal sentiment,—an authority which I believe to have been always very great. . . . Striking proof that the punishments inflicted by a community upon its erring members were originally inflicted in the name of the tutelary god is furnished by the fact that manifestations of communal displeasure still assume, in various country districts, a religious character. I have witnessed such manifestations, and I am assured that they still occur in most of the provinces. But it is in remote country-towns or isolated villages, where traditions have remained almost unchanged, that one can best observe these survivals of antique custom. In such places the conduct of every resident is closely watched and rigidly judged by all the rest. Little, however, is said about misdemeanours of a minor sort until the time of the great local Sintō festival,—the annual festival of the tutelary god. It is then that the community gives its warnings or inflicts its penalties: this at least in the case of conduct offensive to local ethics. The god, on the occasion of this festival, is supposed to visit the dwellings of his Uziko; and his portable shrine,—a weighty structure borne by thirty or forty men,—is carried through the principal streets. The bearers are supposed to act according to the will of the god,—to go whithersoever his divine spirit directs them. . . . I may describe the incidents of the procession as I saw it in a seacoast village, not once, but several times.

Before the procession a band of young men advance, leaping and wildly dancing in circles: these young men clear the way; and it is unsafe to pass near them, for they whirl about as if moved by frenzy. . . . When I first saw such a band of dancers, I could imagine myself watching some old Dionysiac revel;—their furious gyrations certainly realized Greek accounts of the antique sacred frenzy. There were, indeed, no Greek heads; but the bronzed lithe

figures, naked save for loin-cloth and sandals, and most sculpturesquely muscled, might well have inspired some vase-design of dancing fauns. After these god-possessed dancers—whose passage swept the streets clear, scattering the crowd to right and left—came the virgin priestess, white-robed and veiled, riding upon a horse, and followed by several mounted priests in white garments and high black caps of ceremony. Behind them advanced the ponderous shrine, swaying above the heads of its bearers like a junk in a storm. Scores of brawny arms were pushing it to the right; other scores were pushing it to the left: behind and before, also, there was furious pulling and pushing; and the roar of voices uttering invocations made it impossible to hear anything else. By immemorial custom the upper stories of all the dwellings had been tightly closed: woe to the Peeping Tom who should be detected, on such a day, in the impious act of *looking down upon the god!* . . .

Now the shrine-bearers, as I have said, are supposed to be moved by the spirit of the god—(probably by his Rough Spirit; for the Sintō god is multipue); and all this pushing and pulling and swaying signifies only the deity's inspection of the dwellings on either hand. He is looking about to see whether the hearts of his worshippers are pure, and is deciding whether it will be necessary to give a warning, or to inflict a penalty. His bearers will carry him whithersoever he chooses to go—through solid walls if necessary. If the shrine strike against any house,—even against an awning only,—that is a sign that the god is not pleased with the dwellers in that house. If the shrine breaks part of the house, that is a serious warning. But it may happen that the god wills to enter a house,—breaking his way. Then woe o the inmates, unless they flee at once through the back-door; and the wild procession, thundering in, will wreck and rend and smash and splinter everything on the premises before the god consents to proceed upon his round.

Upon enquiring into the reasons of two wreckings of which I witnessed the results, I learned enough to assure me that from the communal point of view, both aggressions were morally justifiable. In one case a fraud had been practised; in the other, help had been refused to the family of a drowned resident.

Thus one offence had been legal; the other only moral. A country community will not hand over its delinquents to the police except in case of incendiarism, murder, theft, or other serious crime. It has a horror of law, and never invokes it when the matter can be settled by any other means. This was the rule also in ancient times, and the feudal government encouraged its maintenance. But when the tutelary deity has been displeased, *he* insists upon the punishment or disgrace of the offender; and the offender's entire family, as by feudal custom, is held responsible. The victim can invoke the new law, if he dares, and bring the wreckers of his home into court, and recover damages, for the modern police-courts are not ruled by Sintō. But only a very rash man will invoke the new law against the communal judgment, for that action in itself would be condemned as a gross breach of custom. The community is always ready, through its council, to do justice in cases where innocence can be proved. But if a man really guilty of the faults charged to his account should try to avenge himself by appeal to a non-religious law, then it were well for him to remove himself and his family, as soon as possible thereafter, to some far-away place.

WE have seen that, in Old Japan, the life of the individual was under two kinds of religious control. All his acts were regulated according to the traditions either of the domestic or of the communal cult; and these conditions probably began with the establishment of a settled civilization. We have also seen that the communal religion took upon itself to enforce the observance of the household religion. The fact will not seem strange if we remember that the underlying idea in either cult was the same,—the idea that the welfare of the living depended upon the welfare of the dead. Neglect of the household rite would provoke, it was believed, the malevolence of the spirits; and their malevolence might bring about some public misfortune. The ghosts of the ancestors controlled nature;—fire and flood, pestilence and famine were at their disposal as means of vengeance. One act of impiety in a village might, therefore, bring about misfortune to all. And the community considered itself responsible to the dead for the maintenance of filial piety in every home.

