

The Initiation of the Religious Specialists

Kamisan: A Few Observations

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INTRODUCTION

The **kamisan** as shaman. The purpose of this essay is to present a follow-up study of the initiation of magico-religious specialists living in Kamaishi City, Iwate Prefecture, known as *kamisan* or *idakko* (for the purposes of this paper I will lump them all together under the general name *kamisan*), and then to attempt some analysis of the study.

The *kamisan*-like religious specialists living in Kamaishi and the environs are those specialists who, while in a state of trance induced by having been possessed by a deity, respond to magico-religious requests made by petitioners. Both men and women, they of course overlap in some respects with other religious practitioners such as Buddhist monks, Shinto priests and other popular religion specialists, but basically their function is different from these other specialists.

The word *kamisan* is used in this geographical area to signify a

Based on a paper presented 14 December 1976 to the Komazawa University Religious Studies Research Group; I have since added the results of subsequent fieldwork. I would like to thank the members of the group for their valuable suggestions. I would further like to express my gratitude to the subjects of this study, the residents of Kamaishi City, who cooperated willingly with me in spite of being subjected to many troublesome and embarrassing questions. I would, in addition, like to acknowledge the valuable leadership I have received from Professors Sakurai Tokutarō and Sasaki Kōkan. Translated by W. Michael Kelsey and Jan Swyngedouw from “Kamisanteki shokunōsha no inishiēshon wo meguru jakkan no oboegaki” カミサンの職能者のイニシエーションをめぐる若干の覚え書 in *Bunka* 文化 (Culture) 3, March, 1977, Komazawa University, pp. 75-117. (The word *kamisan* and several others in the text are in the original written phonetically. We have accordingly omitted them from the Glossary.)

certain type of popular religion practitioner. If we were to attempt a comparative analysis of these people with similar specialists living in other areas, it is needless to say that we would need some expression that would convey the same meaning in any geographical location. A look at the history of the research in this field shows that the words *miko* and "shaman" have been employed for this purpose (Miyata 1973). Lately, however, there has been a strong tendency to rely on the word "shaman." The reasons for this have already been dealt with (see Sasaki Kōkan 1974a and 1974b), and I will not touch on them here, but I too will board this particular band wagon and use the word "shaman" as a general concept useful to analysis.

It is known by now that shamanic specialists exist throughout the world (see Eliade 1964). We can say, then, that the phenomenon of shamanism is recognized as being a universal religious phenomenon. Even if we limit ourselves to Japan, shamanic specialists exist in large numbers in every part of the country. In an earlier study based on exhaustive field research, Sakurai has stated: "These days we definitely cannot say that shamans such as the *itako* or the *yuta* are active in the large population centers. Rather, we must say that they are in remote isolated islands, and in such places as mountain farming villages and fishing villages seldom visited by members of the outside world" (Sakurai 1971, p. 185).

But as field investigations have progressed it has gradually become clear that these specialists are functioning, if not on the surface, among the permanent residents of cities and agricultural and fishing villages without regard to size or urban character, and it is in these places that they are making their livings. For example, the geographical area of Kamaishi City which I am reporting on here is the second largest city in Iwate Prefecture, with a population of 70,211 (34,616 men and 35,595 women according to 1975 figures). Kamaishi City is composed of five districts, namely Kamaishi District, Unozumai District, Kurihashi District, Kasshi District and Tōni District; my report concerns only Kamaishi District, which is the central portion of the city. It is, furthermore, limited

to the urban areas. I found more *kamisan* specialists there with each new survey I made. According to one informant, K.M. (male, 56 years old), "Rumor has it that there are about thirty *ogamiya*¹ in Kamaishi," referring to Kamaishi District; from this statement I suspect that if I were to make yet another survey I would uncover even more such religious specialists. It is, accordingly, simply not possible to say that the number of specialists I have dealt with in this survey represents all such people in the area.

As is clear from this example, it is extremely dangerous to judge whether or not shamanic specialists exist in an area on the basis of the population of the area. It has become necessary today, as similar specialists are being uncovered in greater and greater numbers in every district, to reaffirm and reclarify our fundamental concept of the "shaman."

I would like to make it immediately clear at this point that I am using in its totality Sasaki's idea that a shaman is "a magico-religious specialist who is able to contact and communicate with, of his own volition, supernatural existences (such as deities, buddhas, spirits of the dead, souls and the like)" (Sasaki Kōkan 1974b, p. 33). We should note, in this respect, that this concept contains three separate parts. These are, namely:

1. A shaman *can make contact with supernatural beings*—during the extraordinary psychological state known as the trance the shaman is able to directly contact and communicate with supernatural beings and territories (Sasaki Kōkan 1972, p. 9).
2. The shaman does this *of his or her own volition*—he (or she) is a person who can, when the necessity arises, willfully fill this role (Sakurai 1977, p. 422).
3. The shaman is *a magico-religious specialist*—a person who responds to the demands made by clients (Sasaki Kōkan 1972, p. 9).

1. Among the people called *ogamiya* (lit. "prayer maker") in Kamaishi District are popular religious practitioners who both do and do not have direct contact with the spirit world.

These three parts, or, to restate, three stipulations, thus are all present in people we call shamans. In order to further our understanding I would like to deal briefly with the mutual interrelations among the three stipulations.

Three types of practitioners. We will, for the moment, refer to a person who fills stipulations 1 and 3, but not 2, as being of *Type I*; to someone who fills stipulations 1 and 2, but not 3, as being of *Type II*; and to someone who fills 2 and 3, but not 1, as being of *Type III*.

As for our Type I, then, even though a person might be shamanic in the sense that he is able to make direct contact with the supernatural, it is difficult to call him a shaman if he cannot do it voluntarily. People belonging to Type I are roughly equivalent to the *yorishiro* (lit. "shrine") that will appear in our examples below.² The *yorishiro* is a person who can establish direct contact with the supernatural world, a sort of "spiritual medium" between mortals and deities. She (or he) cannot, however, make this communication with the spiritual world voluntarily and by her (or his) own power. In order for her to fill the role of magico-religious specialist, accordingly, it is necessary for her to have present a specialist who can act willfully. In most cases a *genja* ("ascetic") fills this role. It could, of course, be someone else. Thus the *yorishiro* necessarily must combine with a *genja* (or some interchangeable person). Because the *yorishiro* fills stipulations 1 and 3, and the *genja* meets stipulation 2, when the two work together all three stipulations are met and they can function as a shaman would. To put it more precisely, the *yorishiro* fulfills only stipulation 1, and the *genja* fills stipulation 3, and the two

2. This was expressed by the words *yoridai* and *dainin* during our field investigations. It is not clear, however, if this expression is something that has been handed down in Kamaishi District or whether it has some particular significance to the practitioners; in this essay I have thus decided to use the term *yorishiro*. Ishizu uses the term *yoridai*, expressing it with the characters shown in the Glossary (see Ishizu 1971, p. 14).

working together fulfill stipulations 1, 2, and 3. In this sense, the *yorishiro* does not necessarily have to be a person of Type I (stipulations 1 and 3). It is, rather, probably more common for such people to fill only stipulation 1 and not to meet stipulations 2 and 3. I will leave a consideration of this matter to a different forum, and here would like to stress only that generally the *yorishiro* and the *genja* split between them the role of shaman.

Proceeding to Type II, then, these people are shamanic in that they make contact with the spirit world. It is difficult to call them specialists, however, because they do not do this in response to demands from clients. Type II is a phase through which one must pass in becoming a shaman. The order is, namely, like this: (1) → (1) (2) (Type II) → (1) (2) (3). A consideration of initiation is, thus, identical to a consideration of Type II.

Those people in Type III should be called "magicians," because they make absolutely no contact with the spirit world. There are large numbers of magician-like specialists in Kamaishi District. I will postpone treatment of their roles, and of their relationships with the shamans to a later essay.

I will, thus, call those people who meet stipulations 1, 2, and 3 "shamanic specialists."

I undertook field research in August 1973 in order to first uncover those people in the Kamaishi District who meet these conditions, and then to clarify their religious roles in the district.³ The fol-

3. Members of the Komazawa University Religious Studies Research Group conducted three surveys centering in the suburban Kamaishi City areas of Heita village under the theme "Modernization and religious changes in the coastal areas of the Sanriku (Aomori, Iwate and Miyagi prefectures) district." The first of these was in August of 1967, and the second in October of 1968, centering around the Kamaishi Festival, a time of intensified religious feelings (for results of these, see Matsumoto 1969 and 1970, and Takase 1970). Five years later a follow-up study was made in August of 1973 (for results see *Shūkyōgaku ronshū* 7, 1974). I participated in the third of these investigations. At this time I was assigned the theme "The actual state of the popular religion practitioners, the *kamisan*," and worked with Professor Sasaki Kōkan.

lowing seven points came to light as a result of this fieldwork (Sasaki Kōkan 1974b):

1. There are two main divisions of shamanic specialists found in Kamaishi City. One is the *kamisan*, men and women with sight; the other is the *itako*, who are blind women.
2. The *kamisan* have both greater numbers and greater influence than the *itako*.
3. The *kamisan* correspond to the *gomiso* of Tsugaru.
4. Eliade lists the following three conditions or methods for becoming a shaman: (a) spontaneous vocation (“call” or “election”); (b) hereditary transmission of the shamanic profession, or (c) the becoming a shaman through one’s own free will or the will of one’s clan or family (Eliade 1974, p. 13). Generally speaking, the *kamisan* fall into category (a) and the *itako* into category (c).
5. The individual’s patron deity does not always possess the *kamisan* during the ceremonies.
6. Both during initiation and in subsequent ceremonies the *kamisan* functions in two ways: (a) the deity will use the mouth of the *kamisan* and speak and act in the first person, and (b) the *kamisan* will face the deity and report what it says in the third person, as the representative of the deity.
7. The *kamisan* performs the roles of both spiritual medium and fortuneteller, but as his or her initiation period fades into the past the role of fortuneteller begins to take precedence over that of medium, and the role of fortuneteller is gradually superseded by that of priest.

The above seven points were further validated by our subsequent fieldwork. As I will note below, however, it will be necessary to make a few adjustments in point 4.

This essay will report primarily on the initiation of the shamans, relying on this 1973 survey with supplements from four follow-up surveys,⁴ and will analyze the results of these surveys. My working

4. I made four trips, as follows: 19–28 August 1975; 20–27 August 1976; 3–7 November 1976; 26 December 1976–8 January 1977, for a total of a mere forty days, and performed these research trips alone.

hypothesis will be that “initiation is defined as that corpus of activities engaged in by the average person before becoming a shaman.” I will now present nine examples of *kamisan* from Kamaishi and one example of an *idakko*.

EXAMPLES

1. *O.S., 72 years old (died 1976), female.* From the time she was three she began to feel spiritual influence (*reikan*). For example, when she was four years old she said, “That person will eat poison and die!”; this prophecy was fulfilled exactly as she made it.

She was married on Hokkaidō at the age of twenty-one. From that period she was possessed more and more violently, and the shaman (*ogamiya*) in the neighborhood began to entreat her earnestly, saying, “You are a person to whom the truth has been revealed; you should learn the ceremonies and the ritual prayers (*norito*).” She, however, had already decided to accumulate ascetic practices, and spent about four years purifying herself through such “practices” (*gyō*) as cold water ablutions (*mizugori*), abstention from grain, and abstention from salt, following her own path rather than the one urged on her.

She began to receive petitioners from the age of twenty-three. She said that among the various deities it was Ryūjin-sama (a dragon deity) who gave her the most assistance. When she was possessed by the deity the words would flow ceaselessly from her mouth. According to this woman, those who are possessed by deities can easily communicate with the spirits of the dead, but she said that because her intentions were different from those *itako* on Mt. Osore she never engaged in such practices.

She controlled the area as a sort of living deity (*ikigami*), and died on 6 May 1976 from stomach cancer. Her spiritual powers have, however, been transferred to her youngest daughter, K (thirty years old and single).

The *kamiage* (“coming out of the deity”) ceremony for this daughter K was conducted 6 November 1976 under the leadership of two “living deities” sent from the main headquarters of Seikōkyō

(in which O.S. served as the assistant general coordinator).

This ceremony was begun with the recitation by these two "living deities" of a ritual prayer (*norito*), and in about twenty minutes' time K was possessed by the spirit of her mother, who had died of stomach cancer. Her father sat next to her and performed the role of questioner, and for about thirty minutes he was able to speak to the dead woman through the mediation of his daughter.

As a result of having undergone this ceremony the daughter was herself acknowledged as a "living deity." She has not, however, begun practice as yet. Her father explained this as follows: "K must first completely exorcise herself of the various karma that remain attached to her. If she does not do this, even though she might be possessed by the spirits of the living or the dead, deities and the like, she would not be able to make them leave once they had possessed her. This process will take, at the least, three years."

She is now undergoing ascetic practices.

2. *T.K., 61, female.* She first experienced possession at the age of twelve. At thirteen, for example, she blurted out, "There's a fire. We'll be hearing the alarm soon!" Those around her did not take this seriously, but in about thirty minutes it happened exactly as she had said it would. Because she would occasionally become possessed and blurt things out, she was for a long time treated as though she were insane.

She was married at nineteen. Her husband, who was in the navy, left two hours after the wedding. He did not return for the next six years. Not liking to rely on others and being a very determined person, she supported herself by selling dry goods, and when she had accumulated a little money she would relieve her loneliness by doing ascetic practices. When she was twenty-six her husband returned, but she learned that he had a lover and divorced him. She came to have absolutely no trust in men, and even came to doubt the entire human race. In order to ease her mental suffering she began doing ascetic practices in earnest. At

about this time she began to frequently see deities in dreams.

During the three-year period in which she was doing her ascetic practices she ate only every three days, and limited this to the amount of rice she could pick up with three fingers, so during this period she existed almost entirely on water. She spent her day entirely in such "practices" as cold water ablutions and *hyakudo mairi* ("one hundred repetitions of a worship act"), living entirely for the night, when she could go to sleep and dream.

As an example of such dreams she was once told, "Go to the Hachiman Shrine, where there is a such-and-such sized *goshintai* ('*kami* symbol') of the Sun Goddess (Amaterasu Ōmikami)." She awoke from this dream and thought it strange that her hands were clasped in worship even though it was two in the morning, so she went to the shrine; there she found a rock of the same size that she had been told about in her dream. Thinking this rock was what her dream had been all about, she received it gratefully, but she said, "That was the voice of the deity." Her patron deity was Sarutahiko,* another fact she learned in her dreams. She said that there are "true dreams," "reverse dreams," and "misleading dreams," and that one should take care not to be deceived by a misleading dream.

Several times a deity in the form of an old man with a white beard would appear before her in her dreams and ask for her hand in marriage; she would awake on the point of being taken away by him. She also saw Kōbō Daishi† as a handsome young man several times. The deity who gave her the most strength, however, was the old man with the long beard and a crooked staff. She says that even now, if something happens to her, he will appear before her in dreams.

* A deity who served as a guide to the grandson of the Sun Goddess when he descended to earth; Sarutahiko's shrine is close to that of the Sun Goddess at Ise. TRANSLATOR.

† Kōbō Daishi, or Kūkai (774-835), was the founder of the Shingon sect of Buddhism. He is also an important figure in popular religion and is the patron of many shamans. TRANSLATOR.

She began to act in her capacity as a *kamisan* from the time she was thirty-one years old. She says, "In my younger days I had no doubts about anything and was thus possessed much more easily than I am now," and if a petitioner comes who has feminine problems she is influenced by this, becoming temporarily ill until the petitioner has left.

3. *C.M., 70, female.* When she was eighteen she began to experience severe pain as a presentiment that a person was about to die. In these cases the upper half of her body would hurt if the person were male, and the lower half would hurt if it were a woman who was about to die. She says that she would feel the pain even more sharply if a person she was on particularly close terms with was about to die.

She married a fisherman at twenty-three. The relationship did not go well, however, and she fled back to her parents' home in half a year. The following year her mother went on a retreat (*komori*) in a Nichiren Buddhist temple in order to pray for safe recovery from illness. She accompanied her mother to the temple and began to practice "water dousing" (*mizu wo kaburu gyō*) in order to ease the pain caused by her mother's having to pray for recovery and by her divorce. Half a year later her mother recovered and left the temple, but she remained in the enclosure hall of this temple until she was forty-one, practicing water dousing for some seventeen years. Her daily regimen would be to douse herself in the morning while reciting her morning devotions (*daimoku*), then to clean the main temple and to act as a guide for visitors to the temple, and in the evening to douse herself again. She would practice this with such devotion that even on cold days she would perspire, and she never missed a day in her devotions.

One morning when she was about forty she was reciting her *daimoku* and dousing herself with water in her normal way when she felt a lump on her back. This lump, growing smaller all the while, gradually moved around to her stomach, where it went round and round in circles and began calling frequently to her,

“Speak! Speak!” She did not know, however, what it was that she was supposed to say. The lump finally went away, but she interprets it as being her patron, the Dragon Deity. After this experience, whenever she was dousing herself with water she would see, for example, the figure of a samurai, and she also came to hear voices, just like watching a motion picture.

When she was forty-one she moved her practices to a Nichiren temple in Miyagi Prefecture. That year, when the chief monk of the temple was purifying her using a wooden sword, she suddenly began first to weep, then to babble incoherently. She has absolutely no consciousness of the act, but says this was her “first speaking.” A year after these experiences she received permission from the chief monk to say prayers for others.

She began to say prayers for others at the age of forty-two. She is still doing so, and she is able to feel in her body that which has obstructed her clients. When petitioners come to her because they have been affected by: (1) a deity (*kami*); (2) a spirit of a living person, or (3) the spirit of a dead person, she feels pains in her body respectively: (1) above the neck (in the head, ears or eyes); (2) in the chest area, and (3) below the waist. She is thus able to tell in the waiting room, when the petitioner describes his petition to her, exactly what the problem is, because she is already feeling pains in her body. But she says that it would be rude to tell them the problem right there in the waiting room, so she waits until after a sutra has been read in the altar room to let them know what has happened.

She also performed the role of *yorishiro* from the time she was forty-two until she was fifty. A *yorishiro*, according to her, is a person who cannot make voluntary contact with the deities but is nonetheless able to directly contact the supernatural world through the leadership provided by a *genja*. For that reason *yorishiro* combine with a *genja* in order to respond to petitioners' prayers. She worked together with the chief monk of the Nichiren temple. She says that one becomes considerably more tired in performing the role of *yorishiro* than when praying alone for others.

She gave up the role of *yorishiro* when she turned fifty and began working completely alone in the handling of petitioners' requests. She says that as one begins to get older one's strength will not hold out and her periods of exhaustion are greater.

4. Y.K., 65, female.⁵ She married at the age of twenty-one. To thank an *ogamiya* from Ontakekyō for healing the illness of her oldest son she became a member of Ontakekyō, and when she was twenty-nine she climbed Mt. Ontake for the first time.

That year she suddenly blurted out, "So-and-so will put on a striped *kimono*, drink *sake* and get red in the face!" Nobody around her believed her, but eventually it happened just as she had said. Natural outbursts such as this happened to her frequently.

When she was thirty-nine she was repatriated from Korea and moved to Kamaishi City, but her husband's job did not go well and she went to the various *kamisan* in regard to this. Then her husband put his efforts into the business and appeared to have succeeded, but eventually he failed, and in order to calm herself she began the religious training practice of standing under waterfalls. She pushed herself too far, however, and her body collapsed, so she was hospitalized. Her anguish in her daily life thus grew greater and greater. After her release from the hospital she was at a complete loss, and visited all the *kamisan* in the city.

When she went to receive prayers from one of these *kamisan*, S.K. (see example 7), she was made into a *yorishiro*. About four times after that she "was made a receiver for the deity," but this did not solve her own sufferings; seeking salvation, she then visited an *ogamiya* belonging to Ontakekyō. She became acquainted with Satō Kazumi, an *ogamiya* who came there occasionally, and decided to become his disciple. At this time she was forty-eight.

5. Based on a study conducted in September 1974 by Sugawara and Yamaoka (unpublished).

After becoming his disciple she would choose times convenient to her, spending about ten or twenty days out of each month at his house in Hanaizumi-machi learning how to make the ritual prayers (*norito*), how to conduct the ceremonies and the like.

When she was forty-nine she entered a twenty-one day period at her home in Kamaishi that was a continual dream or vision, though she has never been able to tell which. At this time creatures like dragons, snakes and foxes appeared variously before her eyes. Although she was sleeping with her husband, she would attempt to catch those things she could see, making great amounts of noise and being scolded by her husband; it was, however, a matter of life and death to her to capture them. On the twenty-second day she visited the house of her teacher, and when she told him what was happening he said, "If that's the way it is, then begin your religious training in earnest." She thus stayed at her teacher's house and carried out the practices of standing in waterfalls and cold water ablutions.

While chanting the ritual prayers at night she would see several people who looked like deities, and also five-colored flags and fire balls. She would hear strange songs even though no one was singing, and would also hear noises that sounded like pigs grunting.

After these conditions had gone on for a period of time her teacher tested her one day. In this test the teacher put her into a completely dark room and asked her, "What am I holding in my hand?" To these questions she had to identify the object, such as "a teacup," or "a match." In order to pass this test it was necessary to correctly identify more than eight of the ten different items the teacher asked about. Passing the test meant that the person could be certified as a full-fledged *ogamiya*. She correctly identified all ten items and thus passed the test. Afterwards a "completion ceremony" was held for her, and she was congratulated by her fellow disciples.

Immediately after this, when she was forty-nine, she began working in Kamaishi City as a *kamisan*. Until recently she would contact the dead and contact deities, but now she only interprets

what has passed in front of her eyes. Also, when ill petitioners come she receives their influences, and if, for example, her petitioner has a bad stomach, her own stomach begins to hurt, not returning to normal until the petitioner leaves. Thus she says she can tell immediately what illness a person has, no matter what it might be.

5. *H.S., 56, male.* When he was twelve years old his father was afflicted with an illness that left him hovering between life and death. At that time the various religious practitioners in the city made spells and prayers for his father, who was miraculously cured. Having seen with his own eyes the power of these spells and prayers performed by the *gyōja* ("ascetic practitioners"), he decided to enter the faith.

His father himself entered the faith after being cured, and began performing religious practices in the mountains, so H.S. followed along after his father doing his own practices. When he was sixteen he dropped out of the second year of middle school (under the old system) in order to devote himself earnestly to his practices. The location of his training was primarily the unnamed mountains in Nara Prefecture.

On entering a mountain he would first put on purified clothing, then walk around the mountain to see if it was one that would have value to him in his training. When he had found an appropriate place he would prepare *soba* flour, *miso* and green tea, then enter the mountain. He would break branches and build a hut, spending a minimum of twenty-eight days there in enclosure. During this time he would never extinguish his "fire." His meagre rations and the isolated feeling he experienced constituted painful "practice," but he would keep telling himself, "I can die at any time. That's the reason I have a Buddhist name. While alive, I am already a god or a buddha," and in such a way he was able to endure his sufferings until the end of the time he had set for himself. He says that this is a "practice" he carried out many times.

When he was twenty he was possessed by a witch animal (*izuna*).* When he told others what he had heard from this *izuna* his prophecies were always correct. He thus gathered a remarkable reputation, and always had petitioners trailing along behind him. At twenty-two, however, he began to doubt that these were truly the words of the deities and entered "practices" that were to take him right to the limits of life.

He closed himself up in a cave in the mountains during the winter and copied sutras, and did water practices. He prayed with all his heart, "Please let me hear the voices of the gods! Let me hear the true voices of the gods!" As a result of this he was able to hear for the first time divine voices. The divine words were not at all difficult, but were rather general and conventional, words which flowed along without a gap. He could hear rumbling from the pit of his stomach a magisterial voice, carrying conviction. When he could hear the voice of the deity it was as though a beautiful golden wave were cresting, covering him. When the divine words ended the wave also disappeared. He said this was only for a brief period of time.

The first time he heard the deity's voice he knew the deity existed, and awoke from the self he had been until that time; he became aware that "faith" was the purification of the spirit.

Afterwards a voice several times declared itself with the words, "I am Ōhirume no Ōkami!" (his patron deity). He was also taught in a dream at about the same time how to perform the mudras (*kuji*).

He came to Kamaishi City at the age of thirty-eight and since then he has not spoken once in the first person during a trance. When a petitioner comes he begins to pray and sees and hears the deities or the spirits of the dead; he then relates what they have

* The *izuna* is a four-legged witch animal, regarded by some as a dog and by others as a fox; this particular word is found primarily in Northeastern Japan, though the animal in question is to be encountered throughout Japan. Many shamans keep *izuna* which assist them in their practices. TRANSLATOR.

told him to the petitioner in a normal conversational tone after the state of trance has ended.

6. *K.H.*, 61, *female*. When she was twenty-one she married a monk from the Nichiren sect. When she was twenty-eight they moved to a temple in Tamazukuri County of Miyagi Prefecture, where they lived until they moved to Kamaishi City when she was thirty-eight.

There was a nun, a medium who had visited this temple in Tamazukuri County to do religious practices occasionally over the past several years. Shortly after *K.H.* moved into this temple with her husband the nun paid a visit. In the course of their conversation the nun said, "This temple has a rather strong aura of being a place where the spirits of the living can possess people. Your husband will thus be overcome by this karma and his life will be shortened." When she heard this prophecy *K.H.* implored the nun to tell her what she could do. As a result of this she began to devote herself earnestly to the "practice of chanting magical formulae" (*daimoku gyō*).

Her husband was away from home then, busy with preparations for the construction of a Nichiren prayer hall in Kamaishi City; so to comfort herself in her loneliness the woman had the nun stay with her and they lived together for forty days. During that period she slept for about two hours a day and spent the remaining time almost exclusively in chanting the *daimoku*. She had frequent "true dreams" during this period. She says she was even told in the dreams how to carry out her religious training.

Immediately after this forty-day period of chanting had ended her husband returned. He decided that since she often had true dreams she was qualified to act as a medium and offered prayers every day to free her from the karma that was still clinging to her. Shortly after he began these prayers she began to see some things. After the first experience, these things would appear before her eyes each time her husband began his prayers. Eventually the things she saw would, after a few days had passed, come

to happen. When she had her husband investigate exactly what it was she was seeing, it turned out to be "Toyokawa Inari."* Her husband's prayers continued for a period of one year. She says that in order to be able to receive the spirits one must first purge oneself of unclean karma.

Her patron deity, the Toyokawa Inari, possessed her when she was thirty, and saying, "I am the Toyokawa Inari! Your ancestors treated me poorly!" administered a sound thrashing to the head of the descendant of the one who had mistreated Inari. She was also quite frequently possessed by deities other than her patron deity as well as by spirits of the living and spirits of the dead, all of whom scolded her to their hearts' content.

When she was thirty-five she began to make prayers for other people. At this time she worked with her husband frequently as a *yorishiro*. She says that the person performing the role of *yorishiro* becomes completely immersed in it and that it is thus exhausting to the point of collapse. Thus it is better for a young person to perform it. She said that when she was acting as a *yorishiro* she would have absolutely no idea of what she was doing because she would enter a realm of complete ego loss. When she would come out of this realm, with the departure of the deities, buddhas and the like, a strong sense of their presence would remain in her breast and control her. If, for example, she had been visited by a spirit of the dead who was sad, she would continually weep uncontrolably, and if it had been a strong spirit of a living person, its feelings of bitterness and hatred would linger for a long time.

She thinks of her role as being divided into the two categories of "oracle" and "investigation." She explains this as follows: in the case of an "oracle," she speaks in the third person. If, for example, she recites the *daimoku* twenty times, she will be possessed

* The *inari* is a fox deity identified with rice production; the Toyokawa Inari has particular reference to a shrine in the Nagoya area, the Toyokawa Inari Jinja, one of the most famous *inari* shrines in Japan. TRANSLATOR.

by a deity. At that instant she will begin to quiver like a warrior. Then her hands will automatically rise up in the air. When this happens she can see various things, and is not able to keep silent, so begins to speak out. This is an "oracle." Because she is speaking about what she has seen, she can remember it even after the vision has ended.

In the "investigation," on the other hand, she becomes one with the spirit and speaks in the first person. Therefore, although she will sometimes remember most of what has transpired, she usually does not know what she has done. This is typical of the role of *yorishiro*, but there are other cases of "investigation" as well, such as when she has a client who wishes her to call the family's ancestral deity (*ujigami*) or when she has to call a spirit of the dead, or the like.

She feels that in her later years she has lost a good deal of strength, and says that currently she engages only in "oracles," and does not do "investigations."

7. *S.K.*, 65, *male*. When he was thirty-four his oldest son died at the age of seven. Overcome with grief, he began performing "water dousing practice" as a service for his son's soul. He worked in a foundry, and he would purify himself by dousing himself with well water twice a day, once in the morning before he went to work and once in the evening when he came home. He performed other "practices" as well, such as going without food for a week, merely going to work and dousing himself in the morning and evening; eating only two meals a day, and others.

He began having many dreams after he had carried out these water practices for a time. He said that he had so many dreams that he often felt that he had not slept during the night. He often would be awakened from these dreams by voices saying things such as, "go to such-and-such shrine and pick up a rock that looks like such-and-such," or, "a purse has been lost at such-and-such a place; go and pick it up." He interpreted these as the voices of evil spirits. One must not allow oneself to be controlled by the

voices of evil spirits. He explains that he heard such voices because his own strength had not yet been perfected, and says that he launched himself into religious training in order to rid himself of these voices as quickly as possible.

Twenty months after he had begun these water practices he made the following request to his mother: "If I should collapse while I am dousing myself with water and praying it will be because I am no longer a human being, so keep pouring water on me!" Then he entered a period of frantic practices, during which he neither ate nor drank, but only doused himself with water.

On 8 November 1948, just the first week after he had entered this period of violent training, he did collapse suddenly, and lost consciousness for about fifteen minutes. Because of his prior request his mother poured water over him several times, and he gradually regained consciousness.

Those people who heard about this began whispering that he had gone mad, but his wife realized that a third generation *ogamiya* (his grandfather and father had both been *ogamiya*) had been born, and that a successor had finally appeared. She told me, "On that day, November 8, my husband died and was reborn as a *kami*." They commemorate that day with a big festival each year.

Petitioners began to come from the time he was thirty-six. On the fifth visit I paid to him he asked a petitioner his age, and then (closing his eyes) began to speak to himself: "Yeah, is that right? Yeah, yeah, what was that? Is that so?" When I asked him about this later he said that he had been speaking to the petitioner's soul. He says that when he prays in front of the altar he sees various things, and he interprets these for the petitioners. "If you can't remember what you have said yourself, that's no way to do a job," explained this most violent *kamisan* in Kamaishi, in a very loud voice.

8. *A.R.*, 71 *male.*, He became ill when he was thirty. He went to various hospitals for treatment but nothing came of it, so he went to see an *ogamiya* at Hebita in the suburbs of Ishinomaki.

The *ogamiya* told him, "You have been made ill by the actions of a raging deity, so if you will practice cold water ablutions and pray you will recover."

Having thus heard the will of the deities he moved into a worship hall owned by the *ogamiya* and, spending all his time there, began doing cold water ablutions every night at midnight. During his practices he would pray earnestly all the while, "Please cure my disease! Please restore my health!"

After a year and a half his health was restored, but he continued to accumulate "practices." He now took the *ogamiya* as a teacher and did his cold water ablution "practices" while chanting the *norito*; four and a half years later, at the age of thirty-six, he began to feel spiritual influence (*reikan*).

That same year he began to pray for others. Since the day he began to receive the spiritual influences he has "automatically been made to speak for the deity" when he chants the *norito* wholeheartedly. He says, "After the deity has departed, I can't remember a thing." In order to better explain his trances he introduced me to a follower.

The follower he introduced me to is a fifty-year-old woman who belongs to the upper class of Kamaishi City. She said that she had become a follower of A.R. when she was seventeen and that she went nearly every day to his house, consulting him on a variety of matters. She wanted to know what kind of a person this *kamisan* she had come to rely on was, and so ten years previously had asked him directly, during a trance.

On that occasion A. R. had begun chanting the *norito* while lying down, his eyes covered with a washcloth, and when the deity possessed him he had stood upright; the reply came without a second's hesitation, like a piece of oil paper which has begun to blaze: "This person (A.R.) is my (the possessing deity) messenger. This messenger is the type of person who, once he has made a request before the *kami*, must rid himself of all evil thoughts, devote himself to truth, and pray in such a way as to be able to receive the divine presence. Only one person out of millions is able to do

this. When I leave this messenger, then, even though he is my messenger, he is no different from you around him. If he drinks *sake*, or if he smokes cigarettes, well, these are things that ordinary people will do, so I don't care, but if he should over-indulge himself in such things, then you around him should remonstrate with him."

Since that time the lady had called him *otsukaisan* ("messenger"), and sees him as an *ikigamisama* ("living deity") only when he is possessed. At other times, she says, she deals with him as a talkative, honest "grandfather."

His patron deity is Amatsu Ōkami. His patron deity possesses him only on the first day of the year, and at that time spends about three hours making prophecies for the year to come. On normal days he is possessed by two deities, Kuwasantenchūnomiya and Jurōjin (a deity of longevity), and is never possessed by any other forces. He told me, "When you start to get older, you feel that the spiritual influence is getting weaker than before."

9. C.K., 79, female (died 1976). Until she was fifty-two she had an extremely normal life. She entered menopause at about the end of the summer of that year, however, and her health began to deteriorate. She went around to various hospitals but received no hopes for recovery. Completely at a loss, she went knocking at the door of a *kamisan*. The *kamisan* told her, "If you make something the object of your faith, you will recover your health," She interpreted this as meaning that she should begin cold water ablutions, and determined to begin water practices.

Wishing earnestly to have her illness cured, she began doing cold water ablutions every night at midnight from the autumn of her fifty-second year; she conducted these "practices" for "one or two years, I don't really know." Shortly after she began these "practices," she was possessed by a deity. She had no idea what happened during these possessions. After the deity departed she had no recollection of what was said.

She began to pray for others from the time she was fifty-five.

She continued being possessed until she was seventy-four, but said she had never been possessed by the spirit of a dead person.

When I visited her in August of 1975 she had already given up her work for about a year because a nervous condition had grown serious.

10. *I.Y., 57, female.* When she was a child of about two, her mother had her on her back and was standing in the vestibule of her house, bent slightly forward, prior to going out. She fell from her mother's back and lost the sight in her right eye. Later her left eye was damaged by a salt wind, and even though she eventually regained some sight as a result of medical treatment, her vision was only 0.2.

When she was thirteen both of her parents died and she went from Yokosuka to live with a maternal uncle in Kamaishi. She went through two years of high school in Kamaishi. Her plans after that had been to go to a school for the blind in Morioka, but this did not work out for financial reasons, and those around her strongly encouraged her to become an *idakko*.

She had absolutely no desire to become an *idakko*, but out of deference to her uncle she grudgingly became a disciple of Yamazaki Hatsue, an *idakko* in Ōwatari-chō, Kamaishi City, at the age of sixteen. She commuted back and forth to her teacher's house, and learned the *Hannyashingyō* and the *norito*. Her teacher also taught her the use of the *zeichiku* (divining rods). During this time she also practiced such things as cold water ablution, abstention from grains and the like.

When she was seventeen her teacher conducted the *kamitsuke* ("deity possessing") ceremony. At that time she went to stay at her teacher's house, donned a white robe and went into seclusion. In just a week's time the ceremony was conducted. For about an hour her teacher read the *Hannyashingyō*, the *Fudōmyōōkyō*, the *Kannongyō* and other sutras, but she has absolutely no recollection of what happened after that. In addition to her teacher, her aunt also attended the ceremony. At that time she received a Buddhist

rosary and protective charm (*yokomamori*) from her teacher.

She then returned to her deceased mother's house (in Miyagi Prefecture), but came back once more to Kamaishi, and when she was eighteen did her religious training once more, setting herself up alone in business at the age of nineteen, when she began to receive petitioners. The deity who possesses her is a "mountain deity." and she receives "protection" from Fudōmyōō. She spoke to the spirits of the dead and to deities until she was forty-nine, but it was bad for her health, and now she devotes herself solely to divination, using the *hakke* ("eight signs of divination").

AN ATTEMPT AT ANALYSIS

Two groups of shamans. Earlier in this essay we looked at three stipulations that must be met by people whom we call shamanic religious specialists. I then presented examples of people I have found who can be entered into this category. The three stipulations, or conditions, are conveyed to the religious specialists as we have seen above, in the following order: (1) → (1)(2) → (1)(2)(3), so we can see that the most important stipulation is 1, "direct communication with supernatural existences."

When we inquire into whether the *kamisan* met this stipulation before their religious training we can divide the ten cases into two basic groups. These are, namely, those who had already established contact with the supernatural before they began their training (1-4), and those who experienced such contact after entering training (5-10). I will for the purposes of this paper refer to the first group as Group A, and to the second as Group B.

Concerning the age at which those in Group A made their first contact with the spirit world, example 1 was three years old; 2 was twelve years old; 3 was eighteen years old; and 4 was twenty-nine. The fact that examples 1 and 2 experienced contact at a very early age is particularly worthy of attention. It is also noteworthy that, in the cases of 1, 2 and 4, each of them blurted things out: 1, for example, said at the age of four, "That person will eat poison and die!"; 2, at the age of thirteen, said, "There is a fire.

We'll hear the alarm soon!"; and 4, at the age of twenty-nine, said "So-and-so will wear a striped *kimono*, drink *sake*, and get red in the face!"

Example 3 differs a bit from these others. In her case, she did not begin to blurt things out until after she began her religious training. She did, however, experience pain in her body at the age of eighteen prior to deaths. I believe that we can see this experience she had at eighteen as being a direct contact with the spirit world, for even after she began practicing as a specialist she was able to respond to her petitioners by the pain she felt in her body. I accordingly think that example 3 should be included in Group A.

This Group A has been called the "divine calling type" (Sasaki Kōkan, 1975c), and Sasaki Yūji has named it the "accidental type" (Sasaki Yūji 1968). Horii Ichirō, furthermore, has called this type of shaman the "unexpected shaman" (*toppatsu-fu*) and the "shaman proper" (*shinsei-fu*), and has maintained that strictly speaking the shaman should belong to this type (Hori 1975). As Miyata Noboru has pointed out, however, it is questionable as to just how productive it is to call this type the "shaman proper" (Miyata 1973, p. 56).

All but one of the *kamisan* we discovered in our 1973 field work belonged to Group A. We accordingly reported that, by and large, the *kamisan* of Kamaishi District belonged to the "divine calling" pattern. It became clear in subsequent investigation, however, that there are even more *kamisan* who do not fit into this divine calling pattern. These are the people in my Group B. Because these are specialists who received the power to communicate directly with the supernatural world as a result of going through training, this type is called the "self-training type" (see Sasaki Kōkan 1975 and Sasaki Yūji 1968).

In instances of mutual communication between the spirit world and the possessed shamanic specialist, the spirits function on the levels of "visit" and "separation," while the shamans function on the levels of "invitation" and "sending off" (purification); I would

like to discuss the examples from Kamaishi District in terms of the theories of Sasaki Kōkan, who has done much to clarify the mutual interrelationships of these four factors (Sasaki Kōkan 1975b, see especially the section of "Salvation and shamans").

It is possible to view the physical bodies of those *kamisan* in Group A as being especially receptive to the spirit world because the spirits "visited" them before they entered religious training; opposed to this we have those of Group B, who entered training in order to make their physical bodies more easily "visitable" than they had been.

The importance of training. Be they Group A or Group B, though, all of them passed through a period of "training." We can accordingly see that in all cases this training has a great significance in their having become specialists. Let us look, for example, at example 1.

O.S., who controlled the other *kamisan* in the area, died of stomach cancer. Her spiritual powers, however, were all transferred to her youngest daughter K. This K went through a ritual in order to become her mother's successor, and during this ritual experienced possession by her mother's spirit and speaking in the first person. She was thus certified as a "living deity" by the organization Seikōkyō, with which her mother had ties. In spite of this, however, she has yet to open up her own practice. Her father has explained this as follows: "K must first completely exorcise herself of the various karma that remain attached to her. If she does not do this, even though she might be possessed by the spirits of the living or the dead, deities and the like, she would not be able to make them leave once they had possessed her."

I think we can see *the significance of training* in these words of the father. It is, in short, necessary to create an atmosphere into which the supernatural presence can be taken as a first step to be able to "invite" the supernatural presence into one's own body and then to later "send it off." This amounts to first purifying oneself of all things which are clinging to one's body. "Religious

training,” then, is nothing other than “purification.”

The same general idea can be seen in example 6. In this case, she was first purified for a year by her husband (a priest of the Nichiren sect), who said, “For you to be able to receive spirits you must first purge your body of all karma clinging to it.”

We can see from examples such as these that in order to be able to freely “invite” and “send off” the spiritual presence into and from one’s own body, one must first practice religious training, the content of which must be a thorough-going “purification.”

If we look at the religious practices engaged in by these *kamisan* from this perspective, then, we will notice that all except example 6 engaged in some type of “water practice.” Yanagita Kunio has made the following suggestive remarks about *misogi* (“water purification”): “(through the process of *misogi*) one feels that the result has been almost to completely remake the body, and while that was probably the number one purpose, along with it we have a person who has become temporarily conscious of his impurities and sins and who seems to have, through this awareness, cleansed himself and rid himself of these as well” (Yanagita 1970, p. 231). Training that uses the mediation of water can be said to have an effect that is greater than that of symbolic action.

When we come to look at the problem in these terms we are, I believe, given two topics for further research. The first of these is that it has become necessary to analyze water practices in terms of the classification of ascetic practices made by Kishimoto (Kishimoto 1970, p. 86); the second is that we should attempt to clarify the relationship between the overwhelmingly large number of “possession type” shamans in this country and Japanese notions of impurity in terms of the meaning of religious training as noted above.

At this point I would like to momentarily lay aside the question of whether or not a person has the qualifications for easy visitation from a spiritual presence and consider the content of the religious practices from the perspective of the immediate motives people had for entering them on the one hand, and from the process of training

on the other.

Of these ten examples, number 10 is the most representative of those who entered religious training specifically to become a professional. Example 10 became half blind as the result of an accident when she was two years old, and because of that accident she eventually took the profession of *idakko*, even though she had no inclination to do so. This type of specialist is usually classified as the "occupational type" (Sasaki Kōkan 1975c)

Example 1 is another case. Even though she was encouraged by the *ogamiya* who told her "You are a person to whom the truth has been revealed; you should learn the conduct of the ceremonies and the ritual prayers," she thought that religious training was more important and entered into it. She had the qualifications to receive the spiritual presence, but we can see that her consciousness and motives were to become a full-fledged *kamisan* through the performance of even more religious training. It can also be said that her daughter K is similarly aiming at becoming a specialist.

Excluding these two examples, then, the other eight cases all became specialists *as the result* of having passed through religious training. Thus we cannot find even a trace of the desire to become religious specialists in the direct motivations that led them to religious training. Examples 2, 3, 4, and 7, for example, entered religious training in order to soften psychological blows they had received; example 5 entered training after having seen the strength of faith; example 6 entered training in order to purge herself of bad karma; and examples 8 and 9 entered religious training in order to be cured of disease.

Examples 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 9 were all able to meet the goals which had constituted their original motives, or the motives that had brought them to religious training in the first place, and having done so, any of them could have ceased their training at that point. In spite of this, however, they continued to accumulate religious practices. This is doubtless a point that should not be overlooked.

Two stages of training. In brief, I believe that their religious

training embraces two separate stages. The first of these is that they entered religious training with the intention of solving a personal, immediate problem; the second is the desire to satisfy the qualifications for becoming a *kamisan* through their religious training. Leaving aside, of course, the question of whether or not they themselves were conscious of it in this way, this is, I think, an easily understood interpretation.

Let us proceed to analyse the religious training of examples 1, 5, 6, and 10 from this perspective. Beginning with the cases of 1 and 10, since they entered religious training with the purpose of becoming a specialist, the purpose of their training was to satisfy the requirements of *kamisan*. They thus eliminated the first stage and immediately entered the second phase, and by so doing were able to fulfill their purposes and become shamans. Example 6 ended her training after having completed only the first stage. In this case, however, she received a thorough-going purification from her husband in order to make her body into a vehicle for the reception of the spirit presence, which corresponds to the second stage, and we can thus see her as having undergone an experience that was basically the same as that undergone by the other cases. Example 5 had a first and second period of religious training. After completing the first period he became a specialist, so we can say that the training of his first period embraces two separate stages.

Seen in this way, we can note that for the shamans of Kamaishi District “religious training” is part of the process of fulfilling the stipulations for becoming a shaman, and furthermore, in the second stage of that training one perfects the power to “invite” and then to “send off” the spirit presence.

There are several cases where the subjects had dreams during their initiation period.⁶ They saw meaning in these dreams,

6. There are also many cases in which “the dream becomes the place for communication with the spirit world.” “The trance is a daytime dream; the dream is an in-sleep trance—seen from this perspective the relationship between the two is strong” (Sasaki Kōkan 1975a). Sasaki has further clar-

whether it was positive or negative. Let us first consider example 4. She went through a period of twenty-one days in which she could not tell if she were experiencing dreams or delusions, and as a result was told by her teacher to enter religious training seriously. Example 6 also often had true dreams while chanting her *daimoku*. When she told her husband (a priest of the Nichiren sect) about these frequent true dreams, he determined that she had the ability to become a spiritual medium, and purified her for a year. These examples tell us that the state of "frequently having dreams" is really the state of "being easily visited by the spiritual presence."

There are also many cases of instruction being carried out in dreams. Example 6 was taught methods of religious training, example 5 was taught how to perform the mudras, and example 2 was taught that her patron deity was Sarutahiko. There are also both cases where people did as they had been instructed in their dreams, and cases where they did not do so. Example 2 is a good case of the former. Following instructions given in a dream, she went to the Hachiman Shrine at 2 a.m. She lived entirely to have dreams during her training. Opposed to this we have example 7 as a case of the latter. Interpreting the dreams he had during religious training as having come from "evil spirits," example 7 redoubled his training so that he would no longer be plagued by the voices of evil spirits. These two examples show exactly opposing views of dreams, but we can still say that they are similar in that they show the influence held by dreams during "religious training."

The importance of ritual. There are also cases where a "ritual" has to be performed to complete the series of ascetical practices. In its narrow meaning, "initiation" corresponds to this ritual. As we can see from example 10, when a specialist of the occupational type has completed training the final stage is always to pass through an "ascendency ritual." According to Sakurai

ified and developed this, in Sasaki 1976.

Tokutarō, these people who are not possessed by a spirit during their "ascendency ritual" and who even so set themselves up in business without having undergone the ritual a second time are scorned as "mat-wrapped *itako*" (*komokaburi itako*) and forced to walk the back streets of their profession (Sakurai 1974, p. 249). Passing the ascendency ceremony is the way an *itako* is publically recognized and accorded status as a full-fledged specialist. This is, accordingly, the most important ritual for the "occupational" type specialist.

Those people who are a part of the "divine call type," or the "self-training type," and outside the "occupational type," on the other hand, do not attach such importance to this rite of passage. This is because most of them did not have a teacher and did their religious training alone, in their own original way, and thus usually do not conduct a ceremony for the entering of a profession.

If we look at example 4 with this in mind we can see that she should be put into a special category, for she was first given a "test" by her teacher, then, after passing it, underwent a "completion ritual." We should note that in her case the "test" had more significance than the "ritual." Because this test was to determine whether she could function alone as a specialist it could be said to correspond to the *kamitsuke shiki* (a type of ascendency ritual) held by the *itako*.

In the case of example 1, also, the daughter K passed through a *kamiage shiki* ("coming out of the deity ceremony"), even though it did not signify a completion of training. The ritual was significant in that it was administered by a religious group in order to certify her as a "living deity," but it really had nothing to do with whether or not she was in fact a full-fledged specialist. We should thus think of it as having no particular importance as an "ascendency ritual."

There is, then, no great meaning in passing through a "ritual" for those people who are outside the "professional" type of religious practitioners. We should, however, note that the ritual expresses symbolically a kind of *kejime* ("clear-cut distinction"; cf. Sakurai 1973, p. 228)

I think that examples 3 and 7 can both be understood in terms of *kejime*. Example 3 received license from a chief temple priest to pray for others, and example 7, after one year and eight months of training spent a week in violent training (water practice), then experienced a loss of consciousness that amounted to his rebirth as a “living deity.”

These are the only examples in which the element of *kejime* can even be recognized. According to Sakurai Tokutarō, one of the characteristics of shamanism on Okinawa is that there is absolutely no trace of the idea of *kejime* in ascendency rituals (Sakurai 1973, p. 228).

Type of communications. The next question to be dealt with, then, is the method by which the shaman communicates directly with the spiritual world. Sasaki Kōkan identifies the following three types of “extraordinary psychological conditions such as the trance and others.” (Sasaki Kōdan 1976, p. 104):

- a. The shaman’s soul leaves the body and visits the various spirits in the other world.
- b. The spirit takes possession of the shaman’s body, using it to communicate directly with mortals.
- c. The spirit appears before the shaman or talks with him, and the shaman passes on the messages.

Type “a ” above is called the “departing soul” type (*dakkon*). It is unnecessary to say that this word *dakkon* was coined as a translation term for the word “ecstasy.” The word was first put into common use during the late 1960’s and early 70’s.*

One of the reasons that the appearance and common use of the word *dakkon* are relatively recent phenomena is probably that there are virtually no shamans of the “departing soul” variety in this country. Even so, Sasaki Kōkan has pointed out that there

* We have omitted a rather long footnote attesting to the first use of the word *dakkon* in Japanese academic circles and its subsequent development. TRANSLATOR.

are religious specialists even in Japan who have experienced “ecstasy” (Sasaki Kōkan 1976, p. 106). Let me present just three cases from published research.

Example 1. Kikuchi Yasuko (female, 61, from northern Miyagi Prefecture, Furukawa area). She was born in the Shibuya family. At the age of eight she contracted typhus and went into a coma. In that state of apparent death *she was taken to the other world by an elderly female ancestor with white hair*. She clearly saw the River of Death, Hell and Heaven, and was taken to the middle of a plain by the old woman, but was eventually separated from this woman and returned to consciousness. She was in this comatose state for about seven minutes (Saitō 1976, p. 131, emphasis added).

Example 2. Suzuki Tomi (female, 58, northern Miyagi Prefecture, Shida area). She became very ill in August of her thirteenth year, apparently from sarcoma. While she was suffering from this illness the things around her (the clock, closet and the like) began to appear as deities. From November, finally, *she was taken during dreams to the world of the dead on Mt. Osore, Mt. Gassan, Mt. Haguro, Mt. Yudono and others* (Saitō 1976, p. 131 emphasis added).

Example 3. Akagami Shii (female, age unknown, Ibaraki Prefecture, Inashiki County, Ami-machi). She would face her altar every night at her home and begin her “evening services,” at which point she would enter a state of trance and in this state have dialogues with the deity Kishimojin (Hindu Hārītī, a goddess of children). These took the the following form.

She would chant the *daimoku* for about fifty minutes in a state of intense agitation, and *in her consciousness would walk to a temple called Nakayama-Hokkekyō-ji to worship Kishimojin*. When she had her interviews with this deity she would speak primarily of her own anguishes and receive guidance, relegating matters related to ordinary petitioners to mere confirmation of her opinions

(Yamagami 1975, p. 346 and p. 315).

We can, then, clearly identify the characteristics of ecstasy in the examples above. There is not, however, a single case of *kamisan* from the Kamaishi examples we have considered who has experienced a state of ecstasy. These examples all belong to the “possession type,” which is the overwhelming majority in this country. I will deal briefly with the shamanic specialists who make up this “possession type” in what follows.

Above I noted Sasaki Kōkan’s classification of the trance state into three groups, “a,” “b,” and “c”; the “possession type” corresponds to “b” and “c” of this classification. Sasaki Yūji has explained this as follows: “In one type the deity uses the mouth of the shaman to proclaim directly in the first person, ‘I am such-and-such Deity,’ and in the other the shaman transmits in the third person that ‘divine will’ he has received in whatever form without glossolalia, with words such as, ‘the deity has said thus. This is the deity’s instruction’” (1968, p. 436). He thus calls the first instance “a change in personality,” or “trance speech” (possession in the narrow sense), and the latter “revelation.”

If we then focus our attention on the initiation period and the “speaking method” used at that time, all of our examples except for number 7 experienced “trance speech,” which is to say, they used direct speech in the first person. When I interviewed them, however, during a period some distance from their initiation, the number who used direct speech had shrunk to examples 1, 2, 3, and 8, while conversely, the number who used the third person indirect speech had swollen to include examples 4, 5, 6, and 7. This omits examples 9 and 10, both of whom had finished practicing by this time.

Even among these four examples (1,2, 3, and 8) who spoke in the first person to their petitioners, we find that as they become further removed from their initiation period, their direct speech, while still used, has undergone a few changes. For example, number 2 said, “In my younger days I had no doubts about anything and

was thus possessed much more easily than I am now"; example 3 said, "When you get older your body grows weaker and you get more tired," and example 8 noted, "When you start to get older you feel that the spiritual influence is getting weaker than before."

Although this was also made clear during our 1973 fieldwork, I would like to note also that even in those cases in which direct speech is employed, indirect speech is also used occasionally. In short, both methods are carried out together. Example 6, to cite a case in point, indicated this quite clearly with her distinctions between "investigation" (direct speech) and "oracle" (indirect speech) in her own roles. The nature of the religious specialist thus goes from direct to indirect speech, and from indirect speech to answering by intuition, and mirroring these changes we can confirm a tendency for the role of the shaman to go from medium to fortuneteller and from fortuneteller to priest.

I would like to consider the cases which show the role of the fortuneteller ("revelation"), that is, those cases in which the shaman speaks in indirect speech. These encompass those cases in which the specialist reports in the third person the divine will as it has been perceived by either (1) the eyes, (2) the ears, or (3) the heart. I would like to add to this list cases in which the divine will is transmitted after having been perceived by "physical influences."

What I have called here "physical influences" are those cases in which the shaman gives instructions on the basis of a perception in his or her own body of the pain caused to the petitioner by the supernatural existence (such as the spirit of a dead person or the like) that is interfering with the petitioner. A typical example of this is 3. She would feel pain above the neck (head, ears, eyes) when the petitioner was being troubled by a deity. She would give proper instructions to the petitioner on the basis of what she felt. In the same way she would feel pain in her chest if the spirit of a living person were causing the problems, and she would feel pain in the lower part of her body in the case of a spirit of a dead person.

Examples 2 and 4 also received physical influences, although

not to the extent of 3; example 2 could feel it if the petitioner were having problems of a feminine nature, and example 4 would feel the stomach pains of the petitioners; both examples would be temporarily ill until the petitioners had left. They could thus immediately comprehend what the nature of the illness of their petitioner was.

It is especially interesting that examples 3 and 4 had experienced the role of *yorishiro*. Were they able to fill this role precisely because they were people who easily perceived physical influences? I will leave this as a topic for further discussion.

In any event, I believe that it is possible to call this physical influence “supernatural influence,”⁷ and to list it as one of the characteristics of those cases in which indirect speech is employed.

GLOSSARY

Amatsu Ōkami 天津大神
chōshizenteki eikyō 超自然的影響
daimoku 題目
dakkon 脱魂
Fudōmyōōkyō 不動明王經
genja 驗者
goshintai 御神体
gyō 行
gyōja 行者
hakke 八掛
Hannyashingyō 般若心經
hyakudo mairi 百度参り
ikigami 生き神
Jurōjin 寿老人
Kannongyō 観音經
Kishimojin 鬼子母神
Kōbō Daishi 弘法大師
komori 籠り
kuji 九字

Kuwasantenchūnomiya 加山天中宮
miso 味噌
mizugori 水垢離
mizu wo kaburu gyō 水をかぶる行
norito 祝詞
Ōhirume no Ōkami 大日命大神
Ontakekyō 御獄教
otsukaisan お使いさん
reikan 靈感
Ryūjin-sama 竜神様
Sarutahiko 猿田彦
Seikōkyō 誠光教
shinsei-fu 真正巫
toppatsu-fu 突発巫
Toyokawa Inari 豊川稻荷
ujigami 氏神
yoridai 寄台
yorishiro 寄代(ヨリシロ)

7. The term “supernatural influence” (*chōshizenteki eikyō*) was at the suggestion of Sasaki Kōkan.

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