

2015/07/18

One-to-One Japanese: Tanabata Festival

We read a paper article about a Japanese traditional event of the season, Tanabata Festival in One-to-One class. We already knew some of it and so it was enjoyable.

Lafcadio Hearn begins the story, "The Romance of the Milky Way" as follows:

Among the many charming festivals celebrated by Old Japan, the most romantic was the festival of Tanabata-Sama, the Weaving-Lady of the Milky Way".

He also says, "The legend is Chinese". He was interested not only in the countries in the earthly world like Japan, China, Greece, etc. but also in a heavenly body, the great universe in various ways: science, literature, philosophy and religion as well, like a question of where humans come from.

Another story about Tanabata L. Hearn wrote is "The Legend of Zhi Nu" in "Chinese Ghost Stories". According to the Internet news, "Double Seventh Festival" seems to be known as "Chinese Valentine's Day". Chinese tend to think the day of the festival a chance for young lovers to have a date because of the beautiful love story theme in the legend, whereas Japanese tend to celebrate Tanabata as an event of wish-upon-astral-divinities mostly for children with their familiar Tanabata song.



七夕の袖巻く宵のあかときは

川瀬のたづは鳴かずともよし

As Tanabata (slumbers) with her long sleeves rolled up, until the reddening of the dawn, do not, O storks of the river-shallows, awaken her by your cries.