The World of Spirit Pacification

Issues of State and Religion

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This essay examines the role of "spirit pacification" (chinkon) in Japanese history, focusing on developments in the medieval period. It begins with a historical sketch of the cults of vengeful spirits (goryō), examines how the exoteric-esoteric system (kenmitsu taisei) managed these cults, and concludes with comments on the relevance of this topic with regard to Shinto in contemporary Japan and the "Yasukuni Problem."

RECENT YEARS HAVE SEEN the rapid buildup of a political movement to grant state support once again to Yasukuni Shrine, which since Japan's defeat in World War II has survived as a publically supported "legal religious entity." It has been reported that a "National Day of Mourning for the War Dead" might be enacted in the near future as the first step toward realizing this objective.

The movement toward state support for Yasukuni Shrine did not originate in the recent past, of course, for it was already a part of the early efforts to restore State Shinto shortly after the World War II defeat, even before the so-called "Reactionary Course" had begun. This is not to say, however, that the movement has remained in its original rather anachronistic and reactionary form, for over the years it has gradually been tailored to take on a more important function (MIYAJI 1981), and now forms an inseparable part of policies aimed at fostering popular "enthusiasm, through cooperative efforts, for protecting the nation in the eventuality of a national emergency" (*White Paper on Defense,* 1981).

The fact that state support for Yasukuni Shrine appears attainable sooner than that for Ise Shrine not only reveals something about

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today's political situation but also indicates the peculiar nature of Yasukuni Shrine's religious identity. The first peculiarity of the shrine is, of course, that the objects of veneration are the war dead (although the fact that they are not the only ones venerated there shows the problematic aspects of this even more clearly); I will not discuss the significance of this point here. Second is the fact that Yasukuni enshrines neither kami from the myths, ancestors of the imperial house, nor exceptional personages, but primarily individual common-ers who died in wars. Third is the fact that these individual spirits are called kami, which is, religiously speaking, a quite striking characteris-tic. If it is true that a cult of this type meets with the acceptance or support of a considerable proportion of the population, what does this mean?

Ethnologists and scholars of religion have reflected in various ways about "cults of individual spirits," that is, of the phenomenon of *chinkon* 鎮魂 (spirit pacification). Analyses of the Yasukuni cult in such studies suggest that it belongs to the phenomenon known as *goryō shinkō* 御霊信仰 (beliefs in august [vengeful] spirits) found within the religious tradition generically known as Shinto (see, for example, HORI 1951 and 1975, and MURAKAMI 1970). These studies, however, are framed within a discussion of a transhistorical essence in the Japanese religious consciousness, and cannot be said to have clearly situated the phenomenon within either religious history or social his-tory (especially when we take into account the important implications that a religion of spirit pacification can have in political and national concerns). In the present paper I would thus like to examine the place that spirit pacification has held in the context of Japanese politi-cal power and in the history of the relations between religion and the state.

There is, of course, no dearth of studies touching upon this problem. Indeed, related research and opinion exist in such quantity and diver-sity that they are more than I can keep up with. However, if one situ-ates the *chinkon* phenomenon in various historical periods so that a broader perspective is gained on the complex, interrelated matters of social organization, popular religious consciousness, religious structure and doctrine, and political authority and ideology, then the inaccura-cies, disparities, and incongruities in such studies become instantly clear. The problems are connected not only with the history of rela-tions between religion and the state but with the history of the com-mon people as well.

The present article represents a mere beginning to the broad, over-all investigation that is necessary. I will confine myself to a few prob-

lems relating to the medieval period, looking only from afar at the critical issue of the modern period. I am humbled by the narrowness of my knowledge, my lack of preparation, and the consequent superficiality of my thinking, but if the "background dimension" of historical science is of any assistance in explaining the contemporary Yasukuni Problem, which from day one has been highly politicized, then I shall consider myself satisfied.

The Dedication of Cults to Spirits of the Dead

As mentioned above, the religious ceremonies held at Yasukuni Shrine are said to be part of the "vengeful spirit cults" (*goryō shinkō*) found in the systems of belief presently known as Shinto. Should one enlarge the definition of such cults a bit and and classify them as a form of spirit pacification (*chinkon*),[1] one can point out that *chinkon* was always a notion quite basic to Shinto, while recognizing that the dedication of cults to spirits of the dead is not peculiar to this tradition. The reason why the Yasukuni cult is categorized specifically with the *goryō* cults, however, is that it shares with that genre the trait of being dedicated to the spirits of people (ひと), rather than to the kami worshiped in the rites associated with the imperial house or Shrine Shinto. Let us first examine the characteristics of *goryō shinkō*, then, in order to provide a basis for further discussion.

The term *goryō* 御霊 appears for the first time in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* 日本三代実録, in an entry dated the twentieth day of the fifth month of Jōgan 5 (863). According to this entry, on that day the court held for the first time a "*goryō* ceremony" (*goryō-e* 御霊会) at Shinsen'en 神泉苑 [in the compounds of the imperial palace]. The reason given for this event is that during the spring of that year an epidemic swept through the country and many peasants died. The ceremony combined esoteric incantations (*kitō* 祈) with rites used among the common people. Actually, this was not the first measure taken against the epidemic, for on the twenty-first of the first month of that year imperial banquets had been halted, and on the twenty-seventh of the same month Great Rituals of Purification against epidemics and disasters had been held in the imperial residence and at the Keinrei and Shujaku [Suzaku] gates of the imperial palace. This indicates that the earliest countermeasures had been taken primarily to protect the

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[1] There is in modern Shinto a rite called the *chinkonsai* 鎮魂祭 (spirit pacification ritual), and of course I wish to make a distinction between this ritual and what I am speaking of in this article. See the entry *tamashizume no matsuri* in *Shintō daijiten* (SHIMONAKA 1969, 2:454–55) and KAWADE 1978.

court. Alms were concurrently distributed to people suffering from starvation, and, following reports of a favorable divine response to prayers ordered by the emperor at the great shrines in the various provinces of the country, offerings were made on the fourth day of the third month to those shrines whose kami bore the *myōjin* 名神 title. Moreover, on the fifteenth day of the same month, after a report from the Bureau of Yin and Yang, imperial orders were given to all provinces to engage in readings of and lectures on the Buddhist scriptures and to perform "ritually abbreviated sutra readings" (*tendoku* 転読) in order to beg for a stop to the spread of the epidemic and to pray for abundant crops.

On the third day of the fourth month, however, a monk from Hōki named Ken'ei, bearing the title of Master of Lectures, reported to the court that not only were crops being devastated, but the peasants were in dire straits with the epidemic rampant, and many were dying. He begged for funds so that he could appeal for supranatural intervention from the Buddha, make offerings, copy scriptures, and place votive candles in temples; the government authorized this expense.[2] This shows that prior to the Shinsen'en ceremony the government had taken repeated measures against the epidemic, ordering other rituals, both public and private, to be held in the imperial palace, in Kyoto, in the Five Inner Provinces, and in the provinces around the country, and mobilizing all the agencies at its disposal, including Buddhist institutions, kami cults, and the Bureau of Yin and Yang.

The *goryō* ritual was somewhat different from the earlier ceremonies, however, aside from the fact that it was sponsored and performed by the government. According to the entry in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku*, there were the following distinctive features. First, six sanctuaries were erected, and flowers were offered and fruit displayed on tables and mats; these sanctuaries were dedicated to Emperor Sudō, Imperial Prince Iyo, Fujiwara no Yoshiko, Fujiwara no Nakanari, Tachibana no Hayanari, and Fun'ya no Miyatamaro, all of whom had lost their lives after being falsely accused of political intrigues. Second, in front of these sanctuaries the Master of Discipline Etatsu gave lectures on the two Buddhist scriptures seen at the time as having efficacy in preventing disasters, conjuring well-being, and protecting the imperial lineage and its satellite noble houses through the remission of sins. Third, there were dance performances by staff members of the Bureau of Gagaku, by the children of warriors close to the imperial household, and by the children of noble families, as well as

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[2] The above is based on the *Sandai jitsuroku.*

performances of *gigaku* and *sangaku*. Fourth and last, on that day the four gates of the Shinsen-en were opened to commoners, and the ceremony was celebrated in front of a massive audience.

According to the *Sandai jitsuroku*, this type of celebration followed "folkways" that had spread "in recent times" from the vicinity of the capital to the outer provinces. It is here that we can find the reason for the differences between this celebration and the previous countermeasures adopted by the government, even as we witness the beginnings of a new interaction between the religious consciousness of the commoners and that of the ruling establishment.

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Originating with the Shinsen-en ceremony and documented in the official history mentioned above, the phenomenon referred to as *goryō shinkō* subsequently took different forms, though its definition and path of diffusion remain unclear. Of the various forms, the *goryō* ceremonies of Gion and Kitano (the Tenjin belief system) are particularly famous. I would now like to probe the fundamental characteristics of the phenomenon while taking these two rituals into consideration.

The aforementioned entry in the *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* says this of the six figures celebrated at the Shinsen-en *goryō* ceremony:

> Due to political machinations, these innocent spirits were transformed into vengeful ones (*enkon* 冤魂) that cause disease (*eyami o nasu* 成厲). In recent times epidemics have been raging and people have died in large numbers; the population believes these disasters to be caused by these *goryō*.

It is difficult to judge whether the characters read *eyami o nasu* mean "cause disease," or "have become epidemic deities." Should one opt for the first reading, then the expression indicates an action on the part of the spirits themselves; should one opt for the latter, then the objects of reference are the deities of epidemics, rather than the spirits of departed people. Even though the interpretation of these words remains somewhat ambiguous, in either case we can stipulate that mere death is not enough to create a *goryō*; rather, the particular circumstances of the death give rise to emotions in the spirit that determine it's fundamental attributes. In short, we note that the concept is grounded in a functionalist interpretation. Exactly the same can be said in the case of the Gion *goryō* ceremony, dedicated to Gozu Tennō 牛頭天王, a deity of epidemics, and in the case of the Kitano *goryō* ceremony, dedicated to Sugawara no Michizane (845–903), a vengeful spirit. A pronounced characteristic of all such *goryō* is that they repre-

sent a deification of a *function* (this is especially so in the case of Gozu Tennō, who in Japan is an almost imaginary figure).

This notion did not arise with the *goryō* ceremony. The concept of the kami, ever since the myths recorded in the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki*, has been qualified by terms such as *aramitama* 荒魂 (violent spirit), *nigimitama* 和魂 (peaceful spirit), *sakimitama* 幸魂 (benevolent spirit), and *kushimitama* 奇魅 (awe-inspiring spirit); these terms do not refer to different beings or kami, but reportedly refer to different aspects of the function or efficacy of a given kami. The special functional characteristics of a certain spirit are thus separately deified, and one can say that the notion of *goryō* as deities responsible for disease is rooted in this traditional kami concept.

The *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* entry noted above says of the widely celebrated *goryō* ceremonies that people "at times revere the Buddhas and lecture on the scriptures, at times sing and dance." As we have seen, the combination of Buddhist rites with singing and dancing occurred at the Shinsen'en ceremony, and seems to have represented the fundamental pattern of such ritual assemblies. The Buddhist rites, at least in the ordinary *goryō* ceremonies, were based more on a belief in the magical power of Buddhist images and scriptures than on the kind of scholarly, high-level doctrine that had marked Buddhism since the Nara period. It goes without saying that this was the way Buddhism reached the general populace, and that such practices formed the basis for the rapid expansion of *kenmitsu* 顕密 (exoteric-esoteric) Buddhism among the ordinary people. For the common people, Buddhist images and texts were simply magical means to worship the spirits, and esoteric Buddhism was of the same nature.

The rites at the Shinsen'en assembly were rather refined in nature, with renowned monks giving sermons on scriptures. So too were the songs and dances, featuring court musicians and noble children engaged in elegant performances. By contrast, popular *goryō* ceremonies included not only dances and songs but also competitions in which various groups showed their skills, such as acrobatic performances, equestrian archery by costumed and made-up youths, and sumō matches between strapping wrestlers, and it is said that everywhere crowds thronged to watch. These performances were not simply for the amusement of the audience, however. As with the suggestive dance of Ame-no-Uzume in the myth of the Heavenly Cave and the dances in the rites of spirit recall (*tamashizume no matsuri* 鎮魂祭), they were probably intended for thaumaturgic purposes in that they—together with the laughter they provoked in the audience—were believed to appease the dead. It is clear that these things were of the same character as the *furyū* 風流 and *dengaku* 田楽 ritual

songs and dances performed at the *goryō* ceremonies of Gion and Kitano and as the jesting and erotic performances described in *Shin sarugakuki* 新猿楽記.

These religious features of the *goryō* ceremonies later played an important role in the *chinkon* pacification rites performed by the common people.

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Even the brief information provided above makes it reasonably clear that the *goryō* ceremonies arose in popular milieus and hence were of an originally folkish character. I will therefore now consider their relation to political power and to the ruling establishment.

When dealing with this issue we must once again recall that the *goryō* ceremonies addressed the spirits of wronged persons who were believed to have transformed into epidemic-causing *goryō*. This is important, for the fact that the vengeful feelings of those on the losing side of political struggles were the subject of rumor among the ordinary people indicates the connection between the general populace and politics. At the time under consideration, the ninth century, the Ritsuryō system was in the process of decline and at court the northern branch of the Fujiwara house was securing its hold on the regency through numerous political intrigues. Even though these struggles were taking place in a world completely apart from that of the commoners, it is obvious that, at least in the city of Kyoto, the people were highly sensitive to events, with the merest sign of something unusual sufficing to start a flying rumor, as is vividly depicted in the painted scroll *Ban Dainagon ekotoba* 伴大納言絵詞 (though this is of a later date). Although it is probable that rural villages outside Kyoto were little affected by political struggles, the fact that the record shows that "[the *goryō* ceremonies] spread from the inner to the outer provinces" suggests the existence of reasons for the people's receptivity to such ceremonies. Of course, the common people were in no position to take sides in those struggles, but there is no doubt that they perceived politics to be, so to speak, a calamity raining down from the clouds, something that intruded from outside. However, the lower classes of the time were liberating themselves from the subservient mentality that had prevailed under the old Asian-style system of autocratic rule, and it seems safe to suggest that the spread of the *goryō* ceremonies comprised an expression, indirect though it was, of the attitude of the common people toward politics.

Intruding *goryō* that cause disasters are, among the many types of spirits/kami, known as "roaming spirits." The spirits of the dead are thought to ascend after a certain period of time to the realm of the

ancestral spirits and there dwell in peace. In some circumstances, however, they are unable to find a place of rest and therefore wander here and there. *Goryō* belong to this type of kami/spirit, the belief in which antedate by several centuries the appearance of the *goryō* ceremonies. Roaming spirits were believed to bring both happiness and misfortune, visiting the living in the form of a *hitogami* 人神 (man-god).[3] Such was the case with the *Shidara-gami* しだら神 that appeared about that time, in Tenkei 8 (945).[4] Such spirits can be characterized as "folk deities," in contrast to the ancestral kami worshiped in shrines and other appropriate places by the state, provincial governments, and communal organizations.[5] This latter group of "establishment kami" were central to the formation of Shrine Shinto, and therein lies the reason they became associated with the main current of Shinto while the "visiting" or "roaming" spirits, including the *goryō*, were regarded as exceptions or were made light of.

This folkish character, however, was by no means a fixed thing. Before the rise of the *goryō* ceremonies, the belief that the spirits of wronged people become threatening angry spirits (*onryō* 怨霊) was an accepted "fact," and one finds the traces of such spirits throughout history. It is possible to say that the *goryō* represent a further evolution of the *onryō*. If the angry spirits were, in a manner of speaking, individualistic and human-like entities, the *goryō* were, as stated earlier, somewhat abstract entities whose workings or functions were emphasized. The former did nothing but threaten people and make them suffer, and could not be controlled, whereas the latter could be appeased and their function made the object of worship. This may be why the term *goryō* came to be used, *goryō* meaning, literally, "august spirit." Moreover, since it was their function that was worshiped, the *goryō* soon acquired a clearly defined divine status (*shinkaku* 神格). As can be observed in the cases of Gozu Tennō at Gion and of Tenman Jizaiten at Kitano, the *goryō*, which at first were appeased in rites to prevent further disasters, gradually came to be worshiped as benefactors because of their control over the functions of which they were manifestations. They thus became the objects not only of *chinkon* rituals, but of rituals by the powerful in recognition of their awe-inspiring divine character.

[3] See HORI 1951. [Note: The term "man-god" is in English in Kuroda's original article.]

[4] See SHIBATA 1966 and KAWANE 1976. This Shidara deity, it is thought, was the spirit of a kami of Heaven.

[5] It is possible that I deviate from standard scholarly practice by taking the relationship between these two aspects out of its original context in a religious structure and analyzing it from the standpoint of social history, but I have done this deliberately. I have debated this point in the chapter "Zenshi: Kodai no shūkyō jijō" in my book *Jisha seiryoku* (KURODA 1980).

The above can be diagramatically summarized as follows: 1) angry spirit=roaming=fear—> 2) *goryō* ceremony=pacification=prevention of disasters—> 3) *goryō* belief system=enshrinement=call for divine favor. This scheme marks evolutionary steps, but each step maintained its inner structure through time.

Originally folk deities, the *goryō* were in this way accepted as establishment deities. As long as these deities were worshiped by common people, however, the violent and unpredictable sentiments (whose object and possessor no one knew) would not vanish from their essence.

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In the *goryō* cult, the assimilation and enshrinement of the cult object by the power structure did not mark the disappearance of the wronged spirit from which the supernatural power (function) derived. This was because it was necessary to constantly talk of the being in order to account for the supernatural power; in cases such as that of Gion's Gozu Tennō, where there was little sense of the being's actual existence, the identity of a more "real" kami was grafted on (in Gozu Tennō's case this was Susano-o-no-mikoto). The common people recognized the miraculous effect or power of a deity to the extent that they felt it to be real.

The wronged spirits of the victims of political intrigues were enough to remind the common folk of the oppositions and contradictions of the real political world. In certain conditions the *goryō* revealed the latent political instability (which, in reality, was almost always present), and thereby had the potential to trigger political activity among the masses. If only for that reason the government had to be constantly apprehensive of the "dangerous link" between the common people and the *goryō*.

Following their appearance in the mid-ninth century, the *goryō* ceremonies evolved in the urban and rural areas during the tenth century in conjunction with a process of co-option by the establishment—a matter to which I shall return in the next section. There is a suggestive report about the *goryō* in the *Shōmonki* 将門記, a text probably written in the eleventh century. When, in the twelfth month of Tengyō 2 (939), Taira no Masakado declared himself the "New Emperor" at the provincial office of Kōzuke,[6] a prostitute possessed by a kami said that the "Decree of Enthronement" given by the Great Bodhisattva Hachiman to Masakado had been received from "the spirit of the Minister of the Left, Second Rank, Sugawara Ason" [Sugawara no Michizane,

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[6] Taira no Masakado led the first major warrior rebellion against the central government.

330 Japanese Journal of Religious Studies 23/3–4

deified at Kitano]. There is of course no way to ascertain the veracity of this statement, but at the very least the author of the *Shōmonki* suggests that the *goryō* of Sugawara helped instigate a rebellion and that the Great Bodhisattva Hachiman, also a *goryō*, acquiesced in this, indicating that even in the eleventh century such a thing was imaginable. It is not that the author took sides in favor of Masakado's rebellion—he had nothing invested in Masakado, and, even though he expressed admiration for the warrior's unsophisticated, heroic stature, he reported the events surrounding the rebellion as a type of moral and political admonition (see FUKUDA 1981). This is verified by the fact that Masakado is described as suffering the tortures of hell after his death. The author of the epic did not attribute to Masakado's spirit the type of awe-inspiring power or reverence characteristic of *goryō*, but he did believe in the potential of Sugawara Michizane's *goryō* to associate itself with a rebellion.

The *goryō* cult was, of course, related to the appearance of shrines in Masakado's honor and to the rise of legends in eastern Japan and elsewhere throughout the country that depicted him as a hero—indeed, there was ample reason for people to believe that Masakado had become a *goryō*. But it is difficult to ascertain whether such developments arose out of fear of his spirit's function and the retribution it might wreak, or out of respect for his persona. The reason for this difficulty is that there was an intricate interreaction between the authorities' desire to control the people and the people's critical attitude toward the authorities, and that there was an overlapping and mingling of the characteristics of different periods.

The *goryō* cult has always had a side linking it to the popular religious consciousness. Depending on who controlled it, however, its social characteristics and role changed markedly. Although one should avoid onesidedly attributing the pacification of spirits to a specific class consciousness, the social control of belief systems has always been an object of struggle.

The Establishment's Management of Spirit Pacification

The *goryō* cult was popular and folkish in its origins, and I believe that it maintained this character in its deeper layers throughout its subsequent historical development. In the course of this development it merged with what can be called the "exoteric-esoteric system" (*kenmitsu taisei* 顕密体制), an all-encompassing system of religious ideology that was united with state authority. This system emerged over the long period between the ninth and eleventh centuries, the result not of set political initiatives or policies but of a gradual maturation

process that reflected the contemporaneous currents of social thought. It was directly centered in the "temple-shrine power complexes" (*jisha seiryoku* 寺社勢力) comprised of the great temples and shrines of *kenmitsu* Buddhism, particularly those of Nara and Mt. Hiei. The power of these temple-shrine complexes was not merely conceptual, but formed a social and political reality. Thus the true wielders of government power did not operate openly in visible positions of leadership.

As stated earlier, the *goryō* cult, and *chinkon* religion in the broad sense, always had the potential of being assimilated by the establishment. This assimilation moved ahead in accordance with the organizational principles peculiar to the *kenmitsu taisei*, so I would like to begin with an investigation of this system's main features.

Esoteric Buddhism was the teaching that received absolute respect in the *kenmitsu taisei*, and that formed the common doctrine of all the *kenmitsu* sects. Although esoteric Buddhism had always had an elaborate set of thaumaturgic rituals, neither its rites nor its doctrines contained the *chinkon* concept characteristic of the *goryō* cult. Its practical rituals of protection were of four kinds: relief from calamities (*sokusai* 息災), accumulation of this-worldly benefits (*zōyaku* 増益), acquisition of love (*keiai* 敬愛), and exorcism (*gōbuku* 降伏). Ancient texts often mention that the *gōbuku* rituals included prayers aimed at routing angry spirits, but it clear that such prayer differs in orientation from the deification of calamity-causing spirits seen in the *goryō* cult. Nonetheless, when esoteric Buddhism spread in Japan, that is, around the tenth century when the *kenmitsu taisei* was taking form, there was a precipitous growth in "prayers and thaumaturgic methods representing degenerate applications of esoteric practices" (SHIMAJI 1929, p. 383). Some were used to appease the spirits of the dead, as in the case of Shingon's *dosha kaji* 土砂加持 or its invocations to the Buddha (*nenbutsu* 念仏). Thus the magical practices of spirit pacification penetrated Buddhism through esoteric Buddhism's theory of ritual protection.

However, from the standpoint of Buddhist doctrine there was no way that the spirits of the dead could achieve in this manner an immediate divine status (becoming buddhas), since the technical terms used at the time to refer to such divinities were *kami* and *shintō*, neither of which indicated a status corresponding to that of a buddha (see KURODA 1995b). A long time had to pass before the kami gained the same status as the buddhas. This status was attained principally through three doctrinal propositions, which spread more or less in stages. First was the proposition that a kami was either a benevolent deity that protected Buddhism or an entity wishing to "leave behind mind and body" in order to seek the Buddhist teachings. The next stage was marked by the *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹 (essence and hypostasis)

doctrine, which first accorded equal status to the kami, buddhas, and bodhisattvas. Third was the doctrine that identified the kami as the buddhas' mind of original awakening. At none of these stages, however, was it true that all kami were accorded the same status as buddhas; this phenomenon was limited to kami of a certain type and with a suitable history. Of these three positions, the *honji suijaku* doctrine had the potential for application to any kami, and truly wielded enormous influence.

According to the *honji suijaku* theory—at the stage at which it was more or less standardized during the medieval period—the kami were classified into two broad categories: "temporary kami" (*gonsha* 権社), and "true" or "actual kami" (*jissha* 実社). The former referred to kami regarded as the hypostasis (*suijaku* 垂迹) or temporary manifestation (*gonge* 権化) of a given buddha or bodhisattva (*honji* 本地, essence), in which case the status was identical; the latter referred to kami thought to be the spirits of snakes, foxes, or people (*jittai* 実体: "actual kami substance"), and thus not to avatars of buddhas or bodhisattvas. Thus only the former category of kami was deserving of devout surrender. The second category, which included the *goryō*, were worshiped only in order to placate their wrath and avoid calamities. However, in people's minds any kami that was accorded respect and that manifested its powers in miraculous ways could only have been the manifestation of a buddha. Before long, therefore, someone would begin talking of the "buddha essence" (*honji*) of such kami and creating didactic legends promising salvation at the hands of these beings, be they *goryō*, benevolent spirits, or roaming spirits. In this way they were not only rendered harmless but became the object of heightened devotion, and their standing was elevated. Thus it happened that the *honji suijaku* doctrine played a major role in the assimilation of non-Buddhist cults into the *kenmitsu taisei*. This, however, does not imply that all kami saw their status raised as a matter of principle: angry spirits remained angry spirits as long as they inspired fear, and it was people who decided which kami would be assimilated into the *kenmitsu taisei*. It is just as the saying has it: "The kami's dignity is enhanced by the people's devotion, and the people improve their lot with the help of the kami's efficacious power." What the *honji suijaku* doctrine made possible was nothing less than "elevation."

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Still, the actual process of assimilation was a complex strategy that included rather chancy and, depending on one's perspective, even audacious elements.

A direct indication of this is the inclusion of the Gion and Kitano cult sites among the Nijūni-sha 二十二社 (Twenty-two temple-shrine complexes), which led to regular offerings on the part of the court. The particulars of the formation of the Nijūni-sha system are not yet sufficiently clear, but the arrangement apparently consolidated in the first part of the eleventh century (see NINOMIYA 1965). Along with the shift of the ruling order from the Ritsuryō system to the "system of ruling elites" (*kenmon taisei* 権門体制) there was a shift in the manner of imperial homage to the kami, from universal offerings (as stipulated in the early tenth-century *Engishiki* 延喜式 [Procedures of the Engi era]) to offerings restricted to the Nijūni-sha, in what can be seen as a process of intensification and consolidation (KURODA 1994, pp. 91–92). The Gion and Kitano cult sites, needless to say, were not among the shrines mentioned in the *Engishiki*, but in the course of the formation of the *kenmon* ruling system and *kenmitsu taisei* they were included among the elite group of shrines receiving imperial devotions (although they were not the only shrines to be so treated). They thus came to be conceived in a way that rather differed from their original, somewhat dangerous character as sites dedicated to folkish *goryō*. As stated earlier, there were many popular roaming kami of old that were assimilated by the establishment, and Gion and Kitano may be cited as cases in point. One must also note the fact that, even though we have talked of "imperial offerings," these took place within the framework of the *kenmitsu taisei*—which was Buddhist—and were not under the direct control of the state. Finally, although Gion and Kitano were included in the Nijūni-sha, they were placed in the lowest of the three categories into which the twenty-two shrines were divided, and were not, in fact, among the elite institutions that constituted the *kenmon* ruling system, being mere sub-shrines (subtemples) of Enryaku-ji [Mount Hiei]. This may be one reason why they retained the type of relaxed atmosphere that allowed the commoners to continue direct interactions with them.

Once the *goryō* were situated within the establishment and thereby gained prestige, their supranatural function (the effect of belief) as protectors of both the social order and individual livelihood was emphasized. Kitano Jizai Tenjin, as the apotheosized angry spirit (*arahitogami* あら人神) of the historical figure Sugawara no Michizane, retained, along with his "sacred mausoleum" (*seibyō*), a vivid and terrifying character throughout the medieval period.[7] Accompanying this, however, and already in the early eleventh century when the Fujiwara house began displaying a fervent devotion toward this deity, Kitano

[7] See, for example, the "Sadaijin Tokihira" 左大臣時平 chapter in the *Okagami* 大鏡.

Tenjin came to be eulogized as the emperor's guide and the benefactor of the people in his divine role as the patriarch of belles-lettres and the patron of poetry. His supranatural efficacy was also described in stories glorifying him as a protector against false accusations, a paragon of sincerity and filial piety, a maintainer of peace in the state, a guide to rebirth in the Pure Land, a Zen master, and a genius in calligraphy (see TAKEUCHI 1958). By connecting the function of the Tenjin *goryō* to the personality of Michizane, it became easy when glorifying his supranatural abilities to tack on characteristics rather removed from such original features as bearer of lightning or epidemics. Kitano Tenjin even came to be viewed as an avatar of Kannon through application of the *honji suijaku* doctrine. Though none of this was the result of deliberate planning, and though it long remained unsystematized, one must keep in mind that, in the final analysis, these opportunistic doctrines evolved in the context of the establishment's beautification of the ritual pacification of the *goryō*.

In the case of Gion, too, a cult unmistakably dedicated to epidemic-causing *goryō* became by the latter part of the tenth century the focus of annual *goryō* ceremonies. Gion became a subshrine/subtemple of Enryaku-ji, and after the Insei period was the site of frequent imperial visits. At some point in time—exactly when is unclear—the legend of *somin shōrai* 蘇民将来 was grafted onto the cult, with the effect that the deities came to be depicted as protectors against epidemics, not agents of disease. Although the Gion *goryō* ceremonies, as we will discuss again later, did not lose their popular character during the medieval period, the cult was assimilated into the system of Buddhist salvation, as the *Shintōshū* indicates: "The essence [of the deities] is, in the case of the male deity, Yakushi Nyorai (the Buddha of Medicine), and, in the case of the female deity, Jūichimen (Eleven-headed) Kannon, and they grant great compassion and this-worldly benefits specifically to the people of this land."

It has been pointed out that the *goryō* cult, which aided the maturation of various doctrines and institutions during the consolidation of the ruling system's political and religious ideology, was used at times by the ruling class for direct political purposes, as when it was applied to pacification rites (*chinkasai* 鎮花祭) aimed at placating the angry spirits of the rulers' enemies and protecting the stability of the social order (see KAWANE 1973–1974). Under the auspices of the *kenmitsu taisei* the disquieting aspects of the pacification rituals were rendered harmless and transformed to the point that they were given the role of praising the virtues of the establishment and its order.

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According to orthodox Buddhist doctrine under the *kenmitsu taisei*, the spirits of the dead were reborn in the next life, with, it was hoped, the opportunity to ultimately reach buddha status. Since memorial services were performed with this goal in mind, it came to be believed that the pacification rites had the same aim. In other words, it was expected that the spirits of the dead would become buddhas; it was not considered desirable that they remain pacified in the form of mere kami. This interpretation became not only a doctrinal principle but a general understanding expressed in many written entreaties and appeals for offerings. Chanting the *nenbutsu* or the "mantra of radiant light" (*kōmyō shingon* 光明真言) and taking vows were recommended as effective methods for aiding the repose of a soul. With regard to this belief system, it is known that variants and conflicts arose within the respective Buddhist schools, and between the official position of *kenmitsu* Buddhism and the views of its reform sects and heterodoxies. This means that *chinkon* rituals in forms like the *goryō* cult were not, as a rule, part of the "orthodox" mainstream.

It does not follow, of course, that standard Buddhist doctrine made no provision for veneration or worship of the dead. Although not everyone received such treatment, people who had been influential or highly respected during their lifetime were buried in cemeteries or enshrined in ancestral halls or sacred image halls to be venerated by nobles, relatives, or disciples. There were even cases of permanent cults for historical figures, many of whom reached the exalted status of "avatar" (*gonge* 権化) (see the chapter "Mieidō ni tsuite" in AKAMATSU 1957). However, it was not the case that the spirits of these figures were worshiped as *goryō*; these rites followed a normal process based on the Buddhist doctrine of purification/sublimation.

In light of the thorough dominance of the *kenmitsu* Buddhist culture and belief systems one might be tempted to think that there wouldn't be many spirits roaming about, unable to achieve Buddhahood, but the opposite was true, for it seems that during the medieval period such status was not for just anybody. Indeed, it was for precisely this reason that Buddhism was increasingly important. In the latter part of the twelfth century, when *kenmitsu* Buddhism had reached its pinnacle both doctrinally and in practice and when the temple-shrine complexes were consolidating their authority and had nothing to fear either politically or socially, Emperor Sutoku and Fujiwara no Yorinaga—defeated and killed in the Hōgen Disturbance that followed nearly two centuries without military strife—became angry spirits and started threatening the people. This did not occur only at a time when commoners had forebodings about the social and political crises before their eyes (KAWANE 1973–1974). According to Jien's

analysis in the *Gukanshō* 愚管抄, ever since the establishment of the Kamakura bakufu the angry spirits of Taira warriors roaming the world with other heavenly and earthly goblins (*tengu*) had been throwing society into confusion in their search for revenge. Meanwhile, the angry spirit of Emperor Go-Toba, who had died in exile on Oki Island after the Jōkyū Disturbance, was rumored to have caused the untimely death of prominent figures at court and in the bakufu. According to the *Hirasan kojin reitaku* 比良山古人霊託,[8] written by a certain Keisei, who had performed healing rituals for the aristocrat Kujō no Michiie in Ennō 1 (1239), a *tengu,* described as a relative of the Taishokkan Nakatomi no Kamatari and styling himself the "Old Man of Mt Hira," possessed Gyōbu Gonnoōsuke Iemori's wife and, in answer to Keisei's urgings, declared that Sutoku-in, Shōen, Jien, and many other dead figures had become *tengu.* He then revealed that Kujō no Norizane and Hōnen, among others, had been reborn into the hells or animal realms. Keisei also asked the whereabouts of the "numinous energy" (*reiki* 霊気) or "spirit" (*tama* 魂) of Kujō no Michiie and of the ghosts (*rei* 霊) of Oki-in (Emperor Go-Toba) and other of famous ruling figures, beginning with Hōjō Yoshitoki, Emperor Go-Takakura, Retired Consort Kita-Shirakawa, and Kujō no Kanezane. Rebirth into the Pure Land was not that easy, and many dead continued to transmigrate through the six destinations of rebirth; in bad cases they became angry spirits, demonic figures, or *tengu* destined to roam through the realms beyond death.

This state of affairs continued even after the Nanbokuchō period. Go-Toba was enshrined in the sacred image hall at Minase, not in order to exalt his divine function but to placate his vengeful spirit. The construction of Tenryū-ji, Ankoku-ji, and the Rishōtō on the orders of Ashikaga Takauji and Naoyoshi was intended to console the spirits of people who had met with unnatural or violent deaths. As in the story in *Taiheiki* according to which Kusunoki Masashige became an angry spirit and threw the world into utter confusion, the notion of *tengu* causing commotion formed an important aspect of the conception of history. On the whole, *tengu* were frequently mentioned around the fourteenth century (KURODA 1995d, pp. 3–30, 247–66); we may see in the way that angry spirits were transformed into *tengu* embodying social unrest rather than into *goryō* (functionalized into epidemic-causing kami) a feature that differs from past religious consciousness.

The people's notion of spirits remaining attached to their passions even after death is also vividly described in the "ghost plays" of

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[8] In *Shoji engishū* 諸寺縁起集, formerly owned by the Fushiminomiya and Kujō houses (see KUNAICHŌ SHORYŌBU, ed., 1970).

Muromachi-period Nō drama. Plots in which a person's passion turns into a demonic spirit and subsequently reaches Buddhahood suggest a sharp insight into human nature, but ultimately deluded attachments must be denied. Here again it was Buddhism that elevated the spirits.

During the medieval period Buddhism, or, to put it slightly more concretely, the temple-shrine complexes, took the initiative in the pacification of spirits in the broad sense of the term. These complexes were united with the *kenmon* secular rulers, rulers that believed in the *kenmitsu* doctrines, but Buddhism qua temple-shrine power definitely did not constitute the political power system.

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Even during the medieval period the *goryō* ceremonies did not lose their original character as popular festive rites (*matsuri*).

The Gion *goryō* ceremony and the Kitano *matsuri* continued, along with the Inari *matsuri* and other festivals, to be very popular with those living in the Kyoto area right through the second part of the medieval period, even if this popularity did fluctuate somewhat.[9] Again, the ceremonies of the Eight *Goryō* (Upper *Goryō* and Lower *Goryō*), in the same tradition as the 863 Shinsen'en *goryō* ceremony, are described in documents as enlivened by floats, sacred palanquins, and "crossroad festive rites" (*tsuji matsuri* 辻祭) that incorporated beliefs in *dōsojin* 道祖神 (boundary deities) and male/female sex deities. The Yasurai rite of the Imamiya Shrine in Murasakino, also dedicated to epidemic deities, continued under the name of a *goryō* ceremony. The fact that even today Kyoto's traditional *ujiko* 氏子 districts are apportioned according to the proximity of *goryō* cult shrines—Imamiya, Kitano, Yasaka (Gion), Inari, and the Upper and Lower Goryō Shrines—should suffice to indicate how deeply rooted that belief system is in Kyoto (KYŌTO-SHI, ed., 1971, 2: 392).

Kyoto was not the only place where the *goryō* cult spread. The *Konjaku monogatari* mentions a monk of Mount Hiei who thought that the impressive *dengaku* 田楽 dance performances he saw in Yabase in Ōmi Province were a "countryside *goryō* ceremony" (TODA 1971). Judging from the fact that there was a shrine dedicated to Sudō Tennō in the Kamakura-period domain of Miiri in Aki Province (KAWANE 1976), and in light of the survey indicating the nationwide

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[9] There is a record of the end of the eleventh century in which the Inari ritual festivity is referred to as the "Inari *goryō* assembly" (see *Chūyūki* 中右記, entry of the ninth day of the fourth month, Kanji 8). The reason for this is not clear, but might it not have been the case that the Inari *matsuri* had taken on the same character as the *goryō* ceremony?

distribution of shrines dedicated to Susano-o-no-mikoto (TAKAHARA 1977), one is entitled to think that the *goryō* cult was widespread even in medieval rural villages. For the sake of simplicity, however, I will now deal only with the main features of the relations between the Gion *goryō* ceremony and the general populace of Kyoto.

The Heian capital, built as the residence of the emperors under the Ritsuryō system, evolved slowly from the tenth century into "Kyoto" (lit., "Capital City"), the political, economic, and cultural center of the *kenmon* regime, with the quarters of the Right (West) disappearing, the quarters of the Left prospering, and new residences, shrines, and temples being built in the eastern and northern suburbs, thus considerably changing the original appearance of the city. The population of Kyoto as the *kenmon* capital consisted mainly, it seems, of five social groups:

1 the noble *kenmon* elites, consisting of the nobility and including temple abbots who were of noble birth (*monzeki* 門跡);
2 domain proprietors (*zuryō* 受領), upper officials (*keishi* 家司), and warriors (*musha* 武者);
3 commoners referred to as *Kyōto zōnin* 京都雑人 or *Kyōjū genin* 京中下人 (lower echelons); artisans (*jinnin* 神人) working for the temple-shrine complexes, and the subordinates (*aozamurai* 青侍 and *gebu* 下部) of the various noble or other main houses;
4 cultivators who resided in the capital;
5 *hijiri* 聖 (holy men), actors and performers, *hinin* 非人 (non-persons and former convicts), and the like.

Group 3 formed the bulk of the city's population. However, this type of formal classification does not offer insights into the relationships these groups maintained with each other. This is more clearly reflected in a study of the great *dengaku* performances of the Gion *goryō* ceremony of Eichō 1 (1096), which shows the audience and participants to have consisted of:

i   farmers from the surrounding regions;
ii general residents of the capital (*Kyōto zōnin* and *Kyōjū genin* living in various quarters of the city)
iii official guards and subordinates (the lower layers of the *aozamurai* and *gebu*) of the familial power blocks;
iv the *jinnin* attached to shrines and temples.[10]

The criteria differ a little bit from those in the first classification, but seem to put the emphasis on the large role played by the general residents (I interpret this term as referring to group 3, but here the

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[10] See TODA 1971. A recent study by UMADA Ayako (1981) touches on the same subject.

meaning is that of ii above), the farmers from the surrounding regions, and the *jinnin* attached to shrines and temples. This invites us to ask whether groups 4 and 5 of the first classification played a negligible role in the *dengaku* performance, and at the same time gives us some sense of the composition of the population of medieval Kyoto.

The ancient capitals of Japan differed from their foreign counterparts in that they did not have fortified walls separating them from the adjacent countryside. Moreover, as mentioned above, medieval Kyoto had, as it were, slipped away from its original moorings so that the boundaries of the city were vague; the city was distinctive in that it seems to have evolved without any regulation whatsoever. It is possible to see this lack of control as an extension of the natural-growth character that marked the *kenmon* regime. As a consequence, the core element of the population consisted of those attending to the protection of the *kenmon* elites and shrine-temple complexes and to the management of their production, while on the margins the city embraced a ceaselessly fluid element composed of (to use the above numbering), i) farmers from the surrounding countryside, 4) tenant farmers residing in the capital, and 5) the *hijiri,* actors and performers, and *hinin.* There is little doubt that these marginals had a direct influence on the character of 3), the *Kyōto zōnin* and *Kyōjū genin.* This was an expression of the unclear distinction between city-dwellers and peasants,[11] as well as of the fact that the qualifications for residency were vague and the autonomy of the city-dwellers' organizations not firmly established. On the other hand, it may also indicate that it was not only those with an officially recognized social status who were the city-dwellers, but that the "masses" (*gunshū* 群衆), the city's population, included also the "marginals" (those whom the authorities could not bring under their control). Such "masses" are at the very least a feature of all cities, but they were a particularly noticeable part of the population structure of early medieval Kyoto.

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The external features of the Gion *goryō* ceremonies between the Insei and Kamakura periods are well known owing to descriptions such as those found in the diaries of the nobility and to painted scrolls such as the *Nenjū gyōji emaki* 年中行事絵巻.

Central among the rites performed during this ritual assembly was

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[11] It is possible to see this as based on the fundamental fact that, be it under the ancient Ritsuryō system or under the medieval regime of familial power blocks, the autonomous and voluntary character of unions between agricultural villages and the cities was ambiguous.

the procession that took three sacred palanquins from their normal resting place to a temporary shrine (*otabisho* 御旅所) and back. But the real spectacle was the grand procession of floats of two kinds (the smaller-sized *yama* 山 and the *hoko* 鉾, of larger size), in which all sorts of groups participated, as indicated in the following diary entry:

> Everywhere in the four directions there were courtiers, resplendent youths on horses (*umaosa* 馬長), youths, shrine female officiants, rice-planting maidens (*ueme* 種女), and *dengaku* performers, each group consisting of more than one hundred individuals. There were also Gion officials, monks, their retinues of several dozen people, accompanying warriors, and ten dancers riding horses adorned in Chinese style. The excesses of this world cannot be all counted. It is not possible to write exhaustively of the splendor of the floats decorated with silver and gold brocade.[12]

The competition in luxury and splendor always stimulated interest, and the audience consisted of members of the noble houses, beginning with emperors and regents, and others who watched the spectacle from reviewing stands or from the roadside. The *dengaku* performances were particularly gorgeous and always attracted the most attention (KYŌTO-SHI, ed., 1971, pp. 150, 394).

The ritual procession of the sacred palanquins was, of course, sponsored by the sacerdotal officiants of Gion Shrine, but expenditures for it were covered by a tax, called the *bajōyaku* 馬上役 ("horses" upper tax), collected from wealthy residents and *jinnin* controlled by the shrine in the city. From this it has been suggested that the Gion *goryō* ceremony was, at least during the early medieval period, sponsored mainly by the ruling class (WAKITA 1964). Nonetheless, there is no doubt that the common folk enthusiastically supported the festivity: even without citing the events surrounding the great *dengaku* performances of the Eichō era, there are sufficient records describing the excesses—and the regulations restraining such excesses—to prove the point. Furthermore, the participants were not only from the area under the shrine's jurisdiction or the contemporary *ujiko* district, for it seems that they also came from nearby villages, as noted in *Sekiso ōrai* 尺素往来: "The *shizume* 定 float from Yamazaki, the *kasasagi* 鵲 float from Ōtoneri, the *odori* 跳 floats from various places, the *kasaguruma* 笠車 floats from various houses, the *furyū* 風流 floats...." The active participation of the folk *dengaku* of the Matsuno-o Shrine and other "*dengaku* performers from neighboring districts and villages" (TODA 1971)

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[12] See the *Chūyūki*, entry of the fourteenth day of the sixth month, Taiji 2.

in Eichō 1 (1096) was not a special affair, but a structural feature the Gion ceremony maintained through time. And this means that there was a constant potential for tensions between the "masses"—with their capacity to initiate fights, stone-throwing, and organized battles—and the ruling side (i.e., the landlords and sponsors) that managed the festivity and maintained order.[13] Finally, we must pay attention to the fact that it was in the form of a *goryō* ceremony that this "people's" *matsuri* continued through time.

However, among the common people there must have already existed associations (however germinal) of a territorial nature mediated by the ancient spatial (administrative) divisions of the city such as the *ho* 保 [four *chō*]; these associations evolved during the latter part of the medieval period into urban collective groups known as *machigumi* 町組. Such associations gave rise not only to the *machigumi*, however, but also to the concepts of *rakunai* 洛中 (inside the city) and *rakugai* 洛外 (outside the city), and eventually to the urban blocks one sees in the phenomenon called *odoi* 御土居. By the time the representatives (*tsuki gyōji* 月行事 or *fureguchi* 触口) of sixty-six *machi* in the southern part of the city threatened the government [which had shut down the festivity in 1533 because of peasant rebellions] with the declaration, "Rite or no rite, we'll take the floats through the city!," the *matsuri*'s management had been taken over by the inner-city commoners (*chōnin* 町人 or *machishū* 町衆). Needless to say, this threat must have been backed by a broad base of power wielded by the common folk. This was an epoch-making change, in that the authority to supervise the festivity shifted from the landowning ruling class and its servants to the *chōnin*, who bore responsibility for the urban collective associations. In this case too, there is no doubt that the power supporting the *matsuri* was "the people," which included the marginal groups of the time.

I have provided above a rough idea of the shape that the Gion *goryō* ceremony, originally a spirit pacification ritual, assumed during the medieval period. There were, of course, rites of spirit pacification other than the *goryō* rites, and the *goryō* cult was nothing more than part of the infrastructure of the *kenmitsu taisei*, with the ideological system and apparatus towering high above it. However, it was not the case that the sacerdotal houses and their *jinnin*, representatives of the

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[13] The fact that the performance of *dengaku* was seen as a bad omen is mentioned in TODA (1971), as well as in the *Taiheiki* with respect to Hōjō Takatori during the Genkō years, and with respect to the *dengaku* performances of the Teiwa years. Furthermore, isn't it possible to assume that such tensions would surface in the kind of urban space emphasized by AMINO Yoshihiko in his *Muen-kōgai-raku* (1978)?

temple-shrine power complexes, unilaterally controlled beliefs and rituals, nor was it the case that secular authorities manipulated the spirits of the dead. This was an important characteristic of spirit pacification rituals during the medieval period.

Rituals Grounded in Political Designs

In the medieval period the spirits of the dead were not unconditionally accorded the highest degree of worship. It was not easy for a spirit to become a buddha, as we have seen, and those spirits that became objects of worship had to satisfy specific conditions mediated by Buddhist doctrine.

However, once the Sengoku period was over and the country was unified under the *bakuhan* 幕藩 system, the spirits of dead people, just as they were, received veneration as kami or buddhas. This phenomenon is most clearly apparent in the mausoleums and tombs of secular rulers. It is said that Oda Nobunaga considered himself a kami during his own lifetime, and legends to the same effect arose about Toyotomi Hideyoshi, who, after his death, was given a grandiose cult as Toyokuni Daimyōjin, while Tokugawa Ieyasu was enshrined in Nikkō as Tōshō Daigongen. Of course in these cases, too, the phenomenon was accompanied by rather intricate and artificial adaptations of Buddhist (and Shinto) doctrine, but it is evident that the real reason behind it was to instill reverence for and enhance the prestige of the ruling class.

The same tendency, though not on the same scale, can be seen in the tombs of the various daimyō. These tombs were installed in solemn and dignified manner in either the castles or the family temples of the *daimyō,* and, as in the case of their tombs in the cemetery of Mount Kōya and other places, the competition to overawe people with displays of magnificence was intense. The characteristic feature of these phenomena was that the religious act of worship of the dead was subordinated to the political goal of flaunting authority. With the exception of a few cases in the imperial family, there had been no such arrogance among the medieval ruling nobility or domain owners.

Naturally, complex reasons can be offered to account for the change in relations between religion and politics concerning spirit pacification in the general sense of the term. One can explain the matter by saying that the medieval power of the temple-shrine complexes was waning, that the *kenmitsu taisei* was breaking up, and that government control of Buddhism was spreading, but this only describes the completed situation. Examining the main social causes

of this situation, one can point to the fact that not only the shōgun and the daimyō but everyone else from their retainers down to the peasants and city-dwellers were governed by the feudal system of the "household" (*ie*; see Ōkuwa 1979), as a result of which every family came to possess a tomb venerating the ancestral generations and symbolizing the family's feudal status and its permanence. One must also point out that, in the background, there was a definite vulgarization and ossification of Buddhism, as well as its development into a system based on the performance of funerals. This situation, whether attributed to the formation of the *bakuhan* power structure or to the passing of the medieval world of magic, mysticism, and rapture and the rise of a new age of calculating secular rule, was nevertheless the reality under a system in which Buddhism had become a "state religion." Buddhism, bereft of its original rigor of logic and depth of belief, became a hollow, popularized version of itself that proposed a generally easy realization of Buddhahood after death, leaving it little alternative than to turn into "funeral Buddhism"; this, however, amounted to the subordination of religion to politics.

The soul that attains Buddhahood (*jōbutsu* 成仏) after death must be seen, however, as in a far lower spiritual state than that of the person who achieves *jōbutsu* in its original sense of becoming an awakened being and realizing the dharma. The status in question can be seen as similar to that of ancestral spirits (*sojin* 祖神) or protective spirits (*shugoshin* 守護神) and close to that of the "kami of the establishment" mentioned earlier, and in this sense it is appropriate to refer to these spirits as kami, which would also fit in with what the *kenmitsu taisei* called *shintō*. Insofar as they were worshiped in a period when government and authority had blurred the distinction between themselves and the highest absolute, one might receive the impression that the influence of Buddhism had failed and belief in the ancient kami of heaven and earth had revived. Speaking from the perspective of general historical processes, however, we must point out that all religious phenomena were weakened by the secular political regime, and that independent, integrated religious doctrinal structures were either destroyed or utilized piecemeal by the state. We must understand, therefore, that when it was said that the spirit of a dead person had achieved buddhahood (or become a kami) it meant nothing more than that the person's tomb was not always distinguished from a shrine.

Thus, even if the spirits of the dead were the objects of cults, the orientation of these cults differed from that of the *goryō* cults, in which the *function* of a spirit was deified. These newer cults were

strongly colored by the respect in which these persons had been held when they were alive, with their raw humanity following them into the tomb. To label as a "buddha" or "kami" the object of these cults conceived by the establishment was not a manifestation of respect toward the dead; it was, rather, nothing but a false consciousness created by the political exploitation of religion.

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If spirit pacification involved such a diluted view of divine status for those who utilized it to dress up feudal authority and further the purposes of the establishment, what was it in the popular consciousness? Was it not the case that the commoners of the early modern period, with whom so many dark and ghastly stories of monsters and ghosts are associated, had their own unsophisticated religious thought and a religious veneration for the dead?

I am not yet fully prepared to discuss this issue from the perspective taken in the present study. Still, even if it is true that commoners long revered people who died a wrongful death in the defense of justice, and that, conversely, they enshrined their spirits out of fear of their wrath or spells, it is unthinkable that they raised the special emotions of such people to the status of divinized functions and worshiped them as a general practice. The exploits of the famed forty-seven samurai of Ako were much discussed at the time, and the warriors themselves were portrayed as heroes in the play *Chūshingura* 忠臣蔵 [The forty-seven *rōnin*], but even if the incense smoke always wafted over their tombs in Sengaku-ji this does not mean they were worshiped as kami. The leaders of peasant rebellions, like Sakura Sōgorō, having sacrificed their lives in the common good, were often honored by commoners (and, conversely, by fief holders) as *daimyōjin* 大明神 in order to console their spirits and express gratitude and recognition, but the title of *daimyōjin* was, in a way of speaking, a mere mark of respect for the character of these people during their lifetime. Careful study is needed before judging whether they ever reached the status of being worshiped in the manner of *goryō*. And I might add that all the more caution is needed if it was the case that fief holders accorded recognition to these dead out of social and political considerations.

What of nativists like Motoori Norinaga, or Shinto revivalists like Hirata Atsutane? Here too I am not yet prepared to give an exact answer, but one may wonder whether they really thought that the dead who had achieved "kami status" (*kamiagari* 神あがり) were in a state superior to that of humans. Though not based on exhaustive investigation, my impression is that the term *kamiagari* referred to

something more like the character one had had before death, and that it was weak on the idea of religious fear or awe. This was probably something the nativists and revivalists shared with the Neo-Confucianists of the early modern period, by which time the passionate religious moods of devotion, rapture, and repentance of the medieval period had totally cooled down. The term *kamiagari* has all the features of what should properly be called an academic abstraction.

With this as a historical background, State Shinto came into being following the Meiji Restoration and many new shrines were erected. These can be classified into four main categories:

1 shrines dedicated to those who lost their life in the battles leading to the modern imperial state (Yasukuni Shrine, Shōkon shrines, Gokoku shrines);

2 shrines dedicated to the "loyalists" of the Southern Court during the Nanbokuchō period (Minatogawa Shrine, Abeno Shrine, etc.);

3 shrines dedicated to emperors and members of the imperial family (Kashiwara Shrine, Heian Shrine, Meiji Shrine, etc.);

4 shrines established on the grounds of colonies and foreign territories (Chōsen Shrine, Kenkoku Shrine, Shōnan Shrine, etc.)

(see MURAKAMI 1970, p. 182).

It will suffice here to discuss the first two categories.

It is of course impossible to engage in a probing investigation of the rites performed in these shrines, but the following can be said briefly of the issues connected to the topic of this study. First of all, even though the objects of veneration are called kami, it is in fact spirits of the dead that are revered at these shrines. Just as Minatogawa Shrine was established on the site of Mito Kōmon's stela marking the grave of the loyalist Kusunoki Masashige, and just as Yasukuni Shrine was originally a Shōkon shrine dedicated to consoling the war dead, these institutions, though not actually tombs themselves, involve a type of devotion quite close to that which is shown toward a tomb. As in the case of the "reverence sites" [as opposed to the "actual tombs"] in the "dual sepulture" system (to borrow the technical vocabulary of ethnography), what we find here is veneration for a sublimated spirit, with both the emotions at the moment of death and the person's lifetime virtues being worshiped in the form of a spirit/kami. In this respect there were parallels with the stela erected to commemorate the war dead (*kinenhi* 記念碑) and recognize their valor (*kenshōhi* 顕彰碑).

Does that mean, then, that we can no longer call these shrines religious places? This is of course not the case, and for these reasons: first, these shrines are founded on the clearly religious notion of worship of the dead; second, specific religious rites are performed there;

third, they are completely different in character from cemeteries in that they are located separately from the actual tombs and in some cases are built in multiple locations at the request of the founders; fourth, they all engage in such religious activities as distributing amulets and performing rites on request.

The most important matter in this respect, though, is the question of what kind of divine efficacy is expected of these shrines. Is it the sum of the person's virtues before death? Of course not. The only function that is expected is the protection of the imperial state. Quite apart from the fact that such cults did not spring naturally out of the popular religious consciousness, the narrowness of the system's politically imposed ideology has resulted in the arbitrary selection of only a few of the many sentiments held by the dead while alive. In the case of Yasukuni Shrine the only feature selected is the fact that the person died in war; when the characteristic of being a "loyal servant" (*chūshin* 忠臣) is included a slightly more multifaceted aspect results (onesidedly embellished though it is) that holds some affinity to the *goryō* beliefs. In a manner of speaking, one could describe the deified function at Yasukuni Shrine to be of the Gion type, while the function at "loyal servant" shrines is of the Kitano type. If this characterization holds, then it certainly is possible to describe these new cults as a part of the lineage of spirit pacification.

Even so, however, there is something that must be clearly reiterated. These new rituals and beliefs were not the product of popular religious consciousness in the way that the old *goryō* cults were, but were deliberately organized and led by government authority, which exploited remnants of the people's pacification beliefs as expressed in the form of tomb reverence. As a result these new cults were the same in substance as those utilized by the shogunal authorities to strengthen their regime, though developed much further in order to mesh with the notion of the "unified modern nation-state." However (and I will return to this point), we must not overlook the fact that among the common people the religious consciousness associated with this type of spirit pacification emerged in the form of a quest for magical aid in avoiding the draft or preventing death at war.

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Let us now summarize what has been discussed in a rather scattered fashion above.

From the vantage point of today's academic knowledge it is not overly difficult to understand the custom of spirit pacification as something that has been deeply rooted in the popular religious conscious-

ness throughout Japanese history. Furthermore, this a point that the members of the ruling classes who sponsored and systematized the pacification rituals—setting aside the question of whether they did so consciously and intentionally—have always taken into account. However, the rites of pacification have not always existed in the same form, for they have changed remarkably as a result of various social factors, and have played different social roles depending on the regimes that controlled them.

Broadly speaking, the control of spirit pacification developed in the following four stages. First was the stage at which spirit pacification was controlled by either organized or vagrant mediums (shamans); this system had its origins in the people themselves. One can say that the ritual codes of the Ritsuryō system organized this system into a mechanism of government control. Second was the stage at which, under the *kenmitsu taisei*, the various branches of Buddhism organized spirit pacification in their infrastructures. In this case, religion (the temple-shrine power complexes) controlled where the spirits went; the political authorities performed ritual functions only in part, but institutionally they were unified with religion. Third was the stage at which the political authorities controlled spirit pacification. The institutional system was that of the temples under the authority of the government, but it was political authority that fundamentally and compulsorily told the people which direction the spirits would take. Fourth, an extension of the preceding stage, was the stage at which the framework of State Shinto was created. Despite the fact that religion was disappearing as a central part of ideology, the state created a regime of control that exploited the religious consciousness of spirit pacification.

In light of these transitions, one fact that we are called to reflect on—though it seems obvious enough—is that, depending on the period of history, the relations between religion and the state (i.e., the fitual function and the policy-making function) have greatly changed. We note in particular that at the stage when the political authorities liberated themselves from religion's spell and took the path of modernization, religion came to be exploited by the state in a manner that can only be described as ugly. At this point the rites of spirit pacification were, it seems, made to play an important role in society, and one wonders whether this happened only in Japan.

At the same time, however, one needs to pay attention to the fact that the religious consciousness of spirit pacification was not always just a basis for the ideology of the rulers. It was also a catalyst for all kinds of thoughts and actions on the part of the common people and,

especially at the stage when it had an artless ring of truth, it often became an agency for the rise of mass movements. Even at a time when religion was no longer the only basis for thought, people still believed that, for example, the numinous power of the tomb of the victims of the Takebashi Incident (1878) might enable them to avoid the draft (see TAKEBASHI JIKEN NO SHINSŌ O AKIRAKA NI SURU KAI, 1979).

Having said all this, the comparative place of spirit pacification rites in ideology as a whole, or in the totality of popular consciousness and thought, remains rather unclear. But this must remain a question to be considered another day and from another vantage point.

Concluding Remarks

This concludes my historical sketch of spirit pacification, but I would like to add two or three remarks concerning peculiarities of the modern situation that are a legacy of that history.

One concerns the status of "Shinto." Today we use this term in general to refer to an independent religion, like we use the terms "Buddhism" and "Christianity," and many people end up thinking that Shinto has existed as a religion since the dawn of history. At present this is also the way in which the term is treated legally and institutionally. However, for a good thousand years before 1868, when the government decreed the separation of the kami and buddhas, "Shinto" had no identity as an independent religion (see KURODA 1993, 1995b). It was a part—and originally a marginal part at that—of the infrastructure of the religious world centered on *kenmitsu* Buddhism (including its reform branches and heterodoxies). As we know full well today, the 1868 decree of separation artificially and forcibly gave Shinto its independence, but the problem here is not whether this was a good or a bad thing. The problem is that, because Shinto is the legacy of such a deliberate act, even today the feelings and thought patterns associated with the "Shinto" of the *kenmitsu* Buddhism of old can be recognized in the subconscious of the people and in their religious customs. It is said that the Japanese simultaneously believe in two different religions—that of the kami and that of the buddha. But kami and buddhas were part of the same religious world for an immense length of time before the Meiji government began educating the masses, and from this perspective one must say that, be they doctrinal or legal, any of the "plausible" positions arguing for the differences between kami and buddhas belong, in terms of social understanding, to the realm of hallucination.

With this in mind, I would next like to draw attention to the fact

that religious freedom has become an issue in connection with the "Yasukuni Problem." Since "Shinto" and Buddhism are today regarded as separate religions, the enforcement of rituals associated with State Shinto is clearly something that violates the freedom of religion of followers of all sects of Buddhism as well as of the followers of "sect Shinto" (*kyōha shintō* 教派神道). The important point, though, is that the majority of Japanese do not view it as such a violation. Of course, one might see this as the result of the force of habit, the weak awareness of civil rights, and the compulsory education in State Shinto of days past. However, should someone declare a revival of State Shinto, or should someone rule that Christian rituals must be performed by the state, clearly people's reactions would be different. The religious feelings and principles of the Japanese have been dulled by numerous historical factors, such as the medieval *kenmitsu* Buddhist accommodation of a multitude of doctrines and divinities, or the early modern oppression of religious originality and political use of sectarian debates. Whatever the case, with respect to the "Yasukuni Problem," the question of how much weight the concept of religious freedom really carries with the people is also a problem for historical science.

Finally, I would like to draw attention to the sentiment held by a good number of people that it is natural for the state to worship the spirits of people who died in wars. If our thesis is correct, that the religious consciousness of spirit pacification as seen in the *goryō* cults is present in this worship, then this sentiment must be regarded as including a request on behalf of the dead that the government make honest amends if it really means what it says when using the ostentatious term "heroic spirit" (*eirei* 英霊). In a somewhat extreme way of speaking, it is possible to see in that sentiment relics of a popular consciousness that has, for centuries on end, viewed governments and politics as disasters inflicted from on high. We must keep in mind that the religious consciousness of spirit pacification takes on many modalities of manifestation, depending on who controls and manages it.

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