

In Tokyo's Nihonbashihoncho district and vicinity there is a clustering of pharmaceutical companies' head offices and chemical companies connected with pharmaceuticals. I had heard there was a festival at the Yakuso Shrine, which sits atop a building tucked away in that quarter, so off I went to take a look. The place rang with the sound of festival music played by children, *oshiruko* bean broth was being dished out, and it was a really bustling scene. To draw one of the triangular lots in the lottery that was a central attraction, you had to climb all the way up to the building's rooftop, receive purification and bow at the shrine. The god worshipped at this shrine is Okuninushinomikoto, who also appears in the Izumo Myth of the *White Hare of Inaba*. The hare had been deprived of its pelt (clothing) for tricking a crocodile, but was brought back to health by the kind ministrations of the god Okuni; hence the shrine's name Yakuso, which means "founder of medicine". In this manner the mythical world serves to uphold the ring of ecosystems formed by the neighborhood associations of the urban canyons. (The characters for Okuni can also be read in the Chinese style as "Daikoku", which is the same as the name of the god of wealth (one of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune). Therefore these two gods are often syncretized and worshipped as one.)



Japan's prime Daikoku statue, in Kandamyojin Shrine grounds



Statue of the White Hare at "White Hare Myth Land "

- For more details of the Yakuso Shrine and its festival, visit:
<http://www.yakujikyo.or.jp/matsuri/history.html>
- To learn about the Izumo Myths, see:
<http://www.geocities.co.jp/SilkRoad-Desert/8918/izumosinwa.html>
- For the tale of the god Okuni and the White Hare of Inaba, go to:
<http://www.linkclub.or.jp/~pip/ututu/kami/furukotobumi/ookuni1.html>

<http://homepage2.nifty.com/p-sona/english/tottori-E.html>

- Information on Japanese myths is at:

<http://www.st.rim.or.jp/~cycle/myrefE.HTML>

The number of visitors to zoos, aquaria and the like has been on a declining trend for several years, and increasingly such facilities are revamping themselves with innovative exhibits in an effort to bring the visitors back. Against that background, the Ueno Zoo, which had long been top of the attendance league, has now been toppled from that position by the Asahiyama Zoo in Asahikawa City, which is increasing its attendance by putting efforts into action exhibits. It's an event that has made the news.

Aquaria too are drawing higher numbers of visitors with new facilities featuring giant tanks with underwater tunnels permitting up-close observation of piscine ecosystems.

- The Asahiyama Zoo's website is here:

http://www5.city.asahikawa.hokkaido.jp/asahiyamazoo/zoo/sc02_top.html

- An account of trends at the Asahiyama Zoo is at:

<http://www5.hokkaido-np.co.jp/pet/asahiyama/index.php3>

Going to the Biohistory Research Hall (Director: Keiko Nakamura) in Takatsuki City, I found exhibits on the changing forms of ecosystems from the birth of life to the present, suited to various interest levels and perspectives, and with readily understandable commentaries. Also on display were pictures and tapestries of the Tree of Life, expressing the cosmic outlooks and views of life that have taken root in various climates around the world. It was extremely interesting.

- The JT Biohistory Research Hall's website is here:

<http://www.brh.co.jp/>

- An interview with Keiko Nakamura can be found at:

http://www.jaxa.jp/news_topics/interview/vol11/index_j.html

- To read about the Tree of Life, go to:

http://www.brh.co.jp/seimeishi/1993-2002/25/gls_1.html

<http://www.starpeople.com/sun2a.html>

Novel wireless interfaces compatible with ubiquitous ecosystems are springing up one after another. The recent lifting of the ban on high-speed communication using power lines (PLC) is on many people's lips. In Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications directives, PLC is termed "Broadband Power Line Communication". There are several industry associations for PLC, including HPA, UPA and CEPCA; these must now carry out standardization and normalization among themselves so as to spread use of the products.

- The website of the High Speed Power Line Communication Promoters' Alliance of Japan is here:

<http://www.plc-j.org/index.htm>

- Explication by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications concerning the partial revision and announcement of the Radio Equipment Regulations can be found at:

<http://www.sv15.com/net/plc/61005.htm>

- HPA (HomePlug Powerline Alliance) is at:

<http://www.homeplug.org/en/index.asp>

- UPA (Universal Powerline Association) is at:
http://www.upapl.org/page_viewer.asp?category=Home&sid=2
- CEPCA (CE Powerline Communication Alliance) is at:
<http://www.cepca.org/home>

Soon to be with us are wireless USB products (WUSB) that employ the UWB method to enable high-speed transmission of 480 Mbits/sec for communication distances up to 3 m.

Also being studied is evanescent communication that will utilize the evanescent waves generated when current passes through the steel frames of buildings, and have the feature of preventing leakage to the exterior of buildings.

As technology evolves, it looks like we will be seeing the successive appearance of radio wave utilization modes and communication techniques to fit our ecosystems.

- Concerning wireless USB, see:
http://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wireless_USB
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wireless_USB
<http://www.usb.org/developers/wusb>
<http://www.deviceforge.com/articles/AT9015145687.html>
- Evanescent waves and evanescent light are described at:
<http://www.andrew.cmu.edu/user/dcprieve/Evanescence%20waves.htm>
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evanescence_waves
- Learn about evanescent communication at:
http://www.keyman.or.jp/search/keyword/30001724_1.html
<http://www.sophia-it.com/content/evanescent+communication>
<http://gauss.ffii.org/PatentView/EP1369975>



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