Modernizing Ōmoto: Legitimacy, Authority, and Gender in Ōmoto's *Chinkon Kishin* Boom (1916-1921)

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Abstract

This thesis explores Ōmoto's "*chinkon kishin* boom," a period from 1916 to 1921 when the popularity of a mediated spirit possession technique (*chinkon kishin*) precipitated a massive influx of members to Ōmoto, a Japanese new religious movement. It examines a variety of primary sources, mostly drawn from Ōmoto's magazine, *Shinreikai*, along with secondary literature in both Japanese and English. Previous scholarship has failed to consider this period of Ōmoto's history in any detail or to acknowledge the gendered aspects of the transformation of authority structures and means of attaining legitimacy that occurred during this period. This thesis thus attempts to fill that hole in the literature, as well as offer a new perspective on gender analysis in new religious movements. During the *chinkon kishin* boom, Ōmoto reformulated its doctrine to compensate for the diffusion of authority caused by the practice of *chinkon kishin*, and engaged in debate with practitioners of both spiritualism and medicine in order to legitimate its own practices and practitioners. Both this reformulation of authority structures and its attempts to gain legitimacy in a larger social sphere led Ōmoto to close off several potential channels for female authority that had existed prior to the *chinkon kishin* boom and restrict leadership roles to educated men. Rather than increasing Ōmoto's perceived legitimacy, however, this direct challenge to medical professionals merely contributed to the perception of Ōmoto as a threat not only to its followers but to society as a whole, leading to the first Ōmoto suppression in 1921 and the abolition of the practice of *chinkon kishin*.

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Introduction

Between roughly 1916 and 1921, Ōmoto,[1] a Japanese new religious movement (hereafter NRM) founded in the 1890s by Deguchi Nao,[2] experienced a huge influx of members interested in the practice of *chinkon kishin* (鎮魂帰神), a type of mediated spirit possession.[3] Ōmoto, which had less than 400 members in 1911, had 25,000 members in 1919, and its membership increased to 300,000 by the following year.[4] By 1920, Ōmoto was the third largest NRM after Tenrikyō and Konkōkyō.[5] In 1919, seventy or eighty people were coming to the Kinryūden, Ōmoto's training hall in Ayabe, to practice *chinkon kishin* every day, an increase of three or four times the attendance of the previous year.[6] This sudden interest in the practice of *chinkon kishin*—and Ōmoto by extension—attracted the attention of the police, leading to the first Ōmoto incident in February 1921,

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[1] Ōmoto (大本; sometimes romanized as "Oomoto") has changed names many times in its long history. In this thesis I refer to it as Ōmoto, Ōmotokyō (大本教), or Kōdō Ōmoto (皇道大本; defined below).

[2] A longer introduction to Ōmoto's history is given in chapter one.

[3] The terms "*chinkon*" and "*kishin*" appear separately in several Japanese classics, but were not used in conjunction until their adoption by Ōmoto. The two elements were "rediscovered" in the second half of the nineteenth century by Honda Chikaatsu (1822-1889), a Shinto scholar. "*Chinkon*" refers to procedures for healing and directing spirits, and often joining a deity with a human soul. "*Kishin*" refers to possession by a spirit or deity. Birgit Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin: Mediated Spirit Possession in Japanese New Religions*, 4-5; *Encylopedia of Shinto*, s.v. "Chinkon Kishin," by Tsushiro Hirofumi, accessed May 7, 2013, http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=1454.
Before its "rediscovery" by Honda, "*chinkon*" had been associated with "*chinkonsai*," a rite performed annually at the imperial residence. Although the origin and initial meaning of the ritual are unknown, the 9th century *Ryō no gige*, a commentary on legal codes, explains the ritual as pacifying and strengthening the potentially wandering soul of the emperor. *Encylopedia of Shinto*, s.v. "Tamashizume, Tamafuri," by Tsushiro Hirofumi, accessed May 7, 2013, http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=1450; Takeshi Matsumae, "The Heavenly Rock-Grotto Myth and the Chinkon Ceremony," 12-20. This explanation of the ritual influenced Honda Chikaatsu's conception and naming of *chinkon*. Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 49-50.
Although "*chinkon*" and "*kishin*" were considered separate components of a single practice in Ōmoto, the unified practice was occasionally referred to as "*chinkon*" for short.

[4] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 514.

[5] Ichiyanagi Hirotaka, *"Kokkurisan" to "senrigan": Nihon kindai to shinreigaku*, 202-203.

[6] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 426.

the arrests of several prominent Ōmoto members,[7] and the end of *chinkon kishin*'s golden age in Ōmoto.[8]

Figure 1 Ōmoto members practicing *chinkon kishin* in the packed Kinryūden in February 1921.[9]

This thesis considers how Ōmoto's "*chinkon kishin* boom" reshaped Ōmoto's doctrine, authority structures, gender constructions, and attitude toward other religious and intellectual organizations. I identify the *chinkon kishin* boom as beginning in 1916, eight years after Deguchi Onisaburō assumed leadership of Ōmoto, and continuing until the first Ōmoto incident in 1921. Several features set this period apart from the previous one. Firstly, Ōmoto began proselytizing through monthly magazines—such as *Shinreikai*

[7] Ibid., 566-574.
[8] *Chinkon kishin* was not officially abolished in Ōmoto until 1923 (Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 231), but the arrest of several of the qualified *saniwa* and the legal suppression immediately following the incident effectively ended the practice in 1921.
[9] "Kinen hen 10," accessed March 3, 2014, http://www.daitouryu.com/iyashi/kinen/kinen10.html. Several images used in this thesis were pulled articles published by Aikido organizations. Ueshiba Morihei, the founder of Aikido, was actually quite active in Ōmoto both during and after the *chinkon kishin* boom, and so it is not uncommon to find Aikido articles that reference Ueshiba's time with Ōmoto. For more on Ueshiba's involvement with Ōmoto, see Anne Broder, "Mahikari in Context: *Kamigakari*, *Chinkon Kishin*, and Psychical Investigation in Ōmoto-Lineage Religions," 341-342.

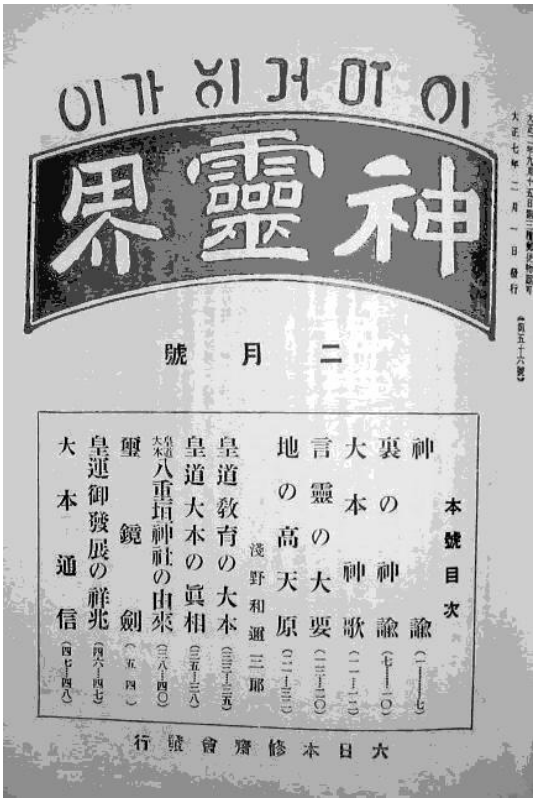

Figure 2 Title page of the February 1918 edition of *Shinreikai*.

(『神霊界』),[10] the spiritualist magazine from which this thesis pulls the majority of its primary documents. *Shinreikai* was initially a 30-40 page journal distributed monthly, but by 1918 it was a bimonthly publication of twice the length.[11] The number of copies rose from 1,000 in 1917 to 11,000 by 1921, when *Shinreikai* stopped publishing because of the first Ōmoto incident.[12] In addition to *Shinreikai*, Ōmoto published roughly thirty different newspapers, journals, and magazines between 1918 and 1920, and bought the *Taishō nichinichi shinbun*, an Osaka daily with a circulation of 480,000, in August

[10] *Shikishima Shinpō*, *Shinreikai*'s precursor, was established in 1914. When Asano Wasaburō became editor (discussed in chapter one), the magazine's title was changed to *Shinreikai*, but issue numbering continued without break. This is why early *Shinreikai* volumes are numbered in the 40s. See Benjamin Dorman, *Celebrity Gods: New Religions, Media, and Authority in Occupied Japan*, 48.
[11] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 351.
[12] Ibid., 476.

1920.[13] Ōmoto's proselytory techniques were thus markedly different in this period than in previous periods.

Secondly, from 1916 to 1921, Ōmoto's doctrine was called Kōdō Ōmoto (皇道大本, Imperial Way Ōmoto).[14] This renaming was an attempt to differentiate Ōmoto from the mainstream Shinto establishment, which, in Onisaburō's opinion, had lost the true way. However, by renaming their organization, Ōmoto also signaled their support for the imperial family, as well as their nationalist character.[15] "Kōdō" was defined as "the way of the emperor's governing," but encompassed not only politics but also education, religion, science, business, and medicine. Kōdō transcended Shinto, which itself transcended religion.[16]

This concept of Kōdō appeared most often in writings surrounding the "Taishō Restoration" (大正維新)[17] that was supposed to occur in Taishō 10 (1921)—there would be a great war between Japan and the rest of the world, along with a variety of natural disasters including a "rain of fire," widespread death (up to 70% of the population, according to some estimates), and the eruption of Mt. Fuji. Out of the ashes of war and

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[13] Nancy Stalker, *Prophet Motive: Deguchi Onisaburō, Oomoto, and the Rise of New Religions in Imperial Japan*, 88.

[14] Occasionally, the organization itself would also be referred to as Kōdō Ōmoto during this time period. The doctrine was again called Kōdō Ōmoto from 1933 to 1935, ending with the second suppression. See Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 209.
This renaming of religious doctrine to include the word "Kōdō" was not unusual for this time period; consider the examples presented in Christopher Ives, *Imperial-Way Zen: Ichikawa Hakugen's Critique and Lingering Questions for Buddhist Ethics*, passim.

[15] This support of the imperial family was a stark departure from the group's previous anti-governmental stance. For more on Deguchi Nao's condemnation of the government and the emperor, see Emily Ooms, *Women and Millenarian Protest in Meiji Japan: Deguchi Nao and Ōmotokyō*, 72-107.

[16] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 339-341. Yoshinaga Shin'ichi, "Taishōki Ōmotokyō no shūkyōteki ba—Deguchi Onisaburō, Asano Wasaburō, shūkyōteki henrekishatachi," 72. For more on the religiosity of Shinto during this period, see Isomae Jun'ichi, "Religion, Secularity, and the Articulation of the 'Indigenous' in Modernizing Japan," passim.

[17] As Yumiyama indicates, theories of apocalyptic destruction (usually by war) followed by reconstruction into a utopia were quite common in religious thought during this time period. Yumiyama Tatsuya, "Rei—Ōmoto to chinkon kishin," 110-111.

disaster, Japan would emerge victorious, thanks to the spiritual power of Ōmoto and the Japanese people, to unify the entire world under the emperor. This new society would be classless, would lack capitalist ideas of private ownership, would no longer have a monetary system or taxation, and would be a world family system (世界大家族制度).[18] Although Onisaburō objected to such theories of destruction and reconstruction increasingly vocally throughout the Taishō period, the enthusiasm of several other prominent members (such as Asano Wasaburō and Taniguchi Seiji) kept the idea of the Taishō restoration in circulation until the first Ōmoto incident in 1921.[19]

Yoshinaga argues that while the theories concerning the "Taishō restoration" and the "sacralization of the state" (国家の聖化) were the main draw for members of the military, *chinkon kishin*'s use as a spiritualist healing technique attracted many people interested in spiritual healing and spiritual practices.[20] Regardless of the cause, the *chinkon kishin* boom shifted Ōmoto's membership from being mainly rural to predominantly urban, and saw an influx of military men and intellectuals, including Asano Wasaburō (1847-1937), Ueshiba Morihei (1883-1969, founder of Aikido), and Taniguchi Seiji (1893-1985, later called Masaharu, founder of Seichō no Ie).[21] Many of these men had been involved in other spiritualist or religious organizations before coming to Ōmoto,[22] and thus were uniquely prepared to mount an all-out attack on the doctrine of

[18] For more on the Taishō Restoration, see Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 63-70; Yoshinaga, "Taishōki Ōmotokyō," 72-76; Helen Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō and Japanese Spiritualism in Early Twentieth-Century Japan," 144-146; Kurihara Akira, "'Kagaku' teki gensetsu ni yoru reiteki jigen no kaitai kōchiku—Ōmotokyō e no manazashi," 57-64; *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 364-371. This theory of destruction and reconstruction was not created wholesale in the Taishō period, but had its antecedent in Nao's writings. See Ooms, *Women and Millenarian Protest*, 88-107.
[19] Yumiyama, "Rei," 107-113.
[20] Yoshinaga, "Taishōki Ōmotokyō," 77-78.
[21] Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 225. *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 359-361. Yumiyama, "Rei," 106-113. Kurihara, "'Kagaku' teki gensetsu," 56.
[22] Yumiyama, "Rei," 106-113.

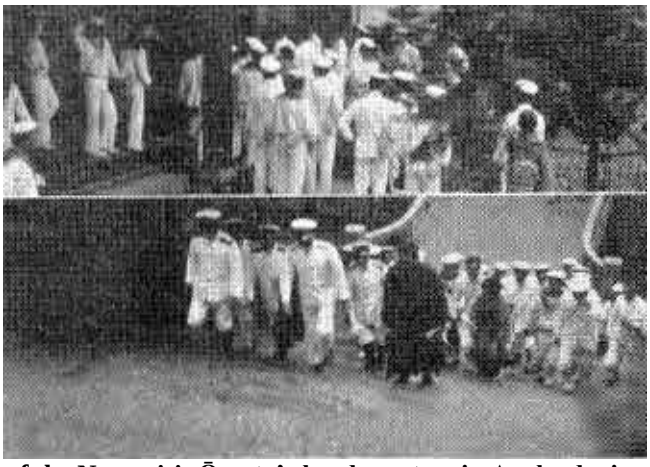

Figure 3 Members of the Navy visit Ōmoto's headquarters in Ayabe during the *chinkon kishin* boom.[23]

other spiritualist groups, which they did with gusto. *Shinreikai* allowed these intellectuals a platform from which to spread their ideas—even when those ideas directly conflicted with those of Ōmoto's "official" leader (Onisaburō). The *chinkon kishin* boom was thus one of Ōmoto's most dynamic periods, but also one of its most fractured, and immediately following the 1921 suppression, many of those prominent intellectuals left Ōmoto to form their own spiritualist organizations. The *chinkon kishin* boom thus affected not only Ōmoto but also the long lineage of "Ōmoto-lineage" NRMs, as well as psychical research institutes that were founded by former Ōmoto members who were active during the *chinkon kishin* boom.[24]

Although, as Staemmler points out, "few new religions have been covered as thoroughly as Ōmoto" in academic literature,[25] the literature covering the *chinkon kishin* boom is currently somewhat scattered. In English-language literature, most scholars

[23] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 359.
[24] Ibid., 91-98. For more in-depth treatment of the Ōmoto-lineage NRMs and research institutes directly affected by the *chinkon kishin* boom, see Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō," 147-149; Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 267-324; Broder, "Mahikari in Context," passim.
[25] Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 202.

focus either on the period before Nao's fall from power[26] or the period between the first and second Ōmoto suppressions (1921-1935).[27] There currently exist (to the best of my knowledge) three English-language works that touch upon the *chinkon kishin* boom period of Ōmoto's history. Nancy Stalker's *Prophet Motive* devotes a single chapter to the Taishō era and offers an overview of the period. However, as her focus is on Onisaburō as a charismatic leader, she only briefly mentions the intellectuals and military men who formed the upper echelons of the group during that period and ultimately offers little analysis or commentary. Helen Hardacre's "Asano Wasaburō and Japanese Spiritualism in Early Twentieth-Century Japan" offers quite in-depth analysis of Asano Wasaburō's activities before, during, and after his involvement with Ōmoto, especially his interest in the Taishō Restoration. However, somewhat understandably, she devotes little attention to *chinkon kishin* or Ōmoto as a whole. Birgit Staemmler's *Chinkon Kishin* is an excellent piece tracing the development of *chinkon kishin* theory and practice, but unfortunately does not devote much space to the effects of *chinkon kishin* on Ōmoto, aside from its involvement as an impetus for the 1921 suppression. On the other hand, there is a fair amount of Japanese-language literature focusing on this time period, but the individual works tend to focus on a single aspect of the period (such as Ōmoto's interactions with other spiritualist organizations, Ōmoto's theory of the Taishō Restoration, Ōmoto's use of *chinkon kishin* for healing, etc.) and fail to connect that single aspect to a larger picture.

[26] See, for example, Ooms, *Women and Millenarian Protest*; Helen Hardacre, "Gender and the Millenium in Ōmoto Kyōdan: The Limits of Religious Innovation."
[27] See, for example, Li Narangoa, "Universal Values and Pan-Asianism: The Vision of Ōmotokyō"; Richard Fox Young, "From 'Gokyō-dōgen' to 'Bankyō-dōkon': A Study in the Self-Universalization of Ōmoto."

This thesis is intended to fill that hole in the Ōmoto-related academic literature by attempting to construct a "big picture" for the impact of *chinkon kishin* on the group. The first chapter briefly introduces the theory behind *chinkon kishin*, and then addresses the impact of *chinkon kishin* on the group's authority structures by comparing sources of authority during the *chinkon kishin* boom to those that existed before *chinkon kishin*'s arrival on the scene. This analysis of authority structures pays special attention to gendered authority before, during, and after the *chinkon kishin* boom, as the *chinkon kishin* boom was the transition point from a female-centered authority (based around Deguchi Nao) to a male-centered authority (based around Deguchi Onisaburō). The second chapter addresses the influence of spiritualism on Ōmoto, especially the ways in which Ōmoto writers attempted to both attract people who might be interested in spiritualism and distance *chinkon kishin* from spiritualist practices (especially hypnotism) and Ōmoto from other spiritualist groups. It also considers the way in which outside spiritualist practices and theories were subsumed into Ōmoto's worldview, and the framework Ōmoto utilized for these debates, which pitted the (educated, male) *saniwa*[28] against the (mostly male, mostly educated) practitioners of other spiritualist techniques, barring women from yet another expressive outlet in the group. The third chapter explores the debates between Ōmoto leaders and psychologists over *chinkon kishin*, the nature of the mind, and the meaning of mental illness. It considers the way that both parties framed the debates, as well as the "battle over the mind" and the concern over the

[28] "*Saniwa*" (沙庭) originally referred to the purified site where a deity was worshipped and its oracles were received. By the 8th century, it had come to mean the person who receives and interprets the oracles of a deity or the person who plays the *koto* at a sacred site (sometimes written 左爾波). *Encyclopedia of Shinto*, s.v. "Saniwa," by Nakajima Hiroko, accessed on May 7, 2013, http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=1315.
In Ōmoto the term (written 審神者) refers to the person who mediates *chinkon kishin*. A longer explanation of this term's use in Ōmoto doctrine appears in chapter one.

"gender ambivalence" of the Taishō period occurring in the background. Ultimately, I argue that Ōmoto's attempts to engage with psychologists as though they were just another spiritualist group to best ultimately contributed to their suppression in 1921.

Scholars tend to treat increasing conservatism (especially with regards to gender) in female-founded NRMs as a natural and inexplicable process, or else as inevitable, given that the leaders who popularize the organizations are usually male.[29] However, if one considers the case of Ōmoto, one can see leaders making deliberate decisions that shut women out of authority positions. I argue that many of the decisions that Ōmoto leaders made during the *chinkon kishin* boom—regarding doctrine, what outside groups to engage with, the attempt to subsume other spiritualist techniques into their worldview, and internal authority structures—were an attempt to both secure the identity of the group as "legitimate" from a scientific and modernist perspective and to deal with the inevitable authority shift that occurred with the introduction of mass *chinkon kishin*. Thus, rather than assuming that female-to-male authority shifts in NRMs are inexplicable, I argue that it is important to consider why NRM leaders might consciously support and encourage such a shift.

[29] See, for example, Hardacre, "Gender and the Millenium in Ōmoto Kyōdan"; Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow: A Study of Shamanistic Practices in Japan*, 137-139.

Chapter One
Mediated Egalitarianism: Sources of Authority During Ōmoto's "*Chinkon Kishin* Boom"

As discussed in the introduction, *chinkon kishin* irrevocably reshaped Ōmoto by transforming its structures of authority. Before the *chinkon kishin* boom, authority in Ōmoto had been derived from possession by various deities in the Ōmoto pantheon, but *chinkon kishin* gave—in theory—all practitioners equal access to those deities. Although, with the abolition of *chinkon kishin*, authority in post-1921 Ōmoto again shifted back to those who were possessed, during the *chinkon kishin* boom a new framework of authority had to be created and negotiated.

This chapter discusses the new authority structure created by *chinkon kishin* through analysis of Asano Wasaburō's "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite" ("About *chinkon kishin*"), originally published in issues 45 and 46 of *Shinreikai* in 1917. "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite" was intended for proselytization, and thus presents the reader with a basic introduction to the theory and worldview that made *chinkon kishin* possible; where space constraints did not allow Asano to expand on a particular point, I have supplemented with information from other *Shinreikai* essays. As "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite" illustrates, the Ōmoto leadership adapted to the diffusion of previous sources of authority by creating two hierarchies—one based upon possession by certain deities and the other based on one's ability to be a *saniwa*. The latter group monitored and restricted the former, and thus was able to maintain control of the group's doctrine while preaching an egalitarian worldview in which anyone—in theory—could rise to the position of Nao or Onisaburō.

Pre-*Chinkon Kishin* Sources of Authority in Ōmoto

In order to understand the challenge the *chinkon kishin* boom offered to pre-existing sources of authority in Ōmoto, it is necessary to briefly consider Ōmoto's history. In 1892, Deguchi Nao had a sudden experience of *kamigakari* (神懸り; spirit possession), which lasted for thirteen days.[30] During that time, she engaged in many dialogues with the deity, who proclaimed himself to be Ushitora no Konjin.[31] Nao visited priest-mediums and fortune-tellers in order to have the deity exorcised, but these attempts ended only in increasingly violent bouts of *kamigakari*, and, in one case, the death of a fortune-teller who tried to seal Ushitora no Konjin in a box.[32] The increasingly enraged spirit, while possessing Nao, screamed insults at her neighbors and ordered them to leave their homes. When a series of fires broke out in Ayabe in March of 1893, the spirit declared that he had set them to punish the people for their evil ways, and Nao was arrested on suspicion of arson. Although someone else later confessed to the crime and Nao was released, Nao subsequently remained confined to her home for forty days. During this period of confinement, Nao decided to accept the *kami* possessing her. The violent *kamigakari* ceased, and she began to write rather than speak the words of the possessing deity. Nao was illiterate, and so her sudden ability to write is considered miraculous.[33] These scriptures, which reached approximately two hundred thousand

[30] Emily Ooms, *Women and Millenarian Protest in Meiji Japan*, 6.
[31] Ushitora no Konjin was best known as the evil guardian of the northeast direction (an unlucky direction associated with death). Shugendō practitioners popularized the deity through appeasement rituals performed before travel or construction in the northeast direction. Kawate Bunjirō, the founder of Konkōkyō, was possessed by Ushitora no Konjin, and became convinced that he was, in fact, not an evil *kami*, but instead the benevolent creator and protector of the world. Nao was exposed to Konkōkyō beliefs both before and after her first possession experience, and shared Kawate's (re)assessment of Ushitora no Konjin. Ibid., 89.
[32] Sakae Ōishi, *Nao Deguchi: A Biography of the Foundress of Ōmoto*, 22-23.
[33] Ooms, *Women and Millenarian Protest*, 5-9.

Figure 4 Deguchi Nao.[34]

pages by the time of Nao's death in 1918,[35] are collected in the *Ofudesaki*.[36] Like many other founders of NRMs, Nao then began to attract followers as a faith healer.[37] During this early stage of Ōmoto's history, Nao derived her authority from two sources—first, her possession by Ushitora no Konjin, and, second, her ability to heal followers because of that possession. This combination of possession and healing as a basis for authority can be seen in other Japanese new religions, such as Tenrikyō, Konkōkyō, and Sekai Meshiakyō.[38]

[34] "File: Nao Deguchi.jpg," accessed March 3, 2014, http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nao_Deguchi.jpg.
[35] Ōishi, *Nao Deguchi*, 25.
[36] Excerpts of the *Ofudesaki*, transcribed and edited by Onisaburō, were first published in *Shinreikai* during the *chinkon kishin* boom. In 1919 and 1920, two small collections of Nao's writings that had previously been published in *Shinreikai* were released under the titles *Ōmoto shinyu ten no maki* and *Ōmoto shinyu hi no maki*, respectively. In 1982, a collection of Nao and Onisaburō's writings was published in the *Ōmoto shiryō shūsei*. For more information on the compilation of Nao's writings and the issues inherent in Onisaburō's editing, see Ooms, *Women and Millenarian Protest*, 71-74.
[37] Ibid., 49.
[38] Carmen Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow*, 130-136.

Although Nao tried to affiliate herself with first Tenrikyō and then Konkōkyō in the hopes that they would acknowledge the authority of the *kami* who possessed her and clarify his revelations, leaders from both religions dismissed her prophetic writings and sought solely to capitalize on her abilities as a faith healer in proselytizing their own teachings.[39] Nao finally found confirmation of the authority of her *kami* through Ueda Kisaburō (later Deguchi Onisaburō),[40] a *saniwa* trained in Honda Chikaatsu's[41] *chinkon kishin* technique for inducing spirit possession. Onisaburō was able to identify Ushitora no Konjin as the Shinto deity Kunitakehiko no Mikoto, verifying his supreme power. Unfortunately, Nao's satisfaction with Onisaburō soon faded. She strongly disapproved

Figure 5 Deguchi Onisaburō, demonstrating the proper hand position for *chinkon kishin*.[42]

[39] Ooms, *Women and Millenarian Protest*, 49-53.
[40] Ibid., 54.
[41] Honda Chikaatsu (1822-1889) was a Shinto scholar who studied under Aizawa Seishisai and Hirata Atsutane. He studied various forms of spirit possession—such as Shugendō's *yorigito* and Ontakekyō's *oza*—intensively in order to "recover" the "original" spirit possession. Through his studies he outlined the theory and technique for *chinkon* and *kishin*, which was then adapted for Ōmoto's practice of *chinkon kishin*. For more information on Honda Chikaatsu and his theory of *chinkon kishin*, see Birgit Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 137-180.
[42] Nancy Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 92.

of his practicing *chinkon kishin* with the group, as it enabled anyone to experience spirit possession, devaluing her own *kamigakari* experience and distracting the group from its main purpose—clarifying and spreading Ushitora no Konjin's teachings.[43] In 1905, she wrote, "[I]f one is overly engrossed only in Spirit Studies, the [*Ofudesaki* is] neglected, one is ever more unable to grasp the truth and cannot fulfil [sic] the divine will. […] If you are engrossed in spirit possession only, people will at first flock together out of curiosity, but because hardly any deities worth mentioning appear, you will be called bluffers, *izuna zukai*[44] or sorcerers, and for this generation the plan cannot be achieved."[45]

Nao's warnings had little effect on either Onisaburō or her followers, however, and so she took matters into her own hands, refusing to allow Onisaburō to interpret her revelations, and essentially rejecting his role as *saniwa* to her shaman.[46] She subsumed the *saniwa* role into herself, announcing herself to have been made the Transformed Male—a male nature in a female body—through many rebirths, much suffering, and finally her possession by Ushitora no Konjin. Onisaburō, after a similar (but shorter) process of rebirth and suffering, was possessed by Hitsujisaru Konjin, the second most important deity next to Ushitora no Konjin, and became the Transformed Female, a female nature in a male body.[47] Nao then used this gendered dyad to control Onisaburō, warning him, "The Transformed Female had better be careful. The … Transformed

[43] Ooms, *Women and Millenarian Protest*, 54-55.
[44] *Izuna zukai* is a local variant of *tsukimono zukai*. See *Encyclopedia of Shinto*, s.v. "Tsukimono," by Kawamura Kunimitsu, accessed December 29, 2013, http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=792; Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 36-37.
[45] Translated in Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 222.
[46] For more information on the common rejection or absorption of the *saniwa* figure by shamanic founders of NRMs, see Helen Hardacre, "The Shaman and Her Transformations: The Construction of Gender Motifs of Religious Action," 100-115.
[47] Helen Hardacre, "Gender and the Millenium in Ōmoto Kyōdan," 220-223.

Figure 6 Onisaburō dressed as Benzaiten, a goddess of music, art, and poetry.[48]

Female wants to assert herself too much. For a woman, her ego is outrageous."[49] Thus, during this period, Onisaburō and Nao gained authority through their identification with the two most powerful deities in Ōmoto's pantheon, continuing the trend of gaining authority through spirit possession.

Nao predicted a crushing Japanese defeat at the hands of the Russians in 1904, marking the end of the world, but in 1905 her prayers proved futile, and the Japanese won the war. Her disillusioned followers abandoned her, leaving only Nao, Onisaburō, Sumi (Nao's daughter and Onisaburō's husband), Nao's younger sister, and Onisaburō's

[48] Nancy Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 42.

[49] Hardacre, "Gender and the Millenium," 223. Nao and Onisaburō were referred to by both male and female pronouns in Ōmoto writings in Japanese, English, and Esperanto; even now, Onisaburō is referred to as "she" in writings posted on Ōmoto's English-language website. See, for example, Deguchi Onisaburō, *Divine Signposts*, passim.

I have opted to refer to Nao with female pronouns and Onisaburo with male pronouns not because of a desire to erase their complex gender identities or because of any attachment to existing scholarly conventions but because the conceptions of the Transformed Male and Transformed Female were eclipsed during the *chinkon kishin* boom by *chinkon kishin* theory (which had, as we shall see, very differently gendered roles) and anticipation for the Taishō Restoration.

mother.[50] In 1906, Onisaburō entered the Kōten Kokyūsho, an institution in Kyoto to train Shinto priests for official appointments. He graduated in March of 1907, and was assigned to a post at Kenkun Shrine in northern Kyoto, but was quickly dismissed from this post for flamboyant behavior. He returned to Ayabe in August of 1908 to establish the Dai Nihon Shūsaikai (Association for the Purification of Japan), an organization for Shinto research.[51] Although Nao did not die until 1918, Onisaburō officially succeeded to the leadership of Ōmoto in 1908, and the group took a drastically different course than the one Nao had envisioned. Staemmler identifies this period (from 1908 to 1921) as the climactic period of *chinkon kishin* in Ōmoto's history,[52] in which Nao and her *Ofudesaki* were eclipsed by Onisaburō and his spiritualistic practices (especially *chinkon kishin*), nationalistic Shinto doctrines, and theories of modern civilization.

Asano Wasaburō

Now that we have discussed the historical context for the text, let us turn to the background of the author. Asano Wasaburō (1847-1937) was the third son of a doctor, and studied English literature at Tokyo's Imperial University under Lafcadio Hearn. After his graduation in 1899, he became a lecturer at Kaigun Kikan Gakkō, a university for prospective naval officers in Yokosuka. He was a prolific writer, penning a thousand-page history of English literature as well as contributing to the journals *Shinsei* and *Teikoku bungaku* and translating Shakespeare.[53]

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[50] Ooms, *Women and Millenarian Protest*, 65-66.
[51] Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 43-48. Yoshinaga Shin'ichi, "Taishōki Ōmotokyō no shūkyōteki ba," 71.
[52] Staemmler identifies the remaining periods as the period beginning with Onisaburō's initiatory experiences on Mount Takakuma and ending in 1908, the period of *chinkon kishin*'s abolition between 1919 and the early 1930s, and finally the period up until today. Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 218.
[53] Helen Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō and Japanese Spiritualism in Early Twentieth-Century Japan," 139-140. Ichiyanagi Hirotaka, *"Kokkurisan" to "senrigan"*, 198-199.

Figure 7 Asano Wasaburō.[54]

Asano was aware of the contemporary interest in Western spiritualism (discussed in the next chapter), and was introduced to hypnotism by a naval officer who frequently invited his friends to watch him hypnotize his wife, daughters, and maids. However, Asano wrote that he had many doubts about the explanations for hypnosis, and he soon lost interest in the subject. His next encounter with the occult was not until 1915, when his son began to run a mysterious fever every morning that would disappear by dusk. After six months and a string of unsuccessful physicians, Asano's wife secretly hired a healer, Ishii Fuyu. Asano's initial humiliation turned to curiosity when his son was successfully healed. Asano performed a variety of "experiments" on Ishii to discover that she was able to perform various feats of clairvoyance, such as divining exactly how much

[54] Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 276.

money was in his wallet. However, Ishii was not able to satisfactorily explain how her powers worked, nor did she have any great insights into the workings of the universe.[55]

It was through Ishii, however, that Asano met Iimori Masayoshi, a naval officer, former colleague of Asano's, and member of Ōmoto.[56] Iimori persuaded Asano to come to Ayabe in April 1916, where he met Onisaburō and Nao. Asano was greatly impressed by Nao's philosophy and her millenarian prophecies. Later that month, Onisaburō visited Asano in Yokosuka, and initiated Asano into the practice of *chinkon kishin* during a session attended by Onisaburō, two other experienced Ōmoto members, and several of Asano's acquaintances. Onisaburō gave an hour-long lecture, and then served as the *saniwa* for two sessions of *chinkon kishin*. Not much happened during those sessions, except that Asano's legs went numb and Miyazawa, one of Asano's guests, breathed heavily. The next evening, Onisaburō claimed to recognize Asano's mission as a mediator and urged him to take the role of the *saniwa*. When Asano acted as *saniwa*, one of the participants, Miyazawa, fell into a trance, but Asano could not make the possessing deity say more than a few unconnected syllables. On the third night, however, Miyazawa fell into a trance and spoke quite easily. While looking for a stone to make a flute for *chinkon kishin*, Asano's mission as a *saniwa* was confirmed by finding a stone shaped like a dragon head. The stone was later revealed to be a gift from the deity Konohana Sakuya Hime.[57]

Asano continued to practice *chinkon kishin* and develop his faculties as a *saniwa*, although the naval school warned him about holding frequent séances.[58] By the end of

[55] Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō," 141. Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 200-201.
[56] For more on Iimori Masayoshi's role in Ōmoto, see Yoshinaga, "Taishōki Ōmotokyō," 74-76.
[57] Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 277-278. Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 201-202. "Ōmoto tsūshin," 83-84.
[58] Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō," 143.

Figure 8 Onisaburō (left) and Asano (right).[59]

December 1916, he had moved his entire family to Ayabe. Although Asano stated that his reason for joining Ōmoto was that he "yearned […] to research this spirit possession practiced in Ōmoto," rather than because of any desire for "a position of influence within Ōmoto,"[60] a position of influence was undoubtedly what he had. Asano was quite a catch for Ōmoto, which was hoping to expand from its base of mostly rural peasant worshippers to the cities and the middle class, and he quickly joined the upper echelons of the leadership council to systemize the doctrinal content for proselytization. He also reported directly to Nao until her death in 1918.[61] Aside from editing and writing for *Shinreikai*, Asano served as the chairman of Dai Nihon Shūsaikai, lectured to members and non-members, acted as one of the few *saniwa* for the increasing number of *chinkon kishin* participants, and coordinated *saniwa* and lecturers.[62] Although Asano was only a

[59] Yumiyama Tatsuya, "Rei," 87.
[60] Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 277.
[61] Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō," 144.
[62] Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 230. Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 203.

member of Ōmoto for 6 years, leaving shortly after the first Ōmoto incident, he significantly influenced interpretations of *chinkon kishin* and world renewal in Ōmoto.[63]

Egalitarianism and Authority in *Chinkon Kishin*

Let us now turn to the text under consideration. "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite" has six sections—the first four were published in *Shinreikai* in March of 1917, and the remaining two were published in the following issue in April. The stated purpose of the article is to "explain simply not only the principles, applications, goals, and forms of *chinkon kishin*, but also the process through which it has been revived and perfected."[64] The tone of the article—as well as the exhortations to come to one of Ōmoto's branches in order to discover the existence of the *reikon* for oneself—makes it clear that the work was intended for proselytization.

Asano begins by explaining the relation between the *kami* and the human *reikon* (霊魂; soul or spirit). According to Asano, the reason that the *reikon* and the *kami* can commune (感応) through *chinkon kishin* is because the human *reikon* is a *bunrei* (分霊) or "divided spirit" of the *kami*.[65] He also identifies the *kami* as the *honrei* (本霊; original spirit), and uses the two terms fairly interchangeably throughout the text. The *honrei* or *kami*, in turn, is a manifestation of the universal originator spirit, Ame no Minakanushi

[63] For more information on Asano's ideas concerning world renewal see Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō," 145-146; Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 89. A collection of Asano's essays on the Taishō Restoration were published in Asano Wasaburō, *Taishō ishin no shinsō*.
[64] Asano Wasaburō, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 113.
[65] The term "divided spirit" is most commonly used in Shinto to refer to the process by which a portion of a *kami*'s spirit (*bunrei*) is ritually separated from the main shrine and enshrined in a new location. For more information on *bunrei* in the context of Inari worship, see Karen Smyers, *The Fox and the Jewel: Shared and Private Meanings in Contemporary Japanese Inari Worship*, 156-159.

no Kami, the highest *kami* of Ōmoto's pantheon.[66] The myriad deities (八百万神) are also each aspects or divisions of Ame no Minakanushi no Kami. Asano explains,

> If one compares Ame no Minakanushi no Kami to a limitless, shoreless ocean the *kami* are like the seawater filling many types of vessels (器物). Even though all seawater has the same qualities, the amount and shape of the seawater [in the vessels] is not the same. If one combines them, they return to being one, and if one separates them, they are split into infinity.[67]

Furthermore, he argues,

> [o]ur *reikon* are the *bunrei* of the one *kami* that is the infinite *kami*. In other words, a certain *kami* is the *honrei* of my *reikon*. Therefore, the height of unity of the *kami* and humanity is, in other words, the unity of the *bunrei* and the *honrei*.[68]

This conception of the *reikon* establishes a universal, equal soul in all people—if all people's *reikon* are merely divisions of the original deity, Ame no Minakanushi no Kami, the substance of all people's *reikon* is essentially the same. The only difference between two people's *reikon* is, as Asano elucidates through his seawater metaphor, their "volume" and "shape." In other words, Asano argues that all people have access, through their *reikon*, to the same divinities as Onisaburō and Nao.

The *reikon* is further divided into one *rei* (霊) and four *kon* (魂).[69] The *rei*, which Asano later identifies with the protective deity (discussed below), differentiates right

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[66] This identification signifies a shift from Ushitora no Konjin to Ame no Minakanushi no Kami as the apex of the pantheon. Ame no Minakanushi no Kami is the first deity mentioned in the *Kojiki.* Donald Philippi, *Kojiki*, 47. Honda Chikaatsu identified him as "the true god" (真神). Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 148. Ōmoto regards itself as both polytheistic and monotheistic—the myriad *kami* are all considered different manifestations of Ame no Minakanushi no Kami. Ushitora no Konjin is also considered one of Ame no Minakanushi no Kami's manifestations, but he is accorded an important place in the Ōmoto pantheon because he is believed to have created this world. For more discussion, see ibid., 213-214.

[67] Asano, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 114.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Staemmler offers "one spiritual guide and four essences" as a possible translation. Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 337. She translates the four *kon* as the "rough essence" (荒魂), "harmonious essence" (和魂), "wondrous essence" (奇魂), and "prosperous essence" (幸魂). Ibid., 150.
This concept of one *rei* and four *kon* is derived from Shinto doctrine. *Encyclopedia of Shinto* offers the following translations for the four *kon*: the turbulent, the tranquil, the propitious, and the wondrous, miraculous, or salubrious. *Encyclopedia of Shinto*, s.v. "Ichirei Shikon," by Yonei Teruyoshi, accessed

from wrong, but if unpolished, will become black and cloudy. The state of the *rei* additionally influences the qualities of the *kon*: when the *rei* is pure and good, the four *kon* are bravery, intimacy (親), love, and wisdom, but when the *rei* is clouded and evil, the four *kon* are fighting, evil, opposition, and madness. People with inferior or clouded *reikon* will not be able to unite with the *kami* during *chinkon kishin*, and will instead only be able to unite with ancestral spirits.[70] Asano's conception of the *reikon*, then, conforms to Hardacre's formulation of the worldview of the New Religions: "The self is emphatically not under control; control is located almost entirely within the individual, and the idea that responsibility for one's situation can be located in any external source is rejected."[71] Although Asano does not go into detail as to how one would go about improving one's *reikon* in this particular essay, one's control over one's own fate is emphasized—by polishing one's *rei* (however it is that one does that), one can change one's *kon* to their positive states.

Asano then expounds on the workings of the spirit world, and how they influence human beings. He divides the spirit world (神界) into two realms: the good or correct spirit realm (正神界) and the bad spirit realm (邪神界). Each person's *reikon* is matched at birth with a *kami* that becomes his or her protective deity (守護神) and resides in the solar plexus.[72] The protective deity is the *rei* of one of the person's ancestors who has spent many hundreds of years in the spirit world perfecting itself, and is commanded by the person's *ubusunagami* (産土神; the tutelary deity of one's birthplace) to protect its

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March 23, 2014, http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=1181. See also *Encyclopedia of Shinto*, s.v. "Concepts of the Soul (Reikonkan)," by Asoya Masahiko, accessed March 23, 2014, http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=1446.

[70] Asano, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 114.

[71] Helen Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō and the New Religions of Japan*, 15.

[72] Inoue Tomegorō, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 238.

descendant.[73] Asano says the role of the protective deity is "like the head clerk or a private secretary," and the nature of the deity depends upon the workings (働き) of the *reikon*:

> [I]f the *reikon* is strong and good, the protective deity will also be strong and good, and often help the *reikon* and do good things, but if the *reikon* is strong and incorrect (不正), the protective deity will also be strong and incorrect, and manifest a monstrous capability to do evil.[74]

Even worse, if the *reikon* is incorrect and feeble, the protective deity will suppress the *reikon*, and may give the owner of the *reikon* an incurable malady or else make him/her seem mentally ill. If the protective deity is driven out or exorcised, however, the body will die, and so "in this case, the only hope is that the protective deity will reform," in which case the illness will be healed.[75]

Although Asano did not touch on this point in his essay, it was commonly believed in Ōmoto that "if the mind (精神; *seishin*)[76] becomes morally corrupt, one will unite (感応) with a different, bad, inferior, low-class evil deity, and that will overwhelm the natural protective deity and occupy the body. In short, one becomes the prisoner of war of the bad deity."[77] These deities were called "acquired possessing spirits" (後天的憑霊), as opposed to the "innate possessing spirits" (先天的憑霊)—the protective

[73] Taniguchi Seiji, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 36. For more on *ubusunagami*, see *Encyclopedia of Shinto*, s.v. "Ubusunagami," by Iwai Hiroshi, accessed January 7, 2014, http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=230.
[74] Asano, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 115.
[75] Ibid., 116. Not all members of Ōmoto believed that the protective deity had the potential to be evil, however. See, for example, Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri."
[76] Ōmoto's conception of the mind is discussed in greater depth in chapter three.
[77] Kōdō Ōmoto Reigakubu, "Reigaku kenkyū shibōsha ni tsugu," 176. On the other hand, it was possible to acquire addition good deities based upon good conduct. However, most Ōmoto publications chose to focus on evil acquired deities, for obvious reasons. See, for example, Taniguchi Seiji, "Ōmoto reigaku no shiteki kenkyū," 366.

deities.[78] These acquired possessing spirits could be gained a few years after birth or many decades after birth, and were gained suddenly as a direct result of one's (usually reprehensible) action. The nature of the possessing spirit was usually directly linked to one's behavior—if one was licentious, one would gain a licentious possessing spirit, and if one was immoral, one would gain an immoral possessing spirit.[79] These evil deities not only caused the "majority of illnesses,"[80] they also caused "egotism and exclusiveness, […] immorality and crime […] [and] mad thoughts like anarchy, communism, socialism, etc."[81]

If the protective deity repents and moves from the bad spirit realm to the good spirit realm, "the result is immediately manifested in the physical body," and a person who was previously ill all the time will immediately revert to a perfect state of health.[82] Acquired possessing spirits, too, could be convinced to reform.[83] Ōmoto writers were quick to note, however, that "this issue of [the healing of] illness is a by-product and the main purpose of [*chinkon kishin*] lies" in the improvement of one's own *reikon* and entering a state of unity with the deity.[84] This reformation of the protective deity of a person, according to Asano, "is not limited to only a single physically ill person, but can also be applied to juvenile delinquents, evildoers, lazy people, egotistical people, frivolous people, selfish people, vain people, arrogant people, and other mentally ill people."[85] This conception of problems arising from a lack of self-cultivation again

[78] Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 238. Note the use of the term "*rei*" (霊) to refer to possessing spirits.
[79] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 33.
[80] Kōdō Ōmoto Reigakubu, "Reigaku kenkyū shibōsha ni tsugu," 176.
[81] Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 238.
[82] Kōdō Ōmoto Reigakubu, "Reigaku kenkyū shibōsha ni tsugu," 176.
[83] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 34.
[84] Kōdō Ōmoto Reigakubu, "Reigaku kenkyū shibōsha ni tsugu," 176.
[85] Asano, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 116.

conforms with the worldview of many other new religions: "All problems can be traced to insufficient cultivation of self. […] [S]ociety can be improved only through collective moral improvement, the doctrine of meliorism."[86] Again, one's control over one's own fate is emphasized; whether one's protective deity belongs to the good spirit realm or the bad depends entirely on one's conduct, and through enough self-cultivation, one could presumably reach the level of Deguchi Nao or Onisaburō.

Although Asano did not touch on this point in this particular essay, other Ōmoto publications emphasized that one should not practice *chinkon kishin* merely to improve oneself, but also to prepare for the coming war. "The ranking of the natural spiritual level of each of the world's races is different, but the Yamato people are on this point supreme, and if they polish their *kon* splendidly, the supernatural power that has no equal under heaven will be able to be manifested."[87] This unequaled supernatural power made up for what Ōmoto perceived as Japan's inferiority in terms of "physical preparations, for example weapons, ammunitions, financial power," and military force. Despite the lack of "physical preparations," however, "Japan has a great, formless weapon. *It is nothing more than the divine technique that has no match anywhere else in the world*."[88] The spiritual development of the Japanese people would decide the war, and the entire world would be unified (under the Japanese imperial family, of course), beckoning in an "ideal era of peace and security."[89] Practicing *chinkon kishin*, then, was framed not merely as a question of self-improvement, but necessary for the sake of the whole world.

[86] Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō*, 14.
[87] Kōdō Ōmoto Reigakubu, "Reigaku kenkyū shibōsha ni tsugu," 176.
[88] Ibid., 177.
[89] Ibid., 176.

Chinkon and *kishin* have very different purposes, according to Asano, and while *chinkon* can occasionally be performed with only a *kannushi* (神主; the person possessed by the deity),[90] *kishin* needs both a *kannushi* and a *saniwa* (審神者; the person interrogating the deity, discussed below).[91] In order to enter into *chinkon*, the *kannushi* must be as pure of body as possible and sit in front of the *saniwa* with eyes closed and fingers and toes crossed.[92] According to Asano, "*Chinkon* eradicates all fantasies, dissipates sensation, destroys thought, and anticipates returning one's *reikon* to the universal originator of the soul, Ame no Minakanushi no Kami."[93] It also gathers the scattered *kon* in the lower abdomen.[94] In other words, "*Chinkon*, with the main purpose of preserving, relaxing, concentrating, and increasing the power of the *reikon*, puts it in a quiet state" and prepares it to be put into *kishin*.[95] Asano says that when the *kannushi* is performing *chinkon*, he/she will feel peaceful and gradually lose feeling in his/her hands and legs, feel like he/she is floating in the sky, and feel unspeakable joy.[96]

From *chinkon*, the *kannushi* can then enter *kishin*. Asano equates *kishin* with *kamigakari*, and says, "The *reikon* that was cultivated in *chinkon* is now transferred to a

[90] Presently the term "*kannushi*" is used to refer to shrine priests. The term has been used since ancient times to refer to those who ritually serve the deity, but also those who serve as the mediator between humans and *kami*, those who play the role of the *kami*, and even those who act as a *kami* in order to transmit the will of the *kami* to humanity. *Encylopedia of Shinto*, s.v. "Kannushi," by Nishimuta Takao, accessed May 8, 2013, http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=1285. Honda, his disciples, and Ōmoto used the term in the latter senses to refer to the possessed actor in *chinkon kishin*.
[91] Asano, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 116.
[92] This refers to the strictly prescribed sitting position, in which the *kannushi* sat "on their knees and feet, with the big toe of the left foot under that of the right foot, and with the upper halves of their bodies upright. Hands had to be joined together with the fingers folded into the hollow between the hands, the thumbs crossed and the index fingers pointing straight up." Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 257. See also Figures 1 and 5.
[93] Asano, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 115.
[94] Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 241.
[95] Asano, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 115.
[96] Ibid., 116.

dynamic state" and "manifests supernatural powers (神通力)."[97] The most powerful manifestation of those powers is the joining of the *reikon* with the *kami*, but normally, Asano says, one only manifests one's protective deity. Signs of possession include slightly moving hands, a rocking body, and, finally, words emanating from *kannushi*'s abdomen.[98]

Thus far, Asano has outlined a fairly egalitarian worldview: all people's *reikon* come from the same source, Ame no Minakanushi no Kami; the quality of their *reikon*, their protective deities, and their protective deities' respective places in the spirit world depend almost entirely upon their own efforts (their ethnicity apparently being the only factor they cannot control); and illness, both physical and mental, can be cured by "reforming" one's protective deity through self-cultivation. Additionally, anyone has the ability to practice *chinkon* or *kishin*, and thus come into contact with one's protective deity, as long as one's body is pure enough. Stalker interprets this egalitarian viewpoint as a form of "Taishō democracy," as it "gave ordinary people greater access to previously limited forms of power, albeit spiritual and not secular."[99]

Now we turn to the regulatory mechanism of the spirit possession experience—the *saniwa*. Although it was possible to perform *chinkon kishin* without a *saniwa*—and some Ōmoto members felt that they had to practice on their own in order to be sufficiently prepared for the impending apocalypse—Asano warned Ōmoto members that such a practice was not ideal and ultimately would not yield as impressive results as practicing with a *saniwa*.[100] I use masculine pronouns to refer to the *saniwa* throughout

[97] Ibid., 115.
[98] Ibid., 116.
[99] Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 106.
[100] Asano Wasaburō, "Chinkon kishin no chūi," 81.

this thesis, not in the sense of the gender-neutral "he" but because the *saniwa* is almost always male,[101] both from a historical perspective and in Ōmoto.[102] A true *saniwa* has special control over the workings of the protective deity, can differentiate a true deity from a fake one, can identify the rank (品位) of a deity, and has the ultimate power to force the protective deity to either leave (退去)[103] or reform its ways (改心). "Of course, when the protective deity is good, it presents no inconvenience to the *saniwa* (手数を煩はすことなく), and the spiritual power [of the protective deity] is naturally manifested."[104] However, often the protective deity is not good, and the *saniwa* is forced to take steps to reform it, with help from the good spirit realm.[105]

> If the protective deity is violent, [the *saniwa*] overpowers it; if it lies, he forces it to tell the truth; if it brags, he reprimands it; if it is indecisive, he encourages it; if it is bad (邪曲), he presses it into repenting or else pacifies it or else humors it or else scolds it or else binds it[106]

until finally he returns it to the spirit world. Although he does not enter a state of possession, the *saniwa* wields the power of the good spirit realm, and can bend deities to his will.

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[101] In anecdotes published in *Shinreikai*, in fact, the *saniwa* was often referred to as "a certain gentleman" (某氏). For a typical example, see Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku no shiteki kenkyū," 367.

[102] While the female shaman/male *saniwa* pattern is quite common throughout Japanese shamanism (Hardacre, "The Shaman and Her Transformations," 90-97), in Ōmoto the *kannushi* were also predominantly male. Of the fifty or sixty practitioners coming to Ayabe daily in 1918, Asano estimated that only 10-20% were women. Asano Wasaburō, "Kinryūden zakki," 214.
Honda, on the other hand, assumed that the medium would be female, although technically either men or women could be mediums. Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 159-161. Although Staemmler claims there are no records of women serving as *saniwa* in the context of Honda's *chinkon* and *kishin* (ibid., 161), she later recounts an incident in which Honda's wife acted as *saniwa* (ibid., 186).
For more on the tradition of the male as mediator in historical mediated spirit possession, see ibid., 45.

[103] Although it is not entirely clear from the context, "leave" here probably means "stop possessing the *kannushi*" rather than "leave entirely," as Asano says the eradication of the protective deity will cause death.

[104] Asano, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 116.

[105] Ibid.

[106] Ibid., 116-117.

False deities posed a major obstacle to Ōmoto. Asano claims that in not only Japan, but all Western countries as well, any and all spiritual phenomena are the workings of a person's protective deity (discussed in the next chapters). He warns, however, that nine times out of ten, these phenomena are the workings of evil or inferior (悪劣) protective deities such as foxes, *tanuki* (狸; shape-shifting badgers), and *tengu* (天狗; a type of winged mountain spirit), who claim the names of many of the "first class good deities" and enjoy uttering false prophecies and deceiving people.[107] Exactly such a case occurred, in fact, early in Onisaburō's career, when he had established a training hall for *chinkon kishin* in Uedani, in the hills outside of Ayabe. In 1899, when Onisaburō was away from Uedani, Fukushima Toranosuke, one of Nao's sons-in-law, became violently possessed, and screamed, "Toranosuke, who was born in the year of the ox, is Ushitora no Konjin!"[108] He then stripped naked and wrote revelations in the style of Nao's *Ofudesaki*. Although Onisaburō was eventually able to pacify the deity possessing Fukushima, other followers subsequently became possessed and supported Fukushima's claim. Fukushima became possessed again, and leapt about, waved his arms, punched holes in the *tatami* mats, and was a general nuisance. The noise attracted villagers, who came with boxed lunches to watch the spectacle. Onisaburō was eventually able to suppress all the possessing deities, but he decided to shut down the practice hall in

[107] Ibid., 115. Observant readers will note that the idea of foxes and *tengu* being protective deities directly contradicts the belief (outlined above) that the protective deity is the *rei* of a direct ancestor of the person in question. Due to the number of writers simultaneously expounding upon Ōmoto's doctrine during this period (as well as conflicting interpretations by different writers), such contradictions appear quite frequently. For more on doctrinal factionalism in Ōmoto during the *chinkon kishin* boom, see *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 476-483.

[108] The connection between the two figures is the ox, as Toranosuke was born in the year of the ox, and Ushitora no Konjin is the guardian of the northeastern direction, which is associated with the ox (and the tiger) in Taoist cosmology. Ooms, *Women and Millenarian Protest*, 89.

Uedani.[109] Although issues surrounding false prophecy in Ōmoto were never entirely resolved as long as *chinkon kishin* was practiced, having more than a single *saniwa* certainly helped solve some of the problems that had occurred at Uedani. The ability of the *saniwa* to distinguish true prophecies from false ones and true deities from deceiving ones gave Ōmoto the ability to control its doctrine—a *saniwa* could merely dismiss a prophecy that conflicted with official doctrine as the deceiving words of a lowly deity.

The *saniwa* clearly wields tremendous power, but how does one become a *saniwa*? Asano says the *saniwa* is "appointed directly by the good spirit realm,"[110] which is almost certainly a reference to his own *chinkon kishin* initiation experience. However, Asano adds, "there is no need to explain the skills of the *saniwa* here."[111] The *saniwa* are chosen by divine oracles, and so it is not possible to simply decide to become a *saniwa*. In fact, the substance of the natural talents of the *saniwa* should not even be discussed.[112] Interestingly, this conception of the *saniwa* is quite different than that of Honda's disciple, Nagasawa Katsutate (1858-1940), who Onisaburō trained under for a short period.[113] Nagasawa wrote:

> Only if the *saniwa* is not well versed in the divine classics and hundreds of other subjects, such as the history of Japan and other countries, from geography to astronomy, mineralogy, physics, chemistry, religions, philosophy or literature, he will not be able to distinguish between a true deity and a fake deity. […] [A] *saniwa* is incompetent if he does not have wide-ranging scientific knowledge.[114]

Similarly, Honda listed the following qualities necessary to be a *saniwa*:

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[109] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 195-196.
[110] Asano, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 115.
[111] Ibid., 116.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Nagasawa was the best known of Honda Chikaatsu's disciples. Following his initiation on Mount Takakuma, Onisaburō trained with Nagasawa for three days, and received a certificate attesting to his mastery of *chinkon kishin*. Onisaburō continued to visit Nagasawa three or four times per year for a period of nearly three years, and they stayed on friendly terms for many years afterwards. For more information on Nagasawa and Onisaburō's relationship, see Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 219-221.
[114] Translated in ibid., 394.

1. He should enquire about the past, present and future.
2. He must be able to distinguish a real deity from a fake deity.
3. He must know about the deities upper, middle and lower grades [*hin'i*, 品位].
4. He must know the deities' meritorious deeds.
5. He must know the [four *kon*].
6. He must be able to distinguish between heavenly and earthly deities.
7. He must know that there are three grades [*santō*, 三等] of deities.
8. He must know that with deities there is public spirit possession [*kōhyō*, 公憑] and private spirit possession [*shihyō*, 私憑].[115]

Honda thus "intimately connected *kishin* to knowledge"—not only the knowledge that was prerequisite to becoming a *saniwa*, but also the knowledge that could be gained through *kishin*.[116] Onisaburō also stressed the need for "[a]nyone wanting to be a *saniwa*" to "have the appropriate knowledge, experience and courage."[117] However, Onisaburō, like many other leaders of NRMs, had little formal education, aside from his stint at Kōten Kokyūsho. Many of Ōmoto's members, especially those who joined during the *chinkon kishin* boom, had university degrees, so education for the *saniwa* had to be defined differently in order for Onisaburō to maintain his position of authority. By emphasizing not the book-learning of the *saniwa*, but instead the *saniwa*'s innate (and indefinable) talent, Ōmoto could exercise tight control over the authority of the *saniwa*—only those "appointed directly by the good spirit realm" could become *saniwa*, and an accredited *saniwa* would need to confirm that appointment (as Onisaburō did in Asano's case). Those who were lacking in knowledge of the spirit realm or who did not have the proper temperament to be *saniwa* were strongly cautioned against attempting to *saniwa* for another member, as that exercise could end in disaster.[118] Although this policy did lead to the aforementioned shortage of *saniwa* during the peak of *chinkon kishin* activity,

[115] Translated in ibid., 160.
[116] Ibid., 164.
[117] Translated in ibid., 395.
[118] Asano, "Chinkon kishin no chūi," 81-82.

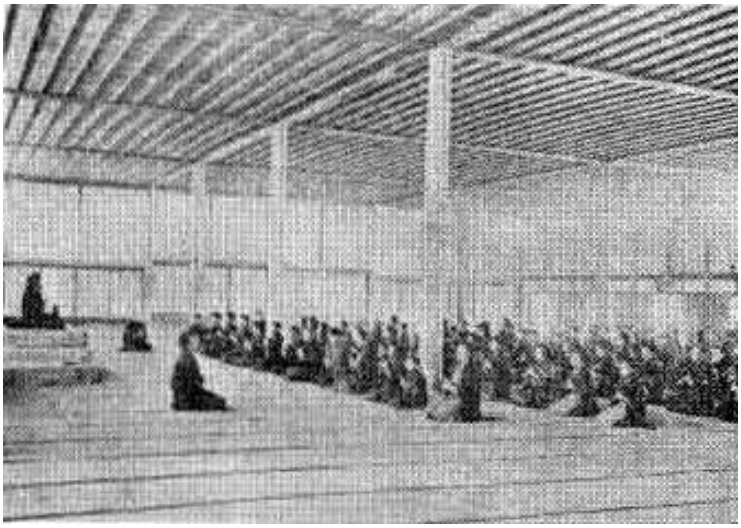

Figure 9 An example of mass *chinkon kishin* practice—the *saniwa* sit on the lefthand side while the *kannushi* are on the right.[119]

it did bestow an extraordinary amount of power and authority upon the lucky few who were chosen by the "good spirit realm."

At the end of his essay, Asano briefly touches upon how knowledge of *chinkon kishin* came to be transmitted to Ōmoto. Asano identifies *chinkon kishin* as an ancient technique used by the imperial court, and offers three examples of *chinkon kishin* from ancient texts: Ame no Uzume's ecstatic dance to lure Amaterasu out of the cave,[120] Empress Jingū's oracles concerning the invasion of the Korean peninsula, and Wake no Kiyomaru's receipt of the oracle from Usa Hachiman.[121] Interestingly, of the three incidents listed, only one definitely involved a *saniwa*.[122] Ame no Uzume's ecstatic dance, although accompanied by a liturgy read by Ame no Koyane, does not appear to

[119] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 427.
[120] Ironically, Honda strongly rejected the interpretation of Ame no Uzume's possession as the origin of *chinkon*. Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 176.
[121] Asano, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 117.
[122] It is unclear exactly how Wake no Kiyomaro received the oracle, but Staemmler believes that a professional priest or priestess obtained the oracle from Hachiman through mediated spirit possession, and then transmitted it to Wake no Kiyomaro. Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 58. Regardless of the specifics, Wake no Kiyomaro was neither the *saniwa* nor the *kannushi* in that instance of *chinkon kishin*.

have had a *saniwa* involved.[123] Although Empress Jingū did have a *saniwa*, Takechi no Sukune, he played a relatively minor role, only applying questions to the deity during Jingū's second possession experience, and completely incapable of stopping the deity from killing Emperor Chūai.[124] These *saniwa* may have had the ability to distinguish true deities from false ones, but they certainly did not seem able to exercise the same degree of control over the deities as Ōmoto *saniwa*.

Asano argues that knowledge of *chinkon kishin* was lost for more than a thousand years before it was rediscovered by Honda Chikaatsu. Honda's *reikon* then taught these techniques to Onisaburō during his initiatory experience on Mount Takakuma in 1898.[125] However, Asano is quick to add that Onisaburō has since perfected the technique he learned from Honda.[126] In fact, *saniwa* who have not been trained by Ōmoto do not have the ability to safely perform *chinkon kishin*.[127] Perhaps Ōmoto's claim to the only perfected version of the *chinkon kishin* technique explains the weak or absent nature of the *saniwa* in Asano's previous examples, or perhaps he was merely riffing off of Chikaatsu's own examples of *chinkon kishin* in ages past. Regardless, Asano secures the legitimacy of the technique by connecting it to a tradition stretching back into the mists of antiquity even as he asserts that only Ōmoto practitioners have knowledge of the perfected technique, and so anyone who is interested in experiencing *chinkon kishin* firsthand must do so at an Ōmoto branch office.

[123] Philippi, *Kojiki*, 83-85.
[124] Ibid., 257-261. For an interpretation of Jingū's story as an example of the "absent or inconsequential" *saniwa*, see Hardacre, "The Shaman and Her Transformations," 94-97.
[125] No mention is made of Nagasawa. Asano must have considered Nagasawa's contribution to Onisaburō's education too minimal—or, more likely, too pedestrian—for inclusion in the essay.
[126] Asano, "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite," 117.
[127] Ibid., 116.

Not only did Ōmoto claim a deeper understanding of *chinkon kishin* than any other practitioner or organization, they also claimed a deeper understanding of the spirit world and the Japanese classics, thanks to the successful utilization of *chinkon kishin*. If the possessing spirit is of a high rank, "it will do something like explain deep philosophical principles […] or speak of secret principles of the classic of the *Kojiki*. The reason why [Asano] has a deep knowledge of the organization of the spirit world and the interpretation of the *Kojiki* and so on is, on the contrary, not because of any sort of human work (人間業) of twisting the brain, [and] a logic of compiling supposition piled on supposition, [but because] he was taught by the deities that came to possess a certain bachelor of science and a certain naval officer. All the academic explanations that Kōdō Ōmoto preaches […] are all academic explanations taught by the *kami*."[128] Ōmoto quite frequently used this claim to higher, in some cases supernatural, knowledge in their debates with other spiritualists and psychologists, as detailed in chapters two and three.

The worldview that Asano lays out in "Chinkon kishin ni tsukite" is one of mediated egalitarianism. All people have equal access, though their *reikon*, to Nao and Onisaburō's sources of power and authority. The quality of their *reikon*, the nature of their protective deities, and the health or illness of their own bodies and minds are under their own control. Anyone with a pure enough body has the ability to practice *chinkon* or *kishin*, and come into contact with one's protective deity. However, the *saniwa* mediates and interprets the individual's access to and contact with the spirit world; he differentiates between "true" union with deities and possession by false deities, and can discount any prophecies that conflict with Ōmoto's official doctrine by declaring them

[128] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku no shiteki kenkyū," 365.

the utterances of deceptive deities. The role of *saniwa* is restricted to those who have certain indefinable talents, and all *saniwa* must be approved by one of Ōmoto's other *saniwa*. Additionally, although anyone (theoretically) has the ability to perform *chinkon* or *kishin*, only Ōmoto possesses the knowledge of the perfected form. Only Ōmoto members can perform *chinkon kishin* safely, and they must do so under the guidance of an approved Ōmoto *saniwa*. Thus, Ōmoto's theory of *chinkon kishin* argues for the universal equality of all humans (or, at least, all Japanese), but mediates its egalitarianism through the *saniwa*. Authority in Ōmoto during the *chinkon kishin* boom was thus derived from one's ability to mediate and control others' spirit possession.

The End of the Boom and the Abolition of *Chinkon Kishin*

The abolition of *chinkon kishin* began in 1919, two years before the end of the *chinkon kishin* boom. There are a variety of official reasons for the abolition, including that *chinkon kishin* had become unnecessary due to progress in the divine world, the lack of appropriate *saniwa*, and the potential danger of the technique.[129] Another factor in the decision to abolish *chinkon kishin* was that the police began questioning Onisaburō and Asano in February of 1919, and were specifically interested in *chinkon kishin*. Finding himself in the hot seat, Onisaburō blamed Asano. He asserted that Nao's *Ofudesaki* had not approved of *chinkon kishin*, and that he had tried to halt the practice, but Asano continually ignored his wishes.[130] In March, after yet another police questioning, Onisaburō declared that only the heads of branch offices and members who had received

[129] Personal communication with Ōmoto teaching staff, cited in Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 237.
[130] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 531-532.

special permission from headquarters were allowed to practice *chinkon kishin*.[131] An announcement published May 23, 1920 reminded practitioners that *chinkon kishin* should consist only of sitting quietly and letting the protective deity hear the *Ofudesaki* read, and more flamboyant activities such as *kiai* (気合; shouts) had to stop. Only members who received special permission were allowed to use *chinkon kishin* for healing purposes.[132] The Ayabe police explicitly advised Onisaburō to halt *chinkon kishin* on August 17, 1920, and after this point Onisaburō continually opposed the practice, saying in an October 1920 speech, "There seem to be some members of Ōmoto staff who want to achieve spirit possession, but this has been absolutely stopped by the god […]. Ōmoto has given out a warning and everyone should give heed to it. Only in cases where one is far away from the main office in remote regions may there be some degree of divine assistance, but as long as you are related to the main office, spirit possession is not permitted at all."[133]

The first Ōmoto incident occurred on February 12, 1921, and Onisaburō officially banned all spirit possession in March 1923.[134] In a 1931 article directed toward potential new members, Shinohara Kunihiko explained why *chinkon kishin* had been discontinued: "Master Deguchi alone is a perfect *saniwa*, and as he is extremely busy with doctrinal matters and [Ōmoto's] expansion, he has no spare time to perform this divine method for individual people's religious instruction." Although there were "several members of staff […] who have reached a certain understanding," Shinohara explained, having them act as

[131] Ibid., 537.
[132] Ibid., 430.
[133] Translated in Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 234.
[134] Ibid., 231. Onisaburō continued to practice *chinkon kishin* in his overseas missions, however. See Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 149.

saniwa was time-consuming, "and they are prevented from doing their other tasks."[135] In a 1933 conversation with members of the youth association, Onisaburō also cited the lack of experienced *saniwa*, saying, "Mr Asano, you know, when an evil spirit came and took possession, he argued with it with all his might. From morning till night he would groaningly deal with it. If I came along and patted him on the back encouragingly, [the evil spirit] would immediately be pacified. […] To let [members] practise spirit possession is like handing a knife to a madman."[136] Ultimately, the oligarchic nature of the *saniwa*, originally used to control *chinkon kishin* practitioners, became part and parcel of the reasons cited by Ōmoto for the abolition of *chinkon kishin*.

Instead of *chinkon kishin*, Onisaburō recommended that members read *Reikai monogatari* (*Tales of the Spirit World*),[137] an eclectic mix of parables, poems, social commentary, and essays that purported to reveal the truth of the spirit world as it had been transmitted to Onisaburō during his week-long sojourn on Mount Takakuma.[138] He dictated his story in a state of trance, vividly reliving his adventures; he even shivered violently as he described travelling through cold regions of the spirit world.[139] He thus came full circle, once again deriving authority from spirit possession. It is worth noting, however, that Onisaburō's authority came not only from possession (generally considered either a gender-neutral or female experience) but from *kamikakushi* (神隠し), a folk

[135] Translated in Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 235.
[136] Translated in ibid., 236.
[137] *Reikai monogatari* has been published in its entirety by Tenseisha. Excerpts can also be found in the *Deguchi Onisaburō Zenshū*.
[138] Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 99-100.
[139] Blacker, *The Catalpa Bow*, 203.

religious motif in which a male figure (usually a young boy) is kidnapped or guided by a spirit on a mysterious journey to strange lands.[140]

Stalker interprets this change as an attempt "to override the controversial teachings proliferating among [Ōmoto] factions with a single, authoritative voice" and a "further shift from a Nao-centric to an Onisaburō-centric doctrine."[141] Certainly, Asano, as well as several other Ōmoto leaders such as Tomokiyo Yoshisane (later founder of Shinto Tenkōkyō), opposed *Reikai monogatari*, and were angry that the new text denied the validity of their former doctrinal interpretations.[142] Additionally, Asano disagreed with Onisaburō's decision to entirely supersede Nao (to whom Asano had been more attached). Eventually, many of the intellectuals who had joined during the *chinkon kishin* boom, Asano included, left to form their own spiritual organizations, partially motivated by the drastic change in Ōmoto's direction and partially by the 1921 suppression.[143]

Conclusion

Today, Ōmoto considers *chinkon kishin* "an abnormal form of the otherwise desirable unity between humans and the divine,"[144] and the *chinkon kishin* boom is regarded as an extreme period in Ōmoto's history.[145] Although it may seem as though the *chinkon kishin* boom was, in fact, an isolated, abnormal period in Ōmoto's history, it shaped the movement in several ways. Firstly, it established Ōmoto's egalitarian worldview concerning the equality and unity of all people's souls and the ability of all

[140] Ibid., 186.
[141] Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 99.
[142] Ibid., 100.
[143] Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō," 147.
[144] Personal communication with Ōmoto headquarters, paraphrased in Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 230.
[145] Personal communication with Ōmoto headquarters, cited in ibid., 239.

people to improve themselves through self-cultivation. The idea that one could improve society by improving oneself eventually superseded the group's millenarian beliefs, bringing Ōmoto more in line with what Hardacre identifies as the worldview of the NRMs, in which "[s]incere cultivation of virtue by an individual can produce important changes in health and can influence human relations for the better."[146]

The authoritative structure in Ōmoto was also shifted during this period from a gendered dyad, comprised of Nao and Onisaburō, who drew their power from their possessing deities, to an entirely male group of *saniwa*, who were chosen by the "good spirit realm" and drew their authority from their ability to mediate others' spirit possession. Although anyone (theoretically) could have the "indefinable" skills of a *saniwa*, and thus, as in many other NRMs, "anyone [could] acquire leadership credentials, including women,"[147] in practice only men (who were approved for the position by other men) were *saniwa*. Even after the abolition of *chinkon kishin* and the shift back to possession-based authority (albeit a masculine authority, through *kamikakushi*), one's credentials as a *saniwa* could be a source of authority, as in the case of Onisaburō, whose position as the only "perfect *saniwa*" elevated him above the other members. This shift from a female-centered structure of authority to a male-centered one (especially at a time of high growth for the group) may also help explain why Nao's innovative ideas concerning gender did not have a larger impact on Ōmoto or Ōmoto-lineage NRMs, and were dropped soon after her death.[148] Ultimately, the *chinkon kishin* boom deconstructed the previous structures of authority by granting everyone equal

[146] Hardacre, *Kurozumikyō*, 12.
[147] Ibid., 5-6.
[148] See Hardacre, "Gender and the Millennium," 233-235.

(mediated) access to the spirit realm, but undermined this egalitarianism by creating a new power hierarchy based on one's ability to be a *saniwa*.

Chapter Two
Building the Knowledge Hierarchy: Ōmoto's Interactions with Spiritualist Thought and Practitioners

The previous chapter discussed the internal changes that occurred in Ōmoto as a result of the *chinkon kishin* boom. In this chapter we widen our focus by exploring Ōmoto's relationship to spiritualism and interactions with spiritualist organizations. We begin by giving a brief overview of spiritualism in the West, before moving to consider spiritualism in Japan. We then turn to Ōmoto's attitude toward spiritualist practices—mainly hypnotism—and its interactions with two other spiritualist organizations (Taireidō and Okada-style quiet sitting). The majority of this analysis pulls from three articles—Inoue Tomegorō's[149] "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu" ("*Chinkon kishin* and hypnotism"), first published in *Shinreikai* issue 91 in 1919; Taniguchi Seiji's[150] "Ōmoto reigaku no shiteki kenkyū" ("Ōmoto spirit studies' personal research"), first published in *Shinreikai* issue 84 in 1919; and Taniguchi Seiji's "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri" ("Looking at abnormal psychology from [the perspective of] Ōmoto's spirit studies"), first published in *Shinreikai* issue 87 in 1919—but is supplemented with other contemporary essays.

Through Ōmoto's publications—as well as the publications of contemporary spiritualist groups—we can begin to construct an image of the religious climate in which *chinkon kishin* flourished. Spiritualism enjoyed a certain degree of popularity among the

[149] No comprehensive biography currently exists for Inoue. He was originally employed as a doctor in Matsue, but he met Onisaburō in August of 1918, and moved to Ayabe the following March. *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 414. He must have been in the upper echelons of the movement, as he served as vice-president of Ōmoto's education affairs section starting in 1920 (ibid., 440), and he was one of the Ōmoto members whose personal home was searched during the first Ōmoto incident (ibid., 572). He was also part of the special defense counsel (特別弁護人) during the trial following the first Ōmoto incident (ibid., 625). Special thanks to Kurita Hidehiko for his invaluable assistance in compiling biographical information.
[150] Taniguchi's biography appears later in this chapter.

intellectual class—from which Ōmoto recruited quite heavily. However, rather than discounting or ignoring other spiritualist practices and groups, Ōmoto integrated outside spiritualist practices into their worldview by placing them in a "knowledge hierarchy" with *chinkon kishin* at the top (and all other practices holding inferior positions). They created a complementary hierarchy of *jutsusha* (spiritual practitioners, see below for a longer explanation) that placed the *saniwa* at the top and all other *jutsusha* in inferior positions with respect to control, power, and knowledge. Thus, through its discourse with and about other spiritualist groups, Ōmoto subsumed other group's techniques and theories into its own worldview. This integration allowed them to recruit from the membership of other spiritualist groups, as Ōmoto's techniques were presented as the next step up the knowledge hierarchy from whatever technique they were currently practicing. This integration of external spiritualist theory into an inferior position in Ōmoto's knowledge hierarchy further elevated the position of the *saniwa*. It additionally restricted leadership positions (or at least positions that were allowed to engage in inter-organizational dialogue) to educated men, as women did not have the education or social standing to engage with other (educated, male) spiritualists, nor did they fit into pre-established ideas concerning the (modern, rational) male psychical investigator.

Spiritualism in the West

Western spiritualism first began in 1848 with the "Rochester Rappings" of the teenage Fox sisters. The movement then spread throughout the entirety of the United

States and England, as "spirit circles" formed in every major city.[151] The movement reached a peak in the 1860s through 1880s, although it is difficult to estimate the numerical scope of the movement due to spiritualists' aversion to organization. The 1890 census (when the movement was on the decline) reported 45,000 spiritualists in thirty-nine states and territories, although only those formally affiliated with an organized society were counted. Contemporary observers estimated from a few hundred thousand to eleven million spiritualists in the United States.[152]

Braude characterizes spiritualism as "a religious response to the crisis of faith experienced by many Americans at mid-century," as it "appealed to people in search of new justification for a wavering faith." Spiritualism required people to believe nothing;

> [r]ather, it asked them to become "investigators," to observe "demonstrations" of the truth of Spiritualism produced under "test conditions" in the séance room. […] Considering its own methods to be scientific, the movement participated in the optimistic equation of science and progress that bolstered the conviction of so many nineteenth-century reform groups.[153]

Thus, spiritualist literature is full of references to "test séances" and indications that "a séance had been conducted under strictly controlled conditions and that the resulting phenomena were therefore acceptable as empirical evidence."[154]

Although "[i]t was firmly held that any individual, male or female, rich or poor, could become the conduit for a dialogue with the spirits,"[155] mediumship was closely identified with femininity,[156] and messages from spirits were generally considered most

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[151] Ann Braude, *Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Women's Rights in Nineteenth-Century America*, 10f. Alex Owen, *The Darkened Room: Women, Power, and Spiritualism in Late Nineteenth Century England*, 18f.
[152] Braude, *Radical Spirits*, 25.
[153] Ibid., 4.
[154] Owen, *The Darkened Room*, vi.
[155] Ibid., 5.
[156] Even male mediums were considered to have feminine traits. Ibid., 10. Braude, *Radical Spirits*, 23.

plausible when delivered by adolescent girls.[157] As Braude argues, rather than rejecting prevailing conceptions of gender, "mediumship gave women a public leadership role that allowed them to remain compliant with the complex of values of the period that have come to be known as the cult of true womanhood"—"purity, piety, passivity, and domesticity."[158] Owen argues that it was never spiritualists' intention to "mount an overt challenge to received notions of womanhood"; instead, believers saw "mediumship as the epitome of femininity."[159] However, rather than seeing femininity as weakness, "[s]piritualism made the delicate constitution and nervous excitability commonly attributed to femininity a virtue and lauded it as a qualification for religious leadership,"[160] for it was "the very quality which facilitated spirit communication."[161] Thus, "[w]hile men might bar women from church councils or from theological education, human authority could not supersede that given to mediums by the spirits who spoke through them. Spirit communcation [sic] carried its own authority. If one accepted the message, one had little choice but to accept the medium."[162] Because of this close linkage of spiritual power with femininity, spiritualists generally advocated women's rights, and spiritualism was closely linked to early feminist movements, as well as many other radical reform movements.[163]

This is not to say that women were active subjects—in fact, although equal numbers of men and women spoke from the spiritualist platform, as opposed to the men who "addressed audiences in a 'normal' state, expressing their own views on spiritualist

[157] Braude, *Radical Spirits*, 23. For more on the legitimacy of young female mediums, see ibid., 86-87.
[158] Ibid., 82.
[159] Owen, *The Darkened Room*, 202.
[160] Braude, *Radical Spirits*, 83.
[161] Owen, *The Darkened Room*, 10.
[162] Braude, *Radical Spirits*, 84.
[163] Ibid., 3.

subjects," the women who took the podium were almost always unconscious. They were "understood to be passive vehicles, whose physical faculties were used by spirits to express the sentiments of these unseen intelligences. […] The essential passivity of women was asserted in a public arena, displayed before thousands of witnesses."[164] In fact, unlike female non-spiritualist campaigners, who often spoke on very similar topics, "it would seem that spiritualist women either could not contemplate a public speaking career in which they had complete agency, or else fervently believed that their pronouncements were valid only when ratified by spirit presence and intent."[165] Thus, although their gender made women the perfect conduits for spirits, it also prevented them from expressing their opinions in non-trance states.

As opposed to the predominantly female mediums, however, psychical research was undoubtedly male-dominated, and investigators were on the whole considerably older than the (female, often teenage) subjects of their experiments and often from a higher social class. Owen describes these men as "predominantly members of the comfortable middle classes with the time and resources necessary to pursue their intellectual interests."[166] Spiritualism in the West was undeniably divided down gendered lines—women had the power to serve as conduits for spirits, while men were the (rational, scientific) investigators who documented and verified (female) spiritual power. This gendered divide is in some ways similar to the *kannushi-saniwa* pairing discussed in the last chapter; however, the *saniwa*, unlike the researcher, exercises a degree of control over the spirits in addition to being able to observe and document their workings. Let us now turn to spiritualism in Japan, keeping in mind its roots in the West.

[164] Ibid., 85.
[165] Owen, *The Darkened Room*, 212.
[166] Ibid., 230.

Spiritualism in Japan

Western spiritualism was imported to Japan in the late nineteenth century. As Staemmler points out, many spiritualist beliefs "were not alien to nineteenth century Japan, where belief in reincarnation was widespread, revering one's ancestors was becoming increasingly important and spirit possession and spirit mediumship had been widely practiced for many centuries."[167] Hardacre explains Western spiritualism in Japan as being "situated on a border between mass culture and the more rarefied pursuits of Westernized, bourgeois salon culture," and, as such, "it was romantic and escapist in a larger cultural context of empire, industrialization, and the expansion of state powers."[168] Ichiyanagi sees interest in spiritualism as born from the contention between folk thought (土俗的な思考) and "the new paradigm, science."[169] Experiments surrounding the soul (*rei*; 霊) were of special interest and were considered representative of the "civilization and enlightenment" that was encapsulated by "direct imports from the West."[170] Japanese spiritualism was thus situated at the intersection of imported Western ideologies and pre-existing Japanese folk belief, and mixed and matched ideas and practices to best suit the needs of the practitioner.

From the mid-1880s to the early 1890s, *kokkurisan* (狐狗狸さん)—a divination practice involving a bowl, lightly touched by three participants, balanced on a tripod of bamboo sticks[171]—became quite popular, reaching its peak of popularity between 1887 and 1888.[172] Although there is debate over how and when *kokkurisan* was imported to

[167] Birgit Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 106.
[168] Helen Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō and Japanese Spiritualism in Early Twentieth-Century Japan," 133.
[169] Ichiyanagi Hirotaka, *"Kokkurisan" to "senrigan"*, 15.
[170] Ibid., 15-16.
[171] For more on the variety of ways that *kokkurisan* was (and is) practiced, see ibid., 24-26.
[172] *Kokkurisan* is still practiced today, although mainly by elementary and middle school students. Ibid., 18.

Japan, most scholars agree that it was imported from the United States and was based either upon "table turning" or the Ouija board, both of which were extremely popular in the States at the time. As Ichiyanagi indicates, *kokkurisan* appealed to preexisting Japanese beliefs concerning spirit possession with an added "Western" flair. Additionally, it could be performed at no cost to the participant and did not require any special credentials, thus allowing the participant to avoid consulting (and paying) *miko*[173] or similar female soothsayers and diviners.[174] Even at its inception, Western spiritualism in Japan was seen as an alternative to traditional female forms of spiritual authority.

Beginning in 1887, hypnotism (催眠術; *saiminjutsu*) became fashionable, although it was never practiced as widely as *kokkurisan*.[175] Perhaps its comparative lack of popularity can be explained by its association (especially starting in the late 1890s) with "Western cutting-edge science" as well as "psychical research" (心霊学; *shinreigaku*) and "spirit studies" (霊学; *reigaku*). Hypnotism thus enjoyed greater popularity among the intellectual class than the common people.[176] There were at least eight national societies for research on hypnotism, and numerous academic periodicals (especially those of a psychological bent) featured essays on hypnotism alongside their regular fare. Several smaller, less academically-focused groups, such as Kuwabara Toshirō's Seishin Gakkai (Society for the Study of the Mind), focused on the spiritual

[173] At the time, a term used most commonly to refer to women with the magico-religious power to receive oracles from divinities while in a state of possession. Occasionally these women worked with *saniwa*. Now the term most commonly refers to young women who assist shrine priests in ritual or clerical work. See *Encyclopedia of Shinto*, s.v. "Miko," by Nishimuta Takao, accessed January 4, 2014, http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=1148.
[174] Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 20-27.
[175] Kurihara disagrees with Ichiyanagi's periodization, and puts the beginning of hypnotism's popularity at 1903. Kurihara Akira, "'Kagaku' teki gensetsu ni yoru reiteki jigen no kaitai kōchiku," 57. Ichiyanagi identifies the 1903 interest in hypnotism as the second hypnotism boom. Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 61-78.
[176] Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 61-78.

aspects of hypnotism (rather than the scientific applications) and thus served as the forerunners of Taishō-era spiritualist groups.[177] Despite hypnotism's "scientific" nature, hypnotists were also in high demand at public pleasure halls.[178] However, due to a mounting consciousness of the societal dangers of misuse of hypnotism, a bill to regulate hypnotism was debated by the Diet, and, finally, in 1908, the Police Criminal Punishment Code (警察犯処罰令) allowed for the arrest of individuals performing hypnotism without permission. Afterwards, many intellectuals treated hypnotism—especially hypnotism performed by people who were not medical professionals—with suspicion.[179]

Figure 10 Mifune Chizuko.[180]

Clairvoyance (千里眼; *senrigan*) then gained prominence, thanks to the media's interest in Mifune Chizuko (1886-1911), a young woman from Kumamoto, who first displayed her supernatural powers while hypnotized. After a period of training, she

[177] Ibid., 87-93. Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō," 136.
[178] Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 73-75. Nancy Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 81.
[179] Tanabe Shintarō, "Sei—orutanatibu na iyashi to sono jissensha," 14-15. Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 78-79.
[180] "File: Chizuko Mifune.jpg," accessed March 3, 2014, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Chizuko_Mifune.jpg.

managed to gain the power of clairvoyance without being hypnotized, and also developed miraculous healing powers. She subsequently attracted hundreds of people hoping to be healed by her supernatural powers, as well as researchers who wanted to study her. These researchers tended to favor "psychical research" as a comprehensive "new science" (新科学) field of research rather than the pre-existing, specialized "scientific" fields that failed to offer adequate explanations for spiritual phenomena such as hypnotism and clairvoyance.[181] As Hardacre argues, intellectuals were especially interested in reconciling spiritualism with science, for

> [t]heir understanding of the meaning of being "modern" human beings and their understanding of a proper, modern nation were based on a personal and a national commitment to "rationality," with science as its principal arbiter. […] Hence, salon demonstrations adopting the model of scientific experimentation were meant to validate not only telekinesis, hypnotism, and the rest but also the claim of these intellectuals to modernity as they understood it.[182]

This attempt to reconcile spiritualism with modernist, rationalist approaches to knowledge was a recreation of the ideology encompassed by Western "test séances," albeit with the added pressure to modernize and "catch up" to the Western world.

In the fourth decade of Meiji (1907-1912), this new "scientific" field of psychical research became particularly popular, and many books and articles—both translations of Western works and original works by Japanese researchers—were published on the topic. The mass media helped spread knowledge of this new field of study by competing to cover psychical research experiments, such as those conducted by Fukurai Tomokichi, (1869-1952), an assistant professor of psychology at the Tokyo Imperial University who became quite well-known for his "experiments" on female clairvoyants such as the

[181] Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 101-141.
[182] Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō," 138-139.

aforementioned Mifune and Nagao Ikuko (1871-1911).[183] Unfortunately, these experiments were later proved to be staged, leading to Mifune's humiliation and eventual suicide, and Fukurai was forced to leave Tokyo Imperial University in 1913.[184]

After Fukurai's fall from grace, spiritualism was increasingly branded as "pseudoscience" (疑似科学) or "superstition" (迷信) that lacked the rationalism of "real" science.[185] Thus, by the opening years of the Taishō era, spiritualism did not have quite the positive, "modern" implication that it had had a decade earlier. The number of books on spiritualistic topics increased in the Taishō era, but they were considered "ideology" (思想) rather than "science."[186] Ichiyanagi refers to this change as the transition from "psychical research" to "spiritualism."[187] Although the initial enthusiasm for Western spiritualism subsided, it still had a large effect on the Japanese religious landscape. Firstly, many intellectuals were deeply influenced by Western spiritualism, especially those who went on to found or hold leadership positions in spiritualist groups. Secondly, Western spiritualism "prepared the soil for new religions which place great emphasis on spiritualist elements and spirit possession,"[188] which mainly flourished between 1916 and 1925, and thus were in direct competition with Ōmoto. These NRMs were unique in that they represented a turn away from the *kokoro* (心; heart) that had occupied earlier NRMs to the *rei* that was the focus of spiritualism.[189]

[183] Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 101-141.
[184] Hardacre, "Asano Wasaburō," 135-136. Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 165-179.
[185] Ichiyanagi, *"Kokkurisan"*, 181-184.
[186] Ibid., 186-215.
[187] Ibid., 193.
[188] Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 107-108.
[189] Yumiyama Tatsuya, "Rei," 91-98.

Ōmoto and Spiritualism

Ōmoto actively recruited people who were interested in psychical research and/or spirit studies, as evidenced by a notice, first printed in issue 57 of *Shinreikai* on March 1, 1918, entitled "Reigaku kenkyū shibōsha ni tsugu" ("An announcement to people aspiring to do spirit studies research").[190] "Debates about the existence of the *reikon* or the existence of the *kami* are already out of date," the opening sentence proclaims. "If one uses the heavenly-given divine technique of *chinkon kishin* that has been practiced in Ōmoto these past twenty years, this problem can easily be solved and proven."[191] The notice then goes on to outline Ōmoto's worldview concerning the *reikon*, *chinkon kishin*, and the need for all Japanese people to improve their spiritual capabilities for the coming war. These advertisements must have been effective, as the announcement ends by noting that although Ōmoto does not "*request anything for a practice fee*" (emphasis in the original), visitors are expected to pay for their own lodging, and as the Ōmoto facilities are already so crowded, they hope that people will lodge elsewhere whenever possible.[192] They then list the cost of various accommodations in the area (50 *sen* for lodges, 1 yen for *ryōkan*), because "recently there have been a large number of people asking."[193]

Part of Ōmoto's motivation for recruiting people interested in spiritualism may be, as Yoshinaga argues, that in order for Ōmoto to successfully expand, they needed teachers, and the individuals whom they saw as most qualified to be teachers were people

[190] Staemmler claims the notice was reprinted several times elsewhere. Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 228.
[191] Kōdō Ōmoto Reigakubu, "Reigaku kenkyū shibōsha ni tsugu," 176.
[192] This emphasis on the lack of a practice fee may have been because of other spiritualist organizations' habit of charging fees. Taireidō practitioners, for example, were required to pay an "entrance fee" as well as "lecture fees." See Kurita Hidehiko, "Reidō o meguru poritikusu—Taishōki Nihon no rei gainen to shintai," 11.
[193] Kōdō Ōmoto Reigakubu, "Reigaku kenkyū shibōsha ni tsugu," 177.

with previous experience with spiritualist practices.[194] In fact, several major figures in Ōmoto during the *chinkon kishin* boom originally joined the group because of their interest in spiritualism. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Asano Wasaburō had a background in spiritualism before joining Ōmoto. Onisaburō also dabbled in spirit studies (along with Shinto, Buddhism, national studies [国学], Confucianism, Taoism, *yōkaigaku* [妖怪学; the study of monsters, which was particularly popular in the Meiji period], and even Christianity) from the late Meiji period until the early Taishō period.[195]

Figure 11 Taniguchi Seiji.[196]

Taniguchi Seiji (1893-1985, later known as Taniguchi Masaharu) was one of the *Shinreikai* authors who wrote most frequently about spiritualism, so it is worth exploring his background in some depth. Taniguchi was born in Kobe, and enrolled in the English literature department at Waseda University, but he quit due to his entanglement in a love

[194] Yoshinaga Shin'ichi, "Taishōki Ōmotokyō no shūkyōteki ba," 77.
[195] Kurihara, "'Kagaku' teki gensetsu," 55.
[196] Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 303.

affair. He became deeply interested in spiritual healing and hypnotism while working at a spinning mill in Osaka, first because of his concern that he had contracted a sexually transmitted disease and then because of concern that he had transmitted the STD to another woman. He first tried to cure himself through hypnotism, but then discovered Ōmoto through an article in *Suisei*, a popular spiritualist magazine. Before joining Ōmoto in 1918, he had studied various spiritualist theories and methods of healing, and so he was well-versed in the spiritualist discourse of the time.[197]

Although Taniguchi was initially skeptical about *chinkon kishin*, he converted to Ōmoto after he discovered that he had been possessed by a fox spirit. This fox spirit was the reason he had been drawn to the woman who had given him the STD, as well as the cause of his hostility toward his father (who had, in fact, killed the fox currently possessing Taniguchi). After joining Ōmoto, Taniguchi edited and wrote for *Shinreikai*, and quickly became an important member of the staff. His familiarity with other spiritualist techniques was especially helpful for engaging in debates with other spiritualist organizations (discussed below).[198] Taniguchi left Ōmoto in 1922 after the first Ōmoto incident, and eventually founded Seichō no Ie, a major NRM that practices an adapted form of *chinkon* called *shinsōkan* for healing purposes.[199]

As we can see, Ōmoto was fairly successful at appealing to those who were interested in Western spiritualism. Despite directly recruiting people who were interested in spiritualism, however, Ōmoto went to great pains to distance itself from Western

[197] Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 301-302. Yoshinaga, "Taishōki Ōmotokyō," 77. Kurita, "Reidō o meguru poritikusu," 20. Yumiyama, "Rei," 109-110.
[198] Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 94-96. Yoshinaga, "Taishōki Ōmotokyō," 77. Kurita, "Reidō o meguru poritikusu," 20. Yumiyama, "Rei," 109-110. Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 302.
[199] For more on Taniguchi's post- Ōmoto career and the practice of *shinsōkan* in Seichō no Ie, see Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 302-308.

spiritualist techniques such as hypnotism, as well as other Japanese spiritualist groups. One reason for this public disavowal was that, as one Ōmoto article put it, with the growing popularity of *chinkon kishin* "gradually there have been warnings to the public, […] and a great number [of people] have looked [upon Ōmoto and *chinkon kishin*] with eyes of scorn toward superstition," and these people "randomly decide that [*chinkon kishin*] is hypnotism and that becomes the sole ingredient (材料) of the attack."[200] These writers who criticized Ōmoto did not really know what hypnotism was, the Ōmoto writers complained, and yet wrote that *chinkon kishin* was "a type of hypnotism, or of a level inferior to hypnotism, or nothing more than [a technique] to induce sleep [that belongs to] the lowest level of spirit techniques (霊術)."[201] In order to understand the difference between *chinkon kishin* and hypnotism, Ōmoto argued, "first you must understand the main points of consciousness (意識) and sleep," and on both of those counts, "modern psychology and physiology are not thorough."[202] However, we shall leave issues of the mind and consciousness for the next chapter and instead focus on how Ōmoto differentiated *chinkon kishin* from hypnotism.

Let me first make a brief note about terms. Throughout Ōmoto publications, when discussing only *chinkon kishin*, writers use the terms *saniwa* and *kannushi* (as discussed in the last chapter). However, when taking a comparative approach to discussing *chinkon kishin*, they use *jutsusha* (術者) to refer to the person performing the technique (such as the actor performing hypnosis, the *saniwa*, etc.) and *hijutsusha* (被術者) to refer to the person receiving the technique (such as the person being hypnotized,

[200] Inoue Tomegorō, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 237.
[201] Taniguchi Seiji, "Ōmoto reigaku no shiteki kenkyū," 364.
[202] Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 237.

the *kannushi*, etc.). I have opted to not translate these terms, as I feel that there is no single translation that would be appropriate for all contexts,[203] and utilizing differing terms for different contexts would erase the authors' intentions of directly comparing techniques by utilizing the same language. With that linguistic note out of the way, let us turn to Ōmoto's critique of hypnotism.

Inoue Tomegorō offered quite a long explanation for hypnotism, describing it as a "a method of, as needed, putting another person into a state of sleep and limiting or suspending (休止) that person's conscious mind, injecting the consciousness of the *jutsusha*, and making the *jutsusha*'s consciousness occupy the core in the person's unconscious mind." Hypnotism was thus nothing other than the *jutsusha*'s protective deity—or, in some cases, the *jutsusha*'s acquired possessing spirits—struggling with the *hijutsusha*'s protective deity. "This is why, from the perspective of the good spirit world, hypnotism is nothing but an evil way."[204] However, "[i]f the protective deity of the *jutsusha* is of a lower level than the protective deity of the *hijutsusha* or at times when it [the protective deity of the *jutsusha*] is feeble, the hypnotism won't stick. A person of solid will, an educated person, is strong at self-criticism, and does not have the necessary mental submission for hypnotism, so [he/she] is comparatively difficult to put into a state of hypnotism."[205] Inoue thus not only classified hypnotism as a dangerous technique—because it gave the *jutsusha*'s protective deity or acquired possessing spirits control over the vulnerable *hijutsusha*—but also one with a somewhat unsavory and unsophisticated character, as educated people and people of strong character could not be hypnotized.

[203] Although "practitioner" and "receiver" are possible translations for the two terms, there are certain contexts in which these translations do not make sense—for example, the *hijutsusha* was occasionally the person actually performing the technique (as in the case of Okada-style quiet sitting).
[204] Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 240.
[205] Ibid., 240-241.

In fact, Inoue argued, the only time in which no damage will occur from hypnotism is when the *jutsusha* is a correct, good person who works in concert with his/her protective deity.[206] These cases are rare, however, and instead, "[b]ased upon the level of evilness of the practitioner's protective deity, the bad effects are […] large or small." Repeated hypnosis can lead to the *hijutsusha* to become neurotic and "[his/her] mind will become thin and weak," and he/she thus becomes easily suggestible and unwittingly driven to crime. Even when someone is healed through hypnotism, "it is in many cases a transitory thing, and does not continue endlessly."[207] In order for hypnotism to be non-damaging, the *jutsusha* must be not only a morally superior individual but also able to work in concert with his/her protective deity. The implication, of course, is that the non-harmful *jutsusha* needs to have some knowledge of Ōmoto doctrine and techniques, for how else could he/she work in concert with the protective deity? Those *jutsusha* who do not have such training are likely to cause severe (mental) damage to their *hijutsusha*. The *hijutsusha* are presented as relatively passive potential victims, for the only factor they can control during their experience of hypnotism is whether they can be hypnotized at all (through their own level of education and strength of character).

According to Taniguchi, the manifestation of various supernatural powers could also be explained as the workings of the possessing spirits. Clairvoyance was nothing more than mind of the *hijutsusha* being suppressed and a possessing spirit taking control of the actor's body, and, through its spiritual powers (which the actor him-/herself did not possess), being able to see things that were very far away. This theory of suppression of

[206] Ibid., 241.
[207] Ibid.

the main mind, Taniguchi argued, explained how one could have, for example, clairvoyance, but not be able to identify objects in the adjacent room; possessing spirits all had different capabilities. "The reason why there are truly so few [cases] of the *hijutsusha* being led into a state of deep hypnosis by means of hypnotism" and successfully manifesting "clairvoyance is because possessing spirits of inferior capabilities jabber on about nonsense."[208] Ōmoto was in this way able to explain how hypnotism and manifestation of various spiritual phenomena operated, which even psychical researchers were unable to do. Ōmoto writers thus continued to present themselves as more knowledgeable about spiritual phenomena than other spiritualist researchers and practitioners.

Ōmoto was desperate to distinguish *chinkon kishin* from hypnotism, and devoted a great deal of page space to enumerating their distinguishing characteristics. Taniguchi criticized hypnotism's dependence on suggestion and argued that the power of hypnotism was derived from the *hijutsusha*'s own preconceived notions of what would occur during the ceremony. Even with such "preliminary knowledge" of hypnotism, "[one] can already know that Kōdō Ōmoto's *chinkon* is not hypnotism." The practice of *chinkon kishin* did not follow the *hijutsusha*'s preconceived notions and did not utilize verbal or physical suggestion, and yet during *chinkon kishin*, "in each person in their particular way movement occurs in the *hijutsusha*'s body. […] This is not raising one's hands based on suggestion, and it is also not moving one's body based on suggestion."[209] Hypnotism was presented as an inferior technique that relied upon the vulnerability or suggestibility of the *hijutsusha*. *Chinkon kishin*, in comparison, did not prey on the

[208] Taniguchi Seiji, "Ōmoto yori mitaru hentai shinri," 35.
[209] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku no shiteki kenkyū," 364.

vulnerabilities of the *hijutsusha*, and the *saniwa* represented a *jutsusha* with real power over the workings of the spiritual world. The main difference between the two techniques—aside from the quality level of the techniques themselves—was the expertise of the *jutsusha*. When hypnotism was compared with *chinkon kishin*, not only was hypnotic technique found lacking, hypnotism's *jutsusha* was found lacking, thereby enhancing the prestige and authority of *chinkon kishin*'s *jutsusha* (the *saniwa*).

Inoue described *chinkon* as "the state of […] voluntarily loosening the hand of control and temporarily entrusting the possessing spirit with the body, and observing and critiquing the possessing spirit's consciousness and operation." Hypnotism, on the other hand, "is the state of being hypnotized and becoming thoughtless; the possessing spirit's consciousness can retain sovereignty (主権)."[210] The *hijutsusha* would generally "have no memories of what happened during hypnotism," but during *chinkon kishin*, "even in a case where a possessing spirit manifests and violently speaks, the person in question's consciousness is clear," even if they are unable to suppress the unseemly and embarrassing behavior of the possessing spirit. "But when the *saniwa* says, 'That's enough (よろしい),' and pats [the *kannushi*] on the back twice, no matter how violent the manifestation of the *rei*, [the *kannushi*] will immediately return to [a state of] tranquility (平静) and completely remember all [that occurred] during *chinkon*."[211] Again, the superior power of the *saniwa* is emphasized, as well as the comparative lack of vulnerability of the *kannushi* during *chinkon kishin*.

Asano described *chinkon kishin* as being like a sword that could cut very cleanly—when wielded by someone who could use it well, it could accomplish great

[210] Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 239.
[211] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku no shiteki kenkyū," 367.

things, but when wielded by someone who used it badly, it could cause great damage.[212] It is obvious from examining Ōmoto's discussions of hypnotism that Ōmoto prided itself on the "swordsmanship" of its *saniwa*, and devoted a great deal of page space to pointing out the comparative inferiority (the quality of the sword, one could say) of hypnotism, as well as the lack of properly trained *jutsusha*. Asano's choice of metaphor certainly makes a strong statement about the assumed gender identity of the *jutsusha*—not merely because of the phallic appearance of the sword, but also because of the identification of swordsmanship with masculinity.

Extending Asano's sword metaphor, one could say that hypnotism was a much duller sword than *chinkon kishin*, but even a dull sword can cause serious damage when wielded poorly. The *hijutsusha* is much less visible than the *jutsusha* in these comparisons, only mentioned as a potential victim of the poorly trained and potentially evil *jutsusha*. The only potential source of the *hijutsusha*'s spiritual agency is his/her strength of character and level of education, and that agency only allows defensive action (avoiding hypnosis/inept *jutsusha*) rather than active control over one's spiritual experiences. The call for people interested in psychical research to join Ōmoto was therefore not a call for them to gain authority over the workings of the spirit world (for that power was restricted to the *saniwa*). Rather, it was a call for them to remove themselves from the evil influences of the non-Ōmoto *jutsusha* and entrust themselves to the benevolent guidance of the better trained, more knowledgeable Ōmoto *jutsusha*. Ōmoto's discourse surrounding *chinkon kishin* and hypnotism was thus in tune with the spiritualist discourse of the day (by offering anyone the chance to discover the true power

[212] Asano Wasaburō, "Chinkon kishin no chūi," 80.

of the *rei* and conduct "spirit studies" research), but it placed its own techniques above what were presented as other inferior, run-of-the-mill spiritualist practices.

Ōmoto vs. Other Spiritualist Organizations

As can be inferred from the above discussion of hypnotism, Ōmoto writers considered other spiritual techniques inferior and misguided at best and dangerous at worst. In their appeal to people interested in spirit studies, they warned readers away from other groups, saying, "In the world there are such things as hypnotism, quiet sitting techniques, and every kind of *kitō*,[213] but because [the *jutsusha* of these techniques] do not know the method of resolving [problems] with and dealing with the protective deity, [these techniques] are, of course, imperfect and […] dangerous."[214] They often presented other spiritual practices as "immature" or "incomplete" forms of *chinkon kishin*, sometimes making their analogy explicit: "Even now in the world there is a big fuss over clairvoyance […] and such, but these sorts of things belong among mere children's play. Under appropriate guidance, if one accumulates training, Japanese people's spiritual capabilities will not stop at such trifling things as this."[215] Instead a variety of more impressive powers such as clairvoyance and clairaudience would manifest.[216]

Additionally, Ōmoto illustrated its superiority by remarking that "[a]mong Ōmoto's officer and believers" there are those who were masters of hypnotism and

[213] Magico-religious invocations of the power of either Shinto or Buddhist deities. See *Encyclopedia of Shinto*, s.v. "Kitō," by Shimazu Norifumi, accessed January 19, 2014, http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=1310. It may seem odd for Ōmoto to group *kitō* with hypnotism and other spiritualist practices, as *kitō* is a "traditional" Japanese practice. However, *kitōshi* (祈祷師; practitioners of *kitō*) were in direct competition with Ōmoto, especially in matters of spiritual healing.
[214] Kōdō Ōmoto Reigakubu, "Reigaku kenkyū shibōsha ni tsugu," 176.
[215] Ibid.
[216] Ibid.

leading figures in spiritual healing (心霊療法; *shinrei ryōhō*). Nearly all of these people "came with the ambition to, if things go well, […] [destroy] the Ōmoto training hall" by disproving the efficacy of *chinkon kishin*. However, "after once receiving Kōdō Ōmoto's *chinkon*, suddenly they tuck their tails and surrender. If Ōmoto's *chinkon* were the same as hypnotism or something less than it, there would be no reason for imposing hypnotists and masters of spiritual healing to convert to Kōdō Ōmoto's divine techniques, would there?"[217]

However, not all spiritualists were so inclined to "tuck their tails and surrender," and Ōmoto engaged in a fierce rivalry with several other organizations of a spiritualist bent during the *chinkon kishin* boom. This jockeying for members and influence was quite common among both spiritualists and spiritual healers, who often badmouthed other practitioners in order to assert the value of their specific practice.[218] As Kurita argues, the competition that occurred between Ōmoto and other contemporary spiritualist organizations was not a debate over the nature of consciousness (as took place with psychologists, discussed in the next chapter), but rather one over the interpretation of the involuntary bodily movements—often referred to as "*reidō*" (霊動) or "*rei* movement"—that occurred as a result of their various techniques.[219] The remainder of this chapter will consider the interactions between Ōmoto and two other spiritualist groups—Taireidō and Okada-style quiet sitting. These two organizations, aside from being two of the groups that Ōmoto most frequently mentioned by name, had quite different techniques and approaches to spiritualist practice, despite the overlap in their membership. Thus, by

[217] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku no shiteki kenkyū," 364.
[218] Tanabe, "Sei," 32.
[219] Kurita, "Reidō o meguru poritikusu," 2.

considering Ōmoto's reactions to and interactions with these groups, we can gain a better understanding of not only the religious climate surrounding the intellectual class in the Taishō era but also how Ōmoto distinguished itself from other spiritualist groups at the time. Let us briefly introduce Taireidō and Okada-style quiet sitting and then discuss their interactions with Ōmoto.

Figure 12 Tanaka Morihei.[220]

Taireidō (太霊道), like Ōmoto, blended spiritualism and more traditional Japanese forms of folk healing. Tanaka Morihei (1884-1929), Taireidō's founder, catapulted himself to national recognition in 1903, when he tried to directly petition the Meiji emperor to take military action in Russia. Following the incident, Tanaka withdrew from the public eye for a few years, and engaged in various ascetic practices. In 1905, after a ninety-day fast, he had an experience of automatic movement and gained miraculous healing powers. Like the founders of many other NRMs, Tanaka then

[220] Tanabe, "Sei," 1.

gathered followers through his healing activities, and preached a messianic vision of the future in which Taireidō would lead the world to true unification.[221]

Tanaka tried to propagate Taireidō's teachings through a variety of activities including a tour of Manchuria, China, and Korea; a bid for public office; and participation in the second Tōyō Psychology Association-sponsored exhibition, where he demonstrated the power of his healing technique. He, like Ōmoto's leaders, also founded a variety of spiritual research organizations and schools, and ran advertisements in major newspapers such as the *Yomiuri Shinbun*. The "public declaration" (公宣) that appeared in the November 29, 1916 edition of the *Yomiuri Shinbun*, for example, invited readers to experience "proof" of a "spiritual actual presence" (霊的実存在) through Taireidō, which "transcends materialism […], religion, philosophy, [and] all of science."[222] Like many other spiritual movements at the time, Tanaka was particularly successful at attracting intellectual- and military-class members, who were interested in spiritualism and the supernatural. Yoshinaga argues that one reason why Taireidō may have appealed so strongly to intellectuals was because Tanaka's ideas fit neatly with the "Taishō democracy" of the times that was so popular among intellectuals, as Tanaka argued for universal suffrage (including for women), a revised court system, and the reorganization of the aristocratic system (華族制度).[223]

Tanaka conceived of a presence, called "*tairei*" (太霊), which he said transcended the highest deities of every known religion. *Tairei* was the source of all life and consciousness, but Tanaka did not conceive of it in explicitly religious terms as Ōmoto

[221] Yoshinaga Shin'ichi, "Taireidō to kokka: Taireidō ni okeru kokkakan no imi," 35-38.
[222] Quoted in ibid., 40.
[223] Ibid., 38-45.

did with its identification of Ame no Minakanushi as the *honrei*. On the other hand, there were "*reishi*" (霊子)—a portmanteau of *rei* and *genshi* (原子; atom)—which were "spirit particles" that were responsible for all mental and physical phenomena.[224] Although in practice Tanaka used the two terms almost interchangeably, *tairei* was supposed to apply to the more theoretical aspects of Taireidō—such as *taireigaku* (太霊学), the theoretical study of the operation of *reishi*—while *reishi* applied to the more practical aspects—such as *reishijutsu* (霊子術), the practice of manipulating *reishi* for healing purposes.[225] Taireidō considered its beliefs fundamentally compatible with science, and, in fact, offered involuntary movement as scientific proof of the existence of *reishi*.[226] Taireidō's healing technique involved the practitioner transmitting *reishi* from his/her hands to the patient, causing involuntary movement in the patient and healing the patient's illness.[227] However, in Taireidō practice, the patient did not enter a trance, but the *kiai* and laying on of hands of the healer would cause automatic movement in the practitioner.[228]

Okada-style quiet sitting method (岡田式静座法), on the other hand, was created by Okada Torajirō (1872-1920) as a type of health technique (健康法) and mind-body practice (心身修行).[229] Okada was sickly through much of his childhood, and consequently was only able to complete an elementary school education. Despite his frail health, he became a well-known advocate of agricultural reform. However, he fled from an unhappy arranged marriage in 1906, abandoning his wife and child and disappearing

[224] The idea of "spirit particles" or some sort of "spiritual emission" was actually quite common among spiritualist groups at the time, although they did not all use the same term. Tanabe considers this idea the precursor to the current emphasis on *ki* (気). Tanabe, "Sei," 34.
[225] Yoshinaga, "Taireidō to kokka," 45-47.
[226] Kurita, "Reidō o meguru poritikusu," 12.
[227] Ibid., 13.
[228] Yoshinaga, "Tairei to kokka," 41.
[229] Practices based around breathing and sitting were quite popular at this time. See Tanabe, "Sei," 18-21.

into the mountains. When he returned from his period of self-exile, he had miraculously returned to the peak of health and began propagating an innovative quiet sitting technique.[230] Although Okada never completed any higher education, his personal charisma and sophisticated conversational style attracted many intellectuals and progressives; at its height, the movement had roughly twenty thousand followers, and quiet sitting sessions attracted hundreds of participants.[231]

Figure 13 Okada Torajirō demonstrating his quiet sitting technique.[232]

Okada claimed that his method of quiet sitting was intended to "reform the personality" (人格の改造), but also emphasized the healing capabilities of the technique. The technique itself was extremely simple, as it merely involved sitting upright with one's eyes open, one's legs crossed, and one's hands folded. One would then breathe

[230] Kobori Tetsurō, "Za—Okada Torajirō to Okada-shiki seiza hō," 52-57.
[231] Ibid., 77-79. Simon Avenell, *Making Japanese Citizens: Civil Society and the Mythology of the* Shimin *in Postwar Japan*, 50.
[232] Kobori, "Za," 47.

slowly through the nose.[233] Although Okada gave very explicit and detailed instructions about how exactly to sit and breathe, he did not explain the principles of the technique. Okada, unlike Ōmoto and Taireidō, steered clear of theoretical frameworks to explain his technique, and instead emphasized the universality and non-verbal nature of his technique. When asked about the proper state of mind while sitting, he said, "If you think about becoming thoughtless, soon only that thought is working, and consequently you shouldn't think that—it's good to just float like water, without a purpose." When practitioners had questions or doubts, he commonly answered with statements like, "If you sit, you'll understand."[234] Okada so strongly believed that proper technique could only be learned through experience that he never wrote any of his techniques down.[235]

Although Okada did not say so explicitly, Kurita claims that it appears that he did not think that involuntary movement was a necessary component of quiet sitting. However, many people experienced involuntary movement of some kind during their practice—in addition to swaying or moving their hands, some practitioners spun about, shouted, or groaned.[236] Takada Sanae, the then president of Waseda University and a practitioner of Okada's technique, in 1911 wrote that the movement he experienced during quiet sitting was not "like that of a person who has been hypnotized," because he was aware of his own movements, and they were natural rather than the forced, unconscious movements of hypnotism.[237] Another of Okada's followers, Kishimoto Nobuta, a scholar of religion and professor at Waseda University, contrasted the "healthy

[233] Ibid., 51.
[234] Quoted in Kurita, "Reidō o meguru poritikusu," 15.
[235] Consequently, most of our information on Okada's techniques comes from his followers' writings. Kobori, "Za," 52-61.
[236] Kurita, "Reidō o meguru poritikusu," 16.
[237] Quoted in ibid.

shaking" (健的動揺) of Okada's technique with the "unhealthy shaking" (病的動揺) caused by suggestion, hypnotism, mental illness, and possession by spirits.[238]

Taireidō and Ōmoto clashed directly, as many influential Taireidō members defected to join Ōmoto.[239] Taniguchi wrote several scathing denouncements of Taireidō, arguing, for example, that

> when the *saniwa* transmits the *rei*, in each person in their particular way movement occurs in the *hijutsusha*'s body. That is actually unexpected *reidō*, and the type of the *reidō* depends upon the quality and type of the protective deity dwelling in the *hijutsusha*. […] However, these movements are infinitely varied, and it becomes clear that it is not the one-style workings of Taireidō's Tanaka Morihei's sacrilegious (勿体ない) hypothetical universal origin substance "*reishi*."[240]

He described Taireidō's *reishi* healing techniques as "a technique that uses centrifugal force and emits the *rei*," thus explaining why the *jutsusha*'s hands "shake like boiling water."[241] This technique of emission of *rei*, which required mudra and *kiai* in order to transmit the *rei* from the fingertips, was significantly less sophisticated (and effective) than Ōmoto's technique, which called for the interlocking of the fingers.[242]

The type of spiritual techniques that utilized mudra, Taniguchi argued further, "become evil *rei* swords in order to cut only [one's] enemies," and the spiritual power that emanates from one's hands "is spiritual power that will hurt only your partner (相手)." Ōmoto's technique, on the other hand was "a just, fair and impartial transmission of spiritual energy, [in which] if the *jutsusha* is evil, [it] will cut the *jutsusha*, [and] if the *hijutsusha* is evil, [it] will cut the *hijutsusha*." The type of *reidō* that occurred in

[238] Ibid., 17.
[239] Yoshinaga, "Tairei to kokka," 40.
[240] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku no shiteki kenkyū," 364.
[241] Ibid., 365.
[242] Ibid., 366. See also Figure 5.

Taireidō, Taniguchi concluded, is "usually caused by possession of one kind of low-level spirit," and after a few days of receiving *chinkon kishin*, the trembling that previously occurred in a Taireidō practitioner's hands will cease. Taireidō thus "allows evil spirits to freely move the body while thinking that 'the workings of the *reishi* are occurring.'"[243] Similarly, Asano accused the leaders of Taireidō of being "possessed by wild *tengu*."[244] Ōmoto's criticism of Taireidō thus was similar to their criticism of hypnotism—questioning of the credentials and moral integrity of the *jutsusha* as well as labeling of the other technique as inferior and lacking in sophistication.

Quiet sitting techniques were similarly underwhelming, as "the *chinkon* state one reaches after a few days or a month of Ōmoto's *chinkon* technique will take more than a year to several years in quiet sitting or *zazen*."[245] From Taniguchi's perspective, Okada's quiet sitting technique operated by gathering and condensing the scattered *rei*, much as *chinkon* did.[246] The increase of "spiritual pressure" caused by the gathering of the *rei* was what caused the shaking movement that so commonly characterized the practice.[247] Although "after many years of hard work" at a quiet sitting technique, "there will be a small amount of benefit,"[248] the implication is clear—why settle for the weaker option when one could go to Ōmoto and progress spirituality with much greater speed?

On the other hand, some members who had been repulsed by Ōmoto turned to Taireidō specifically because it employed a more "rational" and "scientific" worldview as

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[243] Ibid.
[244] Quoted in Kurita, "Reidō o meguru poritikusu," 21.
[245] Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 241.
[246] Attentive readers will notice that Taniguchi imagines *chinkon* as gathering the scattered *rei*, while other Ōmoto publications imagine *chinkon* as gathering the scattered *kon*. See, for example, Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 241. This inconsistency could be a sign of the increasing doctrinal factionalism that occurred during this period, or could merely be an inconsistency caused by so many different authors writing on the same topics.
[247] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku no shiteki kenkyū," 367.
[248] Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 241.

opposed to Ōmoto's idea of anthropomorphic *rei* (in the form of the protective deities and the other possessing spirits). Taireidō was also fairly successful in attracting former practitioners of Okada's quiet sitting technique by explaining Okada's technique in terms of the movement of *reishi*, and telling quiet sitting practitioners that by joining Taireidō, they would be building upon the progress they had already made in Okada's group.[249] Taireidō was less kind to Ōmoto—comments published in their magazine, *Taireidō*, included that Deguchi Nao was a "狂祖" (*kyōso*), meaning "insane founder," a pun on "教祖" (also read "*kyōso*"), the founder of a religion; that Ōmoto was a "horde of lunatics" (狂人の群); and that Ōmoto's supposed possession-induced spiritual phenomena were nothing more than lowly forms of *reishi*-related movement.[250]

Tanaka and Asano met a number of times, first when Tanaka came to Kyoto to proselytize. Asano asserted that if Tanaka received *chinkon kishin*, he would understand that possessing deities truly did exist. After more than thirty minutes, however, nothing had happened. Tanaka declared the experiment a failure and decided that while the *reidō* that occurred during *chinkon kishin* might be *reishi*-related movement, the speech of the possessing deities was nothing more than a cheap trick caused by hypnotic suggestion.[251] Taireidō's attacks on Ōmoto were thus fairly similar to Ōmoto's attacks on Taireidō—questioning the competence of the leaders (although it is interesting that Taireidō chose to attack Nao rather than Onisaburō) and decrying Ōmoto's technique as an inferior form of Taireidō's.

[249] Kurita, "Reidō o meguru poritikusu," 20-21.
[250] Quoted in ibid., 22.
[251] Ibid., 22-23.

Okada similarly dismissed both Taireidō and Ōmoto, asserting that although it may seem to some uneducated observers that the shaking movement which occurred during Taireidō practice or *chinkon kishin* was similar to that which occurred during quiet sitting, that was simply not the case. Okada claimed that *reidō* in both Taireidō and Ōmoto was caused by suggestion—and thus was similar to the movement that occurred during hypnotism—unlike the movement that occurred during the proper practice of quiet sitting.[252] However, even this proclamation did not prevent members from confusing quiet sitting with Ōmoto and Taireidō practices, and so in 1920 Okada forbade movement in quiet sitting practice halls "in order to avoid confusion with Taireidō, Ōmotokyō, and others" of the same ilk.[253]

In their debates with Tairedō and Okada-style quiet sitting practitioners, Ōmoto writers used the *saniwa* as justification for *chinkon kishin*'s superiority over all other spiritualist techniques but also used the complexity of *chinkon kishin* to argue for the superiority of Ōmoto's *saniwa* over other *jutsusha*. Other *jutsusha* were less educated, sophisticated, and/or skilled than the Ōmoto *saniwa*. They utilized techniques that were not only less powerful than *chinkon kishin*, but were at best inefficacious and at worst posed considerable risks to the *hijutsusha*. Ōmoto writers often argued for the necessity to practice *chinkon kishin* rather than any of the other spiritual techniques not only because of the hazardous (or inefficacious) nature of the other techniques, but also because of the coming renewal of the world. Ōmoto's techniques were thus different from "simple" techniques, such as spiritual healing, *kitō*, or hypnotism, that aimed only to heal illness, as *chinkon kishin* was intended to "foster the Japanese soul (日本魂)" for the

[252] Ibid., 23.
[253] Quoted in ibid., 24.

coming world renewal.[254] Choosing to practice *chinkon kishin* over, say, Okada's quiet sitting technique, was not merely a question of choosing a more efficacious and safe technique, but also a way of contributing to society and one's future well-being.

Conclusion

We began this chapter by exploring spiritualism in the West, so it is fitting that we end the chapter by returning to it. In the West, women gained spiritual authority and power through their ability to act as conduits for spirits. Although they might ultimately be considered passive vessels for the spirits, their femininity conferred a power that (male) psychical researchers could not hope to achieve. When psychical studies reached Japan, the male researcher/female object of study construction continued to be utilized, and spiritualism was embraced by the intellectual class as a modern, scientific lens for exploring and interpreting the world. Although spiritualist women arguably had less agency and authority in Japan than the West, they still enjoyed a degree of power that researchers did not—although psychical researchers could explain (and showcase) the power of their subjects, they could not manifest such power themselves.

Chinkon kishin was inexorably intertwined with the spiritualist movement—firstly, because it existed in the same intellectual sphere and attracted many of the same participants, and, secondly, because individuals both inside and outside of Ōmoto inevitably compared *chinkon kishin* to other spiritualist techniques. It is worth noting, however, that the way Ōmoto constructed the *hijutsusha*/*jutsusha* dichotomy was different than the way it was conceived of by psychical researchers. As discussed in the previous chapter, *chinkon kishin* allowed all people equal access to the same sources of

[254] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku no shiteki kenkyū," 368.

power and authority, and thus the idea of a powerful yet uneducated *hijutsusha* being studied by a powerless yet knowledgeable *jutsusha* would have created a fundamental power imbalance in the group. Instead, Ōmoto presented the *hijutsusha* as a passive object to be acted upon by the *jutsusha*. The *hijutsusha* is fundamentally lacking in agency—the only decision he/she is capable of making is to which *jutsusha* and/or technique to entrust him-/herself. The superiority of Ōmoto's *jutsusha* was proven both by the complexity of *chinkon kishin* (and the potential damage that could be wrought upon the *jutsusha* by its incorrect usage) and the speedy spiritual progress and/or healing of the *hijutsusha* when compared to similar techniques. Unlike media coverage surrounding, for example, the clairvoyance experiments, Ōmoto's discussion conceived of the *hijutsusha* as an essentially passive object to be acted upon, while the *jutsusha* was the actor holding all the (spiritual and situational) power.

To claim that Ōmoto's *hijutsusha*/*jutsusha* construction was inherently gendered would be misleading, as an estimated 80-90% of Ōmoto's *kannushi* were male.[255] Of course, the *saniwa*/*kannushi* construction was historically gendered, regardless of the actual gender composition of practitioners, so an argument could be made for Ōmoto constructing a passive (female) *hijutsusha* to contrast with the active (male) *jutsusha*. However, rather than immediately imposing a gendered framework, it may be more productive to consider the authority construction introduced in the previous chapter. By comparing the *jutsusha* of various spiritualist organizations and techniques to Ōmoto's *saniwa*, Ōmoto was able to further elevate the authority of the *saniwa* within the group (by proving that the *saniwa* was the best *jutsusha*) and elevate the position of *chinkon*

[255] Asano Wasaburō, "Kinryūden zakki," 214.

kishin vis-à-vis other spiritualist techniques (by arguing that the education and sophistication of the *saniwa* demonstrated the complexity and efficacy of *chinkon kishin*).

The fact that the *saniwa* was an educated male was an essential part of his identity—his education was what allowed him to navigate the complexities of *chinkon kishin*, while his masculinity helped further heighten his authority, both through linkage with the historical (traditionally male) *saniwa* and through the connection with contemporary constructions of the rational, modern (male) psychical researcher (also a *jutsusha*). Ōmoto writers could have ignored other spiritualist techniques or else declared them fraudulent parlor tricks, but instead they subsumed them (along with other religious knowledge)[256] into what I have termed a knowledge hierarchy. By constructing a knowledge hierarchy, Ōmoto could both demonstrate the legitimacy and (superiority) of their own practices and attract practitioners of other spiritualist techniques—an intellectual interested in spiritualism would almost certainly be more interested in joining Ōmoto if Ōmoto's practices were presented as a perfected, polished form of his current practices and thus the next step on his spiritual (and intellectual) journey than if his current practices were presented as entirely false.

We can thus say that the *jutsusha*/*saniwa*'s identity was inherently gendered, for women would not have been able to receive the education necessary to be considered a *jutsusha*, while the *hijutsusha*/*kannushi*'s identity was not. By elevating the *saniwa*/*jutsusha* and stressing the essential passivity and lack of agency of the *hijutsusha*/*kannushi*, Ōmoto defined the field of debate as being restricted solely to educated, male researchers. This restriction elevated the position of the *saniwa* within

[256] For example, *Shinreikai* featured an article entitled "Ōmoto no chinkon kishin to kirisuto no mirakuru" ("Ōmoto's *chinkon kishin* and Christ's miracles") in issue 135, published in 1921.

Ōmoto, and attempted to give Ōmoto a degree of legitimacy in the larger society, by placing *saniwa* on equal footing with other male practitioners, intellectuals, and professionals. However, this attempt to place the *saniwa* on the same level as (male) intellectuals and professionals sometimes pitted Ōmoto against larger enemies than they could handle, as will be explored in the next chapter on Ōmoto's clashes with psychologists.

Chapter Three
Acquiring a Monopoly on Legitimacy: Ōmoto and Psychology

As discussed in the last chapter, Ōmoto attempted to legitimize *chinkon kishin*—and their organization, by extension—by engaging with other spiritualist techniques, practitioners, and groups and besting them in debate. In this sense, they saw their clashes with psychologists—the topic of this chapter—as merely another set of debates with a different set of intellectuals; instead of debating the meaning of *reidō*, they argued over conceptualizations of the mind and the subconscious. In fact, many of the sources utilized in this chapter—most notably Taniguchi Seiji's "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri" and Inoue Tomegorō's "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu"—attacked both psychologists and other spiritualists, sometimes in the same sentence. Ōmoto writers' plan of attack with regards to psychologists was surprisingly similar to their approach to dealing with other spiritualists, and so they cast the psychologist as just another uneducated, bumbling *jutsusha* who paled in comparison to Ōmoto's *saniwa*.

Psychologists, on the other hand—especially those affiliated with Nihon Seishin Igakukai (Japanese Mental Medicine Society), who led the attack on Ōmoto through their magazine *Hentai shinri* (*Abnormal Psychology*)—saw Ōmoto and *chinkon kishin* as a threat not only to their own livelihood but also to the mental well-being of society. Psychology was just beginning to emerge as a viable field of study in Japan, and so Ōmoto's appropriation of psychological terms to explain their theories caused psychologists no end of grief. Additionally, in Japan, as in the West, spiritualist healers threatened medical professionals' livelihood by offering quick cures, often at reduced prices (or for free in Ōmoto's case). Ōmoto additionally posed a threat to society, in the

Figure 14 Assorted issues of *Hentai shinri*.[257]

psychologists' eyes, by encouraging undesirable mental states and spreading mental illness (through *chinkon kishin*). The psychologists' attack on Ōmoto was thus significantly more brutal than the attacks of other spiritualist organizations, and also had significantly more clout behind it, as psychologists were able to offer a "professional opinion" that the police needed to step in.

Health Professionals and Spiritualism in the West

Spiritualist healing in the West was, in Owen's words, "a polyglot affair, a mixture of traditional remedies or techniques, the 'pseudo-sciences', and spirit intervention."[258] Spiritualist healers' techniques were based upon a theory of energy transfer between healer and sufferer, but the process often looked quite similar to

[257] *"Hentai shinri" to Nakamura Kokyō*, 9. This book has an exceedingly strange page numbering system whereby the first half of the book is numbered 1-243 and the second half is numbered 132-1. This image can be found on page 9 in the second half of the book.
[258] Alex Owen, *The Darkened Room*, 107.

hypnotism or therapeutic touch. Other spiritualist healers examined patients while in trance, and offered remedies prescribed by "spirit doctors." The ability to heal was considered one of the highest manifestations of psychic power, and, as with many other forms of mediumship, spiritualists asserted that women were naturally better suited than men to serve as healers.[259]

During the height of the spiritualist movement, Victorian medicine strove to ban women from professional practice and to control traditionally female-dominated areas of medicine such as midwifery.[260] In the United States, as well, "orthodox" physicians secured a monopoly on medical practice from the state by the turn of the century, making alternative medicine illegal. In their campaign for legal recognition, orthodox physicians targeted especially viciously sectarian movements (which practiced one particular system of medicine such as homeopathy or botanical cures) that allowed women to practice medicine.[261] On the other side of the Atlantic, an 1878 amendment to the 1858 Medical Act in Britain ensured that unregistered persons who took the title of "Doctor" in order to practice medicine for financial gain would be penalized.[262]

Part of the motivation for the attack on alternative medicine was that orthodox medical professionals sought respectability and status by presenting medicine as a forward-thinking, modern, scientific discipline,[263] but the degree of (both physical and emotional) intimacy required in a spiritualist healing relationship was considered highly improper by orthodox medical practitioners. The *Lancet* seized upon the moral implications of mesmerism, asserting,

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[259] Ibid. Ann Braude, *Radical Spirits*, 142-151.
[260] Owen, *The Darkened Room*, 112.
[261] Braude, *Radical Spirits*, 143.
[262] Owen, *The Darkened Room*, 110-112.
[263] Ibid., 139-140.

> Mesmerism, according to its advocates, acts most intensely on nervous and impressionable females. […] Who would expose his wife, or his sister, his daughters, or his orphan ward, to contact of an animal magnetizer?[264]

However, in addition to its moral dangers, alternative healing posed both an ideological and economic threat to orthodox medical practitioners by claiming to possess exclusive, esoteric knowledge about the origins, nature, and proper treatment of disease. It was thus in the medical profession's best interests to label all lay practitioners of medicine as charlatans and quacks.[265] These restrictions sought "to ensure that the medical profession remained a gentlemen's club,"[266] quite literally, as the practitioners most heavily impacted by these restrictions were women.

Practitioners of orthodox medicine saw spiritualism "both as a source of competition and as a manifestation of disease." Doctors imagined the female organization to be inherently pathological, and thus labeled mediums, who embodied so many feminine traits, as "prime examples of pathology."[267] New specialists in insanity categorized belief in spiritualism as a symptom of mental illness, and were "troubled by what they perceived as an association between the mediumistic trance and an entire range of pathological conditions." In particular, they "regarded with distaste and suspicion the close involvement of women in spiritualist practice, likening female mediumship to hysteria."[268] They emphasized the feminine "neurotic temperament" and inherent passivity, which they saw as part of a larger deficit in emotional fortitude.[269] Eventually the term "mediomania" was coined to refer to "the insanity of mediums," which was

[264] Quoted in ibid., 110.
[265] Ibid., 110-112.
[266] Ibid., 112.
[267] Braude, *Radical Spirits*, 157.
[268] Owen, *The Darkened Room*, 139.
[269] Ibid., 146.

associated heavily with the "natural pathology of female organs." Other doctors saw spiritualist displays as a type of fraud, motivated not by hysteria but instead by a "proclivity to deceit" that was peculiar to the female sex.[270] This connection between spiritualism and mental illness was thus conceived of in highly gendered terms, even though both women and men practiced and believed in spiritualism.

However, Owen does not see this struggle between spiritualists and health professionals as "simply a matter of wicked male physicians versus their helpless female victims." While she admits that medicine was quite patriarchal at the time, she interprets the clashes between physicians and spiritualists as focusing on normative womanhood, as the "physicians who adopted an aggressively anti-spiritualist stance often recognized that there were elements of spiritualist practice that subverted conventional behavior, but sought to portray these as evidence of a pathological condition."[271] The linkage of spiritualism with hysteria was thus an alert "to the prospect of femininity gone awry."[272] "Less obvious, but more pernicious," Owen argues

> was an underlying sense of the superiority of the investigator—the man of science who would destroy retrogressive myths and illusions, thereby contributing to the establishment of a more rational and enlightened society. Where these assumptions were combined with a medical discipline in which the physician was both the arbiter of what constituted a healthy mind and the instigator of a cure when he diagnosed disease, medicine became a powerful weapon in the armoury of Truth.[273]

Mental health practitioners, especially, equated normalcy with contemporary ideas of socially appropriate behavior, and denounced behavior that did not conform to these

[270] Ibid., 159.
[271] Ibid., 139.
[272] Ibid., 147.
[273] Ibid., 140.

norms as morbid and pathological.[274] Medical professionals were able to label their competition as pathological and mentally unstable, thereby elevating their own status as modern, scientific, and rational arbiters of truth who sought only to save the mentally fragile (female) from the ravages of spiritualism and society from the evils of superstition.

Japanese Psychology[275] and the Battle for the Mind

In order to understand psychologists' critiques of Ōmoto, we must first understand a little bit about the history of treatment of mental illness in Japan. According to Hiruta, the common people of the Edo period (1603-1867) differentiated between eight undesirable mental states: madness, possession, depression, epilepsy, foolishness, senility, personality disorders (or bad habits), and drunkenness. Mental disorders in legal documents, on the other hand, were limited to five: madness, drunkenness, fox possession, fugue, and suicide. The mentally ill were treated in a variety of ways—herbal medicine, folk medicine, shamanic treatments, etc.—although they were occasionally left untreated or placed in confinement.[276] Criminal law contained provisions for crimes committed by an insane person or committed by a person in a state of insanity (such as alcoholic hallucinosis or possession).[277] Although treatment of physical ailments began to gradually be passed over to doctors, it wasn't until the latter

[274] Ibid., 141.
[275] A note on terms: *Seishin byōgaku* (精神病学; literally "mental illness studies") was the earliest field that attempted to treat mental illness separately from physical illness; it was, however, still deeply based in physiology. I translate this term as "psychiatry." *Seishin igaku* (精神医学; literally "mental medicine") and *shinrigaku* (心理学) were created as alternatives to physiologically-focused treatment of mental illness, and instead focused on treating the mind. I translate both these terms as "psychology," for nuances in their use are beyond the scope of this study. For more information on these terms and their use, see Hyōdō Akiko, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai: tsuku shinshin kara yamu shinshin e*, passim.
[276] Genshiro Hiruta, "The Recognition of Madness and its Classification in Early Modern Japan," 254-258.
[277] Ibid., 259-262.

half of the Edo period that some doctors began to treat mental illness, with psychiatry appearing by the beginning of the nineteenth century.[278]

The beginning of the Meiji period saw wide-scale importation and adoption of Western medicine.[279] As was the case in the West, psychical studies and psychology were intimately entwined in Japan, and hypnosis played a large role in the mid-Meiji treatment of mental illness.[280] Hypnotism was first used for "academic purposes" in Japan by professors of life sciences, psychiatry, and psychology at Tokyo Imperial University,[281] as spiritualist techniques were often presented as a way of peering into the "black box" of the human mind.[282] However, after Fukurai Tomokichi's downfall, psychologists hurried to distance themselves from psychical studies, lest the newfound scorn for "pseudoscience" relegate psychology to the realm of "non-science" (非科学).[283] Spiritual healers, however, continued to use hypnotism as well as other spiritualist techniques to treat their patients.[284] From early in Japanese psychology's history, then, there existed a tension between "orthodox psychology" and "spiritual healing," in part because of their shared roots.

Hyōdō interprets *Hentai shinri*'s vicious attack on Ōmoto as part of a larger battle over the concept of the "mind" (精神; *seishin*).[285] Nihon Seishin Igakukai attempted to create the new field of psychology (精神医学; *seishin igaku*, literally "mind medicine"), distinct from the preexisting field of psychiatry, which they complained was merely a

[278] Ibid., 271-273.
[279] Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai*, 160.
[280] Hyōdō Akiko, "Taishō no 'seishin' gainen— Ōmotokyō to 'Hentai Shinri' no sōkoku o tsūjite," 101.
[281] Tanabe Shintarō, "Sei," 14.
[282] Ichiyanagi Hirotaka, *"Kokkurisan" to "senrigan"*, 116-119.
[283] Ibid., 189-191.
[284] Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai*, 160.
[285] For a longer history on the term "*seishin*," see Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 98-101.

form of "material medicine" (物質医学).[286] Nihon Seishin Igakukai conceived of the mind as not only the antonym of the "material," but also as transcending the material. Nakamura Kokyō, the founder of Nihon Seishin Igaku, lost his younger brother to mental illness,[287] and realized through his experiences that orthodox medicine "intently only stud[ies] physiological (生理的) treatments" for mental illness and "forget[s] the necessity of mental (精神的) treatments."[288] One member of Nihon Seishin Igakukai wrote, "Just as it would be inconvenient for astronomy to explain the movements of the stars by means of the power of the *kami*, wouldn't it be inconvenient for psychology to explain mental illness by means of a dissection of the changes of the brain?"[289]

Instead of psychiatry's more anatomically-based approach, Nihon Seishin Igakukai forwarded a theory of a split consciousness: the conscious mind (referred to as 意識 [*ishiki*] or 普通意識 [*futsū ishiki*]) and the unconscious mind (referred to as 下層意識 [*kasō ishiki*], 潜在意識 [*senzai ishiki*], or 副意識 [*fuku ishiki*]). They made a conscious effort to present themselves as separate from preexisting physiology-focused research on mental illness, even referring to their treatment regimens as "education" (教育) rather than "treatment" (治療). They also denied orthodox medicine's claim that the mind was linked directly to the brain and thus died immediately after death. Although they disagreed with spiritualist theories of the soul, some psychologists ironically forwarded a theory that the mind was like spiritualists' conception of the "immortal soul," and thus would live on even after the brain died.[290]

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[286] Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai*, 157.
[287] Ibid., 163-169.
[288] Quoted in ibid., 169.
[289] Quoted in Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 104.
[290] Ibid., 102-108. Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai*, 158-159.

One consequence of this shift from identifying mental illness with anatomical abnormalities to focusing on the "mind" was that the mind alone could be labeled "abnormal," and "abnormal psychology" could be attributed even to people who didn't have physical symptoms. Thus it was impossible to know whether certain people were mentally ill merely by looking at them. This ambiguity created a class of people called *chūkansha* (中間者)—literally "people in the middle,"[291] because of their status between the "mentally healthy" and the "mentally ill"—who looked like "normal people," but in fact had some sort of psychological abnormality, often related to the personality.[292] These people were presented as potential societal problems, as their personality abnormalities often made them repeat offenders, juvenile delinquents, vagrants, prostitutes, and/or beggars. By creating a category of patients that could not be treated solely by identifying abnormalities in the brain, Nihon Seishin Igakukai and similar psychologists thus created a treatment niche that only they could fill.[293]

However, by identifying themselves as transcending the material and focusing instead on the mind, psychologists placed themselves in a similar field to popular spiritual healing (民間精神療法; *minkan seishin ryōhō*). As mentioned in chapter two, from the end of the Meiji through the Taishō era there was a boom in spiritual healing techniques.[294] Spiritual healers, unlike psychologists, used the terms "mind," "soul," and "heart" (心; *kokoro*) interchangeably, and believed that the mind was a physical presence that existed outside of or separate from humanity. In this sense, spiritual healers' conception of the mind was eerily similar to psychologists' (although the psychologists

[291] This concept was a translation of the German "Grenzzustände." Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 106.
[292] Today we would likely refer to many *chūkansha* as having personality disorders.
[293] Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 105-108. Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai*, 176-178.
[294] Yumiyama Tatsuya, "Rei," 90.

certainly would have disavowed any and all similarity between themselves and spiritualists). Some spiritualists additionally identified the unconscious mind as part of a larger "universal great soul" (宇宙の大霊; *uchū no tairei*) or "universal consciousness" (宇宙意識; *uchū ishiki*) that transcended the individual. Like the psychologists of Nihon Seishin Igakukai, they criticized orthodox psychiatry for only being interested in the physical body that housed the soul/heart/mind, but unlike Nihon Seishin Igakukai, they invited interested parties to come visit them to see concrete proof of both the existence of the soul/heart/mind and the efficacy of their healing powers.[295] Psychologists were in direct competition with spiritualists (including Ōmoto) because of their similar conceptions of the mind/soul and their utilization of the concept of "the unconscious mind."

Dorman argues that psychologists saw "new religions and their proponents as manifestations of social disease,"[296] whose psychopathological phenomena psychologists were uniquely qualified to treat.[297] As Kurihara argues, *Hentai shinri* (and Nakamura) singled out Ōmoto as representative of the spiritual activities it opposed. These spiritual activities were classed along with other "abnormalities," including (but not limited to): hysteria, juvenile delinquency, split personalities, "treasonous women," lascivious behavior, Koreans, political activists, infanticide, "masculinized women" (男性化せる女), female sterility, cholera, suicide, rape and adultery, erotomania, sexually transmitted disease, and indolence. Kurihara interprets this list as part of the contemporary trend toward rationalization and modernization, especially the drives to "develop national

[295] Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 98-103, 108-109. Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai*, 160-161.
[296] Benjamin Dorman, *Celebrity Gods*, 54.
[297] Ibid., 54-57.

prosperity and military strength" (富国強兵) and create "civilization and enlightenment" (文明開化).[298] Indeed it is quite easy to see how many of the "abnormalities" could be seen as irrational, abnormal, or feudalistic layovers from the past that should be removed for the health (both literal and figurative) of Japanese society.

However, it is also worth noting how much of the list is concerned with societal norms, especially those concerning gender and sexuality. As Garon notes, "the prevailing orthodoxy" during the Taishō era was "bound up with more secular notions of social order, public morality, and even modernity."[299] Even in the Meiji period, "Westernized" dandy masculinity, which was seen as weak, effeminate, consumerist, and performative, was contrasted with virile, physical, anti-consumerist, and often defiantly unkempt "Japanese" masculinity.[300] "Gender ambivalence" was embodied by the "naturalist writers" of the 1900s, who created "a new image of manhood fraught with anxiety, indecision, nervousness, and a susceptibility to falling in love," as well as the "new woman" (*atarashiki onna*) who emerged from the pages of the feminist magazine *Seitō* in the early 1910s.[301] Transgressive popular representations of gender continued into the Taishō period in the form of the sexually aggressive, culturally transgressive Modern Girl (*moga*) who infantilized and emasculated her counterpart, the passive Modern Boy (*mobo*).[302]

Moralists spoke with derision of the "lack of masculine resolve" of the "anguished young men" of the late Meiji, and in 1916, Tokutomi Sohō declared "that the young men of the new Taishō era had no unifying sense of character, settling instead for

[298] Kurihara Akira, "'Kagaku' teki gensetsu ni yoru reiteki jigen no kaitai kōchiku," 57-61.
[299] Sheldon Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life*, 62.
[300] Jason Karlin, "The Gender of Nationalism: Competing Masculinities in Meiji Japan," passim.
[301] Donald Roden, "Taishō Culture and the Problem of Gender Ambivalence," 43.
[302] Miriam Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense: The Mass Culture of Japanese Modern Times*, 51-71.

divergent shades of materialism, anguish, debauchery, and colorless nonchalance."[303] In 1922, General Ugaki Kazushige wrote,

> The feminization of men and the masculinization of women and the neutered gender that results is a modernisitic tendency that makes it impossible for the individual, the society, or the nation to achieve great progress. Accordingly, since the manliness of man and the femininity of woman must forever be preserved, it is imperative that we not allow the rise of neutered people who defy nature's grace.[304]

Spokesmen from the ministries of Education and Internal Affairs, the National Organization of Young Men, women's high schools, and men's higher schools, among others, waged a campaign against "the perceived distortions and excesses of Taishō culture," which included "feminism, homosexuality, recreational sex, and blurring, whether intended or not, of the sacred and inviolate lines between the masculine and feminine."[305]

While "the censure of young men and women who did not abide by prescriptive models for manliness and femininity was largely the preserve of educators" before World War I, Taishō "saw the rise of a new group of critics distinguished by their expertise in the recently introduced fields of psychology and sexology."[306] As Roden indicates, the large number of works on variant sexualities and gender expressions published in the Taishō period attests to the depth of societal concern for gender ambivalence and deviant sexuality. Habuto Eiji and Sawada Junjirō's *Hentai seiyokuron* (*The Theory of Deviant Sexual Desire*), for example, argued that "unnatural desires" (*fushizen seiyoku*) posed a destructive threat to the Japanese social order, because they underlay not only "criminal

[303] Roden, "Taishō Culture," 45.
[304] Quoted in ibid., 52.
[305] Ibid. See also Donald Roden, *Schooldays in Imperial Japan: A Study in the Culture of a Student Elite*, passim.
[306] Roden, "Taishō Culture," 45.

acts of brutality," but also the "widespread pattern of antisocial behavior that arose from the confusion of the sexes."[307] Psychology's focus on the mind and personality of the patient, of course, made it the field best equipped to deal with this psychological deviance.

As both Garon and Dorman have chronicled, NRMs have long been linked in the public consciousness with the corruption of public morals, especially the transgression of gender and sexual norms.[308] The crackdown on Ōmoto was thus not only a product of the "battle for the mind" and the competition that Ōmoto (and other spiritual healers) offered to the barely established field of psychology, but also a reaction to perceived deviance from a society that was deeply concerned by the emasculation of its men, and instituted multiple social controls on sexuality (and gender expression) in order to promote "societal health."[309] Ōmoto's status as an NRM, which were historically associated with transgressive sexual behavior, as well as the gender transgressions of its two main figures (as discussed in chapter one), probably did not endear it to the psychologists who saw themselves as uniquely equipped to heal the social ills of society.

Hentai shinri and Nakamura Kokyō's Attack on Ōmoto

Hentai shinri was established in 1917, and almost immediately began publishing articles criticizing Ōmoto.[310] Aside from publishing criticism in their regular issues, *Hentai shinri* also published the "Ōmotokyō follow-up attack volume" (大本教追撃号)

[307] Ibid.
[308] Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*, 82-83; Dorman, *Celebrity Gods*, 24-65.
[309] See, for example, Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*, 88-114; Sabine Frühstück, *Colonizing Sex: Sexology and Social Control in Modern Japan*, passim; Craig Colbeck, "From the Brothel to the Body: Male Sexuality in Japan's Prostitution Debates, 1870-1920," passim.
[310] Hyōdō, "Taishō no 'seishin' gainen," 97-98. Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*, 79.

in December of 1920, and the "Ōmotokyō eradication volume" (大本教撲滅号) in June of 1921.[311] Nakamura Kokyō's 1920 book, *Ōmotokyō no kaibō* (*Dissection of Ōmotokyō*), also attacked Ōmoto with a vigor bordering on fanaticism, and featured sympathetic introductions written by a number of well-known socialists, liberals, and academic specialists.[312] Even before the publication of his book, Nakamura was considered somewhat of an expert on Ōmoto and spiritualist techniques; in September of 1918, Nakamura served as an expert witness in a Tokyo district court case concerning the relationship between *chinkon kishin* and hypnotism, during which he testified that *chinkon kishin* was a harmful form of hypnotism.[313] Additionally, while employed by the Kyoto police, Nakamura Kokyō visited Ayabe for two days in September of 1919, and read many of its publications.[314]

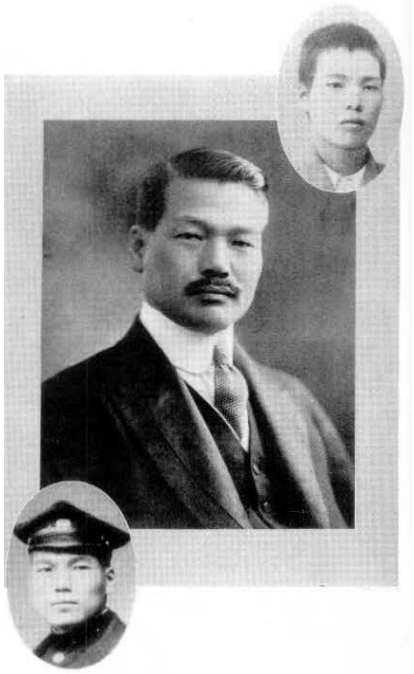

Figure 15 Nakamura Kokyō. The upper right image was taken upon his entrance to high school, while the lower left was taken while he was in college.[315]

[311] Kurihara, "'Kagaku' teki gensetsu," 52.
[312] Nakamura Kokyō, *Gakuriteki gensei hihan Ōmotokyō no kaibō*, 1-70.
[313] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 527.
[314] Birgit Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 230-231.

Nakamura diagnosed Nao as mentally ill, and decreed her *Ofudesaki* fake because the original was nothing more than the delusional ramblings of a mentally ill woman, and Onisaburō had rewritten much of it while editing it for publication in *Shinreikai*. He described *chinkon kishin* as "inferior hypnotism," and spirit possession as nothing more than a "personality change." Onisaburō he described as a "swindler" (詐欺師), while Asano was paranoid and dangerously mentally ill. He explained all the supposedly miraculous happenings in Ōmoto—from Nao's experience of automatic writing to the mysterious pronouncements of the *kannushi* during *chinkon kishin*—as the workings of the unconscious mind. He accused Ōmoto members who claimed that *chinkon kishin* was of divine origin and totally unrelated to hypnotism of being ignorant of even the basics of hypnotism, as Ōmoto was clearly using hypnotism to manipulate its followers.[316] "Ōmotokyō is […] a group of [people suffering from] paranoia, [people suffering from] delusional dementia, superstitious people, and imposters (山師)," Nakamura wrote,[317] while in another publication he referred to Ōmoto as the "ringleader of superstition" (迷信の巨魁).[318] Ōmoto was framed as not only a group that attracted mentally ill, superstitious, and gullible people, but in fact as a group that deviated from mainstream society, and thus was a potential societal problem.[319] Nakamura, in fact, in his role as an instructor at the Tokyo Police Academy, personally encouraged the home minister to take action against Ōmoto before the first Ōmoto incident.[320] He also distributed his 1918

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[315] *"Hentai Shinri" to Nakamura Kokyō*, i.
[316] Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 110. Kurihara, "'Kagaku' teki gensetsu," 62. *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 483. Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai*, 181-183.
[317] Quoted in Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 111.
[318] Quoted in Kurihara, "'Kagaku' teki gensetsu," 62.
[319] Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 111-112.
[320] Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*, 79.

expert opinion on Ōmoto to police substations around the entire country, which motivated several local police stations to launch investigations into the group.[321]

Nakamura Kokyō and *Hentai shinri*'s criticism of Ōmoto began a trend of "Ōmoto criticism" (大本批判) in the academic world. Ōmoto was referred to as "superstitious" and "anti-scientific" (反科学的), its members were called "delusional" and "irreverent" (不敬), and academics called for the organization to be suppressed as quickly as possible.[322] This violent attack on Ōmoto was in part fueled by the beginning of a movement to eradicate the "nonsensical superstition" of psychical research that began to pick up speed in the mid-1920s—Ōmoto's prominence made it an easy target.[323] For example, the "New Buddhists" (Shin Bukkyōtō), led by Professor Takashima Beihō and other academics affiliated with Waseda University, sponsored a rally in 1920 to raise public awareness of the societal dangers of Ōmoto as well as other "superstitious" religions.[324] That is not to say that criticism of Ōmoto was not well-researched—a literary group called Ōmotokan (大本観) were particularly thorough in their critiques of Ōmoto, often citing sections of the *Ofudesaki* and visiting Ōmoto headquarters to observe practices firsthand.[325]

Garon identifies the critique of Ōmoto as part of a larger assault on heterodox healing practices and NRMs that denied the rationality of modern (Western) medicine and endangered the "health of the nation."[326] In fact, *Hentai shinri* criticized a number of other spiritual healers and spiritual practitioners including Taireidō, popular (民間)

[321] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 527.
[322] See ibid., 483-491, 539-545.
[323] Ibid., 483-491. Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*, 81-82.
[324] Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*, 80.
[325] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 488-490.
[326] Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*, 81-82.

hypnotism, and Tenrikyō,[327] and shortly after testifying in the 1918 Ōmoto case, Nakamura served as an expert witness on a case concerning one of Ontakekyō's practices.[328] His testimony was extremely similar to his testimony in the Ōmoto case, further asserting his belief that NRMs used hypnotism to manipulate the populace.[329] However, as previously noted, NRMs' linkage with gender and sexual transgression must also be taken into account when considering Ōmoto's endangerment of "the health of the nation."

In this sense, we can see Nakamura Kokyō and *Hentai shinri*'s criticism of Ōmoto as an echo of medical professionals' criticism of spiritual healers in the West—psychologists decided what constituted "normalcy" and then attacked that which was "abnormal" by their definition. As Dorman argues, "[a]s psychology from the early Taishō period was developing as a method for treating all kinds of disorders, attacking groups that promoted healing practices and espoused personal and societal change through spiritual means was one way to justify their claims."[330] Their attack on Ōmoto, which was backed by larger societal trends toward rationalization and away from superstition, gave their newly burgeoning field academic legitimacy; by labeling Ōmoto

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[327] Tanabe, "Sei," 15. Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai*, 170-172.

[328] Ontakekyō developed out of a variety of pilgrimage associations centering on Mount Ontake, united by Shimoyama Osuke in 1873. Ontakekyō became one of the state-sanctioned Shinto sects under the leadership of Hirayama Seisai, but it remained a rather heterogeneous and loosely unified organization, containing numerous other small religious groups under its patronage, including Ōmoto (between March and November 1908). See Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 73-74; *Ōmoto nanajūnenshi*, 281, 293; *Encyclopedia of Shinto*, s.v. "Ontakekyō," by Inoue Nobutaka, accessed January 11, 2014, http://eos.kokugakuin.ac.jp/modules/xwords/entry.php?entryID=388.
Ontakekyō's practice of *oza* (御座) involves the recitation of prayers and purification texts, accompanied by ritual gestures, culminating in one of the practitioners (the *nakaza* [中座]) becoming possessed and being questioned by another practitioner (the *maeza* [前座]). For a longer description of the *oza*, see Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 74-77.

[329] Kurihara, "'Kagaku' teki gensetsu," 52. This was merely one of Nakamura's public attacks on NRMs, as he testified in court about and wrote articles on a number of others over the course of his career. For more information, see "Nakamura Kokyō chosaku nenpyō"; "Nakamura Kokyō shoshi."

[330] Dorman, *Celebrity Gods*, 64.

backwards and superstitious, they implicitly labeled themselves progressive and scientific, and distanced themselves from the spiritual healers with whom they most directly competed.

Ōmoto's Response

Ōmoto responded to the psychologists' criticism with derision, accusing them of treating "the mere three or four cases [they] collect in a year as huge phenomena," and then "making a racket" about how their tendency to extrapolate from such a tiny sample size "is research of abnormal psychology." Ōmoto, on the other hand, "every day has one or two new cases of *kamigakari*," and thus had a much better understanding of the workings of the mind than a bunch of ignorant psychologists.[331] In a rare readers' column published in *Shinreikai*, entitled "Shinrigakusha no mōron" ("Psychologists' illogical arguments"), Ogura Nanami[332] asserted that "[t]he problem of the soul lies outside psychology's territory," and that although psychologists have been trying to explain what the mind is for 2,000 years, they "still haven't gotten even the slightest bit closer to that explanation."[333] "Concerning the issue of possession," she asserted, "only people who are able to resolve what kind of thing the soul is are able to debate it."[334] She accused *Hentai shinri* of running "foolish, fabricated articles" as evidenced by their assertion that "suggestive or guiding dialogue" was used "during *chinkon kishin*."[335] These types of accusations—in which the ignorance of the other party and their lack of

[331] Taniguchi Seiji, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 34.
[332] 小倉七美. Unfortunately, I have not been able to find biographic information on her. She is, however, one of the few female writers (aside from Nao) to appear in *Shinreikai*, although she devotes a large portion of her article to quoting other (male) writers. She is also one of the few "readers" whose writing was featured in *Shinreikai*.
[333] Ogura Nanami, "Dokusha ran ・shinrigakusha no mōron," 213.
[334] Ibid., 214.
[335] Ibid.

understanding of the workings that produced a specific phenomenon were detailed—may seem very similar to the accusations leveled against the spiritualists in the previous chapter. In fact, the tone and vocabulary of many of Ōmoto's articles detailing the ignorance of psychologists were quite similar to those used in their articles detailing the ignorance of spiritualists; only the content was slightly different.

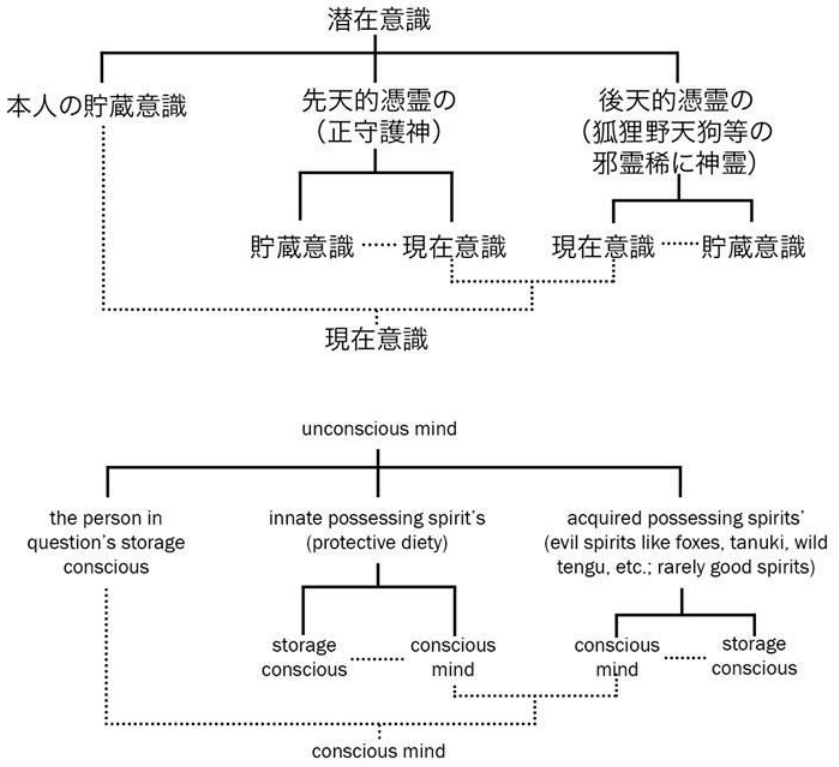

Figure 16 Ōmoto's explanation of the composition of the mind.[336]

Ōmoto's conception of the mind can most easily be summed up by Figure 16. As one can see, Ōmoto imagined a single person's mind as split into "the subconscious mind" or "the unconscious mind" (潜在意識) and "the conscious mind" (現在意識).

[336] The upper half of figure is a recreation of a diagram that appears in Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 31. A very similar diagram appears in Inoue Tomegorō, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 239. Special thanks to Mariah Xu for her graphic design assistance.

The subconscious mind contained not only the "storage conscious" (explained below) of the person, but also both the storage consciousnesses and the conscious minds of both the innate possessing spirit (the protective deity) and the acquired possessing spirit(s) (*tanuki*, foxes, wild *tengu*, and so on). Each storage conscious could influence the associated conscious mind by allowing emotions, thoughts, memories, inclinations, or other mental phenomena to transfer from the storage conscious to the conscious mind (as indicated by the dotted lines), and the conscious minds located in the unconscious mind could in turn transfer mental phenomena into the main conscious mind. In Ōmoto's conception, the "unconscious mind" was a composition of a variety of other consciousnesses, rather than a monolithic entity.

The storage conscious, in Ōmoto's conception, is the part of the mind in which various ideas and facts are stored until needed, at which point they are transferred by the ego (自我) to the conscious landscape (識域), i.e. the conscious mind.[337] Inoue used an extended metaphor:

> [I]f we consider the unconscious the things that are stored inside a warehouse, when the owner needs something and has it removed [from the warehouse], [he] has to open the warehouse and bring it to [his] private room. That private room is the conscious landscape and the owner is the ego/character. If the owner forgets he stored a certain thing, or if another person secretly leaves something there, these are things that do not emerge into the conscious landscape. In other words, [they are] not known. Things that are not known cannot be taken out. […] If we use the warehouse metaphor again, if not only the owner has the key to that warehouse, if the wife or the clerk (番頭) or the family can freely enter the warehouse, if the husband stores each thing and then the wife or the clerk steals it, the husband doesn't know about that, right? Because it is not pulled into his conscious landscape. Because he doesn't know.[338]

[337] Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 237.
[338] Ibid., 237-238.

The storage consciousness was thus considered an important part of the unconscious mind, although, as Inoue's metaphor hints, it could be influenced by outside forces.

Ōmoto identified five possible states for the mind: the regular state of being awake (正規の覚醒状態), the spiritual state of *chinkon* (鎮魂中の霊覚), the spiritual state of hypnotism (催眠中の霊覚), a state of mental abnormality (精神変調), and the somewhat confusingly named "spiritual feeling of the regular state" (正規状態の霊覚), which (despite its name) was equated with sudden *kamigakari* (as in the case of Nao).[339] As discussed in the previous chapter, the main distinction between hypnotism and *chinkon* was that *chinkon* was "a state in which [the conscious mind] while awake voluntarily loosens the reins of control and temporarily entrusts the body to the possessing spirit, and can observe the consciousness and movements of the possessing spirit," while hypnotism was "a state in which [the conscious mind] is hypnotized and becomes thoughtless, and the consciousness of the possessing spirit can maintain sovereignty." Mental illness, meanwhile, was conceived of as "a state in which [the conscious mind] is lost as though paralyzed, and sovereignty is snatched by the possessing spirit."[340]

Ōmoto criticized psychologists for not differentiating between the different elements that made up the unconscious mind and limiting their definition of "the unconscious mind" to what Ōmoto referred to as the person's "storage conscious." When a phenomenon that fell outside of that definition arose, instead of admitting that they could not explain the phenomenon with their current models, they slapped the "abnormal

[339] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 31.
[340] Ibid. A similar discussion is included in Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 239.

psychology" label onto it so that they could merely say that it was "an abnormal psychology to which regular psychological explanations do not apply." Thus, psychologists "started to divide [psychological phenomena] into regular phenomena where [existing psychological explanations] apply and abnormal psychological phenomena where [existing psychological explanations] seem not to apply." Even in cases where they attached the correct name to a mental phenomenon, "[they] still cannot explain why that sort of phenomenon occurs." "The best they can do," Taniguchi complained, to explain why a particular mental phenomenon occurred, was to say something like, "The stored conscious (貯蔵された意識) at a certain opportunity displayed an abnormal appearance (表面)," which was to say that they blamed the phenomenon on the "automatic phenomena of the unconscious mind."[341]

This criticism of the shallowness of psychological theories certainly seems similar to Ōmoto's criticism of the shallowness of other spiritualist techniques. It also harkens back to Western psychologists' classification of mental illness—that which Western psychologists saw as conforming to societal norms was considered "normal," and that which did not was "abnormal." While it is certainly true that societal norms played some role in the designation of "normalcy" in Japan (as we have already seen), Ōmoto writers were far more interested in the idea that psychologists aligned the boundaries of "normalcy" with the boundaries of their knowledge. That which they could not understand or explain was "abnormal," and thus "regular" psychological explanations did not (and could not) apply. Psychologists were thus integrated into Ōmoto's knowledge

[341] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 32.

hierarchy in a lower position than the *saniwa*, who were able to explain all sorts of phenomena without falling back on labeling things they did not understand "abnormal."

According to these psychologists, "[i]n a regular [mental state], the mind that is unconscious floats into (浮かび出る) the conscious [mind] according to the person in question's choice and will." In an abnormal mental state, however, "the mind that is stored ignores the choice and will of the person in question and willfully (勝手に) rampages [into the conscious mind]."[342] Taniguchi cautioned his readers, however,

> You should think about whether it would be possible for one's own stored consciousness to selfishly rampage [into the conscious mind] without yielding to the control of one's own choices and wishes. *Regardless of whether my mind is conscious or stored, it must be controlled by a single personality. It is impossible for one personality to be split it two or more [personalities]*.[343]

Ōmoto thus disagreed strongly with the prevailing psychological theories concerning split personalities and secondary personalities. Ogura compared the attempt to explain spirit possession as a personality change to saying, "*Fleas and mosquitoes don't really exist. Only the psychological phenomenon called 'itchy' really exists*."[344] "That kind of discussion has no authority, right?" Ogura asked.[345]

Ōmoto believed rather than "*a phenomenon caused by the splitting of the personality*," it was more correct to interpret the phenomenon "*as workings of separate personalities*."[346] As indicated in the figure above, Ōmoto believed the many conscious minds and storage consciousnesses that composed the unconscious mind in turn affected the larger conscious mind. Ōmoto writers thus criticized psychologists for diagnosing "the phenomena caused by the aforementioned wife or clerk or family"—that is to say the

[342] Ibid.
[343] Ibid., 33. Emphasis in original.
[344] Ogura, "Dokusha ran," 214. Emphasis in original.
[345] Ibid.
[346] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 33. Emphasis in original.

workings of the various parts of the unconscious mind—as a "splitting of the person in question" (本人分裂).[347] A case that could be interpreted as a split personality, Ōmoto interpreted as the person losing control over a possessing deity and thus "completely switch[ing] with the secondary personality of the possessing deity."[348]

Similarly, psychologists at the time interpreted hypnotism as the conscious mind being hypnotized while the unconscious mind awoke. Taniguchi lambasted them for this belief, saying that such a thing would only be possible if the conscious mind and the unconscious mind were completely separate personalities, as "having one half of the same personality become more and more hypnotized while the other half becomes more and more awake is an impossible thing. *Is it possible for one part of a thing to move less and less while the other part moves more and more?*"[349] Taniguchi asserted that while it was possible for the conscious mind to make the body move, it was not possible for the unconscious mind (無意識)[350] to make the body move. The "movement of the living body" was only possible by means of "the conscious mind (the person in question's or *the possessing spirit's*)."[351]

That which psychologists dismissed as "delusions" or "hallucinations"—when people saw and heard things that logically could not exist—Ōmoto explained as sensory phenomena caused by the possessing spirit "manifesting [itself] in the physical body, and because the possessing spirit is a *rei*, [it] can sense things that exist in the spirit world but

[347] Inoue, "Chinkon kishin to saiminjutsu," 238.
[348] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 35.
[349] Ibid., 37. Emphasis in original.
[350] What exactly he means by 無意識 (or how it is different than 潜在意識) is unclear, as he does not offer a definition or longer description.
[351] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 32. Emphasis in the original.

cannot be seen by the physical eye."[352] Thus, many spiritual phenomena which academics dismissed as "delusions" or "mental abnormalities" were, in fact, caused by the workings of possessing spirits, and the only reason that occasionally people did not gain incredible powers like clairvoyance or clairaudience but instead babbled nonsensically was because of the varying capabilities and qualities of the possessing spirits.[353] In the case of low-ranking spirits, because those spirits only have "the art of speaking about things within people's knowledge, [psychologists] surmise that it is a subsumed consciousness (潜んだ意識)."[354]

Ogura turned the tables on Nakamura Kokyō, "diagnosing" him with "wild writing disease" (濫書症).[355] Her proof was two-fold. Firstly, one merely had to look at the nonsense he wrote in *Hentai shinri* about Ōmoto. But secondly, and perhaps more interestingly for our discussion, she criticized his behavior during his visit to Ayabe. "While [Nakamura] was staying in Ayabe, he said he intended to document Ōmotokyō as minutely as possible, but the number of days he stayed (I was visiting Ayabe at the same time last year, so I can prove this) was *merely two days*. Furthermore, *he was a person who fled from receiving* chinkon, and people who are possessed by evil spirits (悪霊) are extremely averse to sitting in front of an Ōmoto *saniwa* with their eyes closed." Although she could not clearly say whether Nakamura Kokyō was possessed by such an evil spirit or not, she did remark that it was an "undeniable truth" that Nakamura "other than observing [*chinkon kishin*] twelve times, had no [*chinkon kishin*] experience."[356]

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[352] Ibid., 36.
[353] Ibid.
[354] Taniguchi Seiji, "Ōmoto reigaku shiteki kenkyū," 365.
[355] Ogura, "Dokusha ran," 214. Ironically, Nakamura referred to Nao as suffering from "wild writing madness" (濫書狂). *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 483.
[356] Ogura, "Dokusha ran," 214. Emphasis in original.

Nakamura "says that Mr. Asano does not understand hypnotism and he has no authority to say that *chinkon* is not hypnotism, but if that is so," Ogura asked, "if he has no personal experience with *chinkon*, how much authority does he have to write that *chinkon* is a type of hypnotism?"[357] Ogura thus cast doubt upon not only Nakamura's ability to offer a professional opinion on *chinkon kishin*, but in fact upon his morality and mental stability (for possession by evil spirits, as we have seen, could have many negative effects upon the mind).

Taniguchi ended his article by saying,

> I suppose that psychologists can probably not endorse the theories I [have explained] here. The reason why is because if they endorsed this, they could not avoid completely overturning most of existing psychology. However, regardless of whether truth is endorsed or not, [it is] the truth.[358]

Throughout all the Ōmoto publications addressing psychologists' criticisms of *chinkon kishin*—from Ogura's submission to the reader's column to Inoue and Taniguchi's longer articles—this attitude of superiority was prevalent. Medical practitioners were derided because "medicine ignores the *rei* and tries to only treat the body" and thus "their basic texts (教典) are insignificant, makeshift, and cannot fundamentally resolve [illness caused by possession by evil deities]."[359] Psychologists were ignorant because they were not only unable to determine the ranking of the spirits (as the *saniwa* could) but were unable to even identify the possessing spirits as the cause of hypnotic phenomena.[360]

Therefore, Ōmoto criticism of psychology attempted to fit psychologists into the *jutsusha*/*hijutsusha* framework. By casting the psychologist as the *jutsusha*, it would be obvious to the reader (the potential *hijutsusha*) that the psychologist was lacking in even

[357] Ibid.
[358] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 37.
[359] Kōdō Ōmoto Reigakubu, "Reigaku kenkyū shibōsha ni tsugu," 176.
[360] Taniguchi, "Ōmoto reigaku yori mitaru hentai shinri," 37.

basic knowledge of the spirit world or the composition of the mind. The *saniwa*, as discussed in the previous chapters, was intimately connected with knowledge—both the knowledge that was prerequisite for becoming a *saniwa* and the knowledge of the spirit world gained through *kishin*[361]—and thus served as a foil to the psychologist who merely labeled everything he couldn't understand as "abnormal psychology."

What benefit was there for Ōmoto to cast the psychologist as just another type of *jutsusha*? It would be just as easy to slander psychologists as ignorant and possessed by evil spirits without allowing them to assume the role of the *jutsusha*. However, there were two distinct advantages to Ōmoto treating psychologists as competing *jutsusha*. Firstly, the fact that the *saniwa* could be compared to (and best) highly educated psychological professionals gave the *saniwa* a certain degree of professional authority. Additionally, as discussed above, Ōmoto was directly competing with Nihon Seishin Igakukai (as well as other mental health professionals) for patients, and by portraying psychologists as bumbling and uneducated *jutsusha* who conveniently cordoned off all phenomena they couldn't understand and shoved them into an "abnormal" category, they presented the *chinkon kishin* (as overseen by the vastly more intelligent and educated *saniwa*) as a preferable, safer, and more efficacious alternative for treatment.

The First Ōmoto Incident as Insanity Trial

On February 12, 1921, police officers cut off Ōmoto's postal, telephone, and telegraph communications and encircled its headquarters at Ayabe. They arrested a number of leaders on charges of lèse-majesté (不敬罪) and violation of the 1909

[361] Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 164.

Figure 17 Police search Onisaburō's house for incriminating evidence, February, 1921.[362]

Newspaper Law. Police officers ransacked the Ōmoto headquarters in Ayabe as well as Onisaburō's residence and twenty other sites associated with Ōmoto, and confiscated the entirety of Nao's *Ofudesaki* as well as a variety of other materials that they believed could be used as evidence. In the end, only Deguchi Onisaburō, Asano Wasaburō, and Yoshida Sukesada, a publisher, were indicted by the Kyoto district court in May. Onisaburō was released on parole in June and returned to Ayabe after having been detained for 126 days. However, this was not the end of the incident—Nao's tomb was torn down, and a variety of Ōmoto's buildings were found in violation of an obscure 1872 law concerning the construction of shrines and destroyed.[363] According to Ōmoto's official history, the purpose of the suppression was to destroy Ōmoto, as the religion had increasingly come to be seen as a threat to society, especially due to the concentration of

[362] "Kinen hen 10," accessed March 3, 2014, http://www.daitouryu.com/iyashi/kinen/kinen10.html.
[363] *Ōmoto nanajūnen shi*, 566-574.

military men and intellectuals and their beliefs concerning the coming world renewal.[364] Several other scholars have agreed with this interpretation of the first suppression.[365]

Although there is much to be said about the first Ōmoto incident, let us focus our attention on the psychological aspects of the trial. One of the accusations leveled against Ōmoto leaders was that they were using *chinkon kishin* to make Ōmoto believers mentally ill. However, almost immediately, the question of whether Deguchi Onisaburō could be considered responsible for the alleged mental illness of followers was raised. Traditionally, as explained above, people who committed crimes while in states of possession were not considered fully responsible for their actions.[366] This was, in fact, the defense attorney's argument—because Onisaburō had edited and published Nao's writings while in a state of possession, he was not responsible for either the alleged lèse-majesté or the violation of the Newspaper Law.[367] From *Hentai shinri*'s perspective, as well, states of possession were, in fact, changes in personality, and only the personality in charge at the time could be responsible for a specific activity. Thus, the question remained: Could Onisaburō be held responsible for things he had said or done while in a state of possession?[368]

The first expert witness, Imamura Shinkichi (1874－1946), argued that Onisaburō did not appear to be manifesting any obvious mental illness, but did appear to have the personality abnormalities of a mentally ill person; he thus declared Onisaburō a *chūkansha*, belonging to the aforementioned group of people who were caught between

[364] Ibid., 577.
[365] See, for example, Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*, 73-74; Nancy Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 98-99; Kurihara, "'Kagaku' teki gensetsu," passim.
[366] Hyōdō Akiko, "Hyōi ga seishinbyō ni sareru toki: jinkaku henkan・shūkyō dan'atsu・seishin kantei," 1033. Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 112-113.
[367] Deguchi Eiji, *Ōmotokyō jiken*, 101.
[368] Hyōdō, "Hyōi ga seishinbyō ni sareru toki," 1033.

the "mentally healthy" and the "mentally ill." He rejected the interpretation that states of possession were unconscious states, but declared instead that possession was simply "one kind of self-hypnosis." Onisaburō, he argued, was entirely responsible for all his behavior even while in a state of "possession," as he was the one responsible for putting himself in such a state.[369]

The second expert witness was Sugita Naoki (1887-1949), a psychologist who occasionally wrote for *Hentai shinri*. He, unlike Imamura, defined Onisaburō's possession as a "phenomenon [caused by] the transformation of a sick personality" (病的人格変換現象). Thus, the state of possession was nothing more than the workings of the unconscious mind, and the first personality (Onisaburō) could not be held responsible for the activities of the second personality (the "possessing spirit").[370] However, Sugita argued that Onisaburō was naturally predisposed to be mentally ill, and had magnified his pre-existing mental illness through his spiritualist activities. Hyōdō thus argues that Sugita also saw Onisaburō as a *chūkansha*—his problem was one of personality (a predisposition toward mental illness), which had been exacerbated by his activities.[371]

Ultimately, the court cared less about the psychological reasoning behind Onisaburō's behavior than the behavior itself—Onisaburō was sentenced to five years in prison, although he only served four months of his sentence before being released on parole. The case was appealed, and in July 1924 the Osaka Court of Appear upheld the verdict. The case was brought before the Supreme Court, but before a decision could be

[369] Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 113. Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai*, 183-184.
[370] Quoted in Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 114.
[371] Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai*, 185.

reached, Onisaburō was fully pardoned in 1927 as part of the general amnesty following the Taishō emperor's death.[372]

Figure 18 Onisaburō at the Supreme Court.[373]

Hyōdō identifies the attempt to find a psychological cause for the crime of lèse-majesté as part of a larger trend during this time period to identify lèse-majesté with mental illness; as "normal" people had no reason to commit lèse-majesté, it had to be the product of some abnormality.[374] Additionally, she argues that the treatment of the Ōmoto defendants, especially Onisaburō, was part of a trend to identify a problem with one person's personality, actions, or disposition not as a personal problem, but rather a potential societal issue.[375] This treatment of the individual as a potential societal problem was, as we have already discussed, a characteristic of the burgeoning field of psychology.

[372] Garon, *Molding Japanese Minds*, 74. Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 98-99.
[373] Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon no kindai*, 184.
[374] Hyōdō, "Taishōki no 'seishin' gainen," 115.
[375] Hyōdō, *Seishinbyō no Nihon kindai*, 185-186.

Conclusion

Ōmoto may have seen the psychologists of Nihon Seishin Igakukai as merely another set of *jutsusha* to best, but the psychologists, unlike the spiritualists discussed in the last chapter, were significantly better connected and had more political power. Psychology was just beginning to become an established field, and so Nihon Seishin Igakukai saw Ōmoto as a major threat not only to its legitimacy and influence in the medical world but also to the well-being of society. Thus, while Ōmoto cast the psychologists as just another set of deluded and ignorant *jutsusha* attempting to use inferior healing techniques and failing to explain how the mind (and the spirit world) worked, the psychologists used their influence in the academic and political world to paint Ōmoto as a dangerous organization of lunatics who were using an inferior form of (the already maligned) hypnotism to create more havoc and illness in the minds of their adherents.

As we have seen, Ōmoto's *chinkon kishin* boom took place when Nihon Seishin Igakukai was desperately trying to distinguish psychology from more physiology-based psychiatry as well as from what they considered "superstitious" spiritual healing practices. Ultimately, many of Nihon Seishin Igakukai's motivations for criticizing Ōmoto conformed to Western medical practitioners' motivations for criticizing spiritual healers: competition for a limited number of patients, fear of being associated with such "backwards" healing practices, and a tendency to label transgressive behavior "abnormal" or "pathological." However, there was no dearth of spiritualist organizations that threatened Nihon Seishin Igakukai's monopoly over the mental health field and

engaged in so-called "abnormal" behavior, so why did they focus the brunt of their attack on Ōmoto?

Ironically, it may have been Ōmoto's attempts to fit the psychologists into the *jutsusha*/*hijutsusha* framework—as well as their concurrent attempt to subsume psychological knowledge into their "knowledge hierarchy"—that ultimately led to their downfall. As detailed in the last chapter, Ōmoto used the *jutsusha*/*hijutsusha* framework to define a field of debate that was limited to educated men who practiced some sort of healing or spiritualist technique. By doing so, Ōmoto elevated the status of their *saniwa* and their organization by extension. This elevation helped contribute to the increase in membership, as members defected from other spiritualist organizations after being impressed by Ōmoto's doctrine and techniques. However, this influx of members (especially intellectuals) was also seen as a threat to psychologists' authority over the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness, and Ōmoto's insistence on using "psychological" terminology to elucidate their spiritual theories—in an attempt to contribute to their image of academic legitimacy as well as to integrate psychological knowledge into their knowledge hierarchy as yet another intellectual field in which they had gained superiority and perfection over other practitioners—probably did not endear them to Nihon Seishin Igakukai. Ōmoto, by presenting their *saniwa* as academics who could be compared to and vie with psychologists and attracting a massive influx of members (especially educated men) interested in *chinkon kishin*, probably posed a more significant ideological threat to Nihon Seishin Igakukai than the spiritual healing groups that had smaller memberships and did not directly engage with psychologists or use their own language against them. Thus, although Ōmoto's attempts to fit the psychologists of

Hentai shinri into the *jutsusha*/*hijutsusha* framework did increase their public exposure (and in some people's eyes their legitimacy), [376] it also presented their organization as a major threat both to psychologists and (in the psychologists' estimation) society, leading to the 1921 suppression.

[376] Nakano Yonosuke (1887-1974), the later founder of Ananaikyō, originally became interested in Ōmoto around the time of the first Ōmoto incident, because he was highly impressed by the articles on Onisaburō, even as public opinion proclaimed him either insane or diabolic. Staemmler, *Chinkon Kishin*, 309-311.

Conclusion

In the preceding chapters we have seen how the *chinkon kishin* boom irrevocably reshaped Ōmoto by shifting the authority structure from being female-centered to being male-centered and limiting leadership roles to educated men. Ōmoto was also deeply influenced by the contemporary interest in spiritualism, through the influx of highly placed members who had previous experience with or interest in spiritualist practices; Ōmoto's conception of a universal, (relatively) equal *rei* in all people was also quite similar to spiritualism's conception of an equal, universal soul. Ōmoto integrated spiritualist practices (as well as psychological theory) into a larger worldview that placed *chinkon kishin* at the top of a hierarchy of spiritualist (and medical) techniques and Ōmoto *saniwa* at the top of a hierarchy of spiritualist (and medical) practitioners.

Examination of Ōmoto's *chinkon kishin* boom allows us to see how (and why) a group with an illiterate female founder, a predominantly rural membership, and a history of transgressive—even anarchic—gender performance shifted to being an urban-based group with a mostly educated, entirely male leadership. The changes in the group's structure and doctrine during the *chinkon kishin* boom not only accommodated shifting sources of power, but also created a standardized, rationalized, even quasi-scientific doctrine befitting the modern and modernizing world that Ōmoto inhabited. Ōmoto was not merely conceived of as a religion; as its name during this time period—Kōdō Ōmoto—implied, it was religion, government, education, science, and medicine all rolled up into one. Ōmoto writers placed Ōmoto at the top of a knowledge hierarchy—above both other spiritualist leaders and trained medical professionals. Its heavenly-granted practice of *chinkon kishin* was presided over by the educated male *saniwa*, who wielded

the power of the good spirit realm, his rational and scientific approach, and his knowledge of the Japanese classics and the secrets of the mind with equal skill and finesse. This modernized Ōmoto had no place in its leadership for women—who, despite their suitability as conduits of the spirits, did not have the temperament, knowledge, or authority to be *saniwa* who could vie with psychical researchers or psychologists. The restructuring of Ōmoto that occurred during the *chinkon kishin* boom did not merely allow the *saniwa* to control the potentially volatile spirits that *chinkon kishin* gave free rein, but also to allow Ōmoto to adapt to and fit in with the masculine modernity it saw in urban spaces.

Ōmoto's attempts to construct an image of "modernity" (and "masculinity," by implication) brought it directly into conflict with spiritualists, psychologists, and the state, all of whom were attempting to construct their own images of "modernity" and "masculinity" in the tumultuous and "gender ambivalent" Taishō period. Western spiritualism offered the image of the rational, educated (male) psychical researcher who gained knowledge of the spirit world through the "scientifically rigorous" séances over which he presided. Japanese spiritualist groups, such as Taireidō, combined images of the educated, enlightened (male) practitioner with theories of political and social restructuring to turn Japan into a fully "modern" state. Educators constructed images of the stoic, masculine young man who was unfazed by sexual desire for women, while students at higher schools policed their classmates, and "corrected" those who transgressed with physical violence.[377] Psychologists constructed ideals of modern masculinity not by positives but by negatives—not neurotic, not superstitious, not "perverse," not "feminized," and so on. In all of these cases, modernity was inevitably

[377] See, for example, Donald Roden, *Schooldays in Imperial Japan*, 133-153.

linked with masculinity—modernization was to be carried out by men. Effeminate or emasculated men posed a serious threat to Japanese progress toward parity with the West. "Masculinized women" were considered a social issue, as we have seen, but it was not expected that a "properly feminine woman" would have an active role in Japanese progress (aside from assuming her proper place as a wife and mother).[378]

Although the paired identification of Onisaburō and Nao as the Transformed Female and Transformed Male (respectively)—the most obviously anarchic conception of gender that Ōmoto professed—still existed during the *chinkon kishin* boom, it was downplayed or absent in the majority of Ōmoto's writings, especially those intended for proselytization. Instead, the *saniwa* loomed large in Ōmoto's writings, as both the most important actor in *chinkon kishin* and the most expedient (and safest) means by which the *kannushi* could improve him-/herself spiritually. Spiritual improvement through *chinkon kishin* was presented as a necessity for the coming war with the rest of the world and eventual reconstruction of the world. The participation of all those who wished to take part in this future was mediated through Ōmoto and the *saniwa*.

This masculine ideal was not created wholesale by Taishō-era Ōmoto leaders—rather, its construction was highly influenced by prevailing ideas about gender and modernity. Ōmoto writers emphasized the "scientific" character of *chinkon kishin* and the "rational" and educated character of the *saniwa* in an attempt to appeal to prevailing social norms, even as they propagated ideas concerning the Taishō Restoration, which directly contradicted the prevailing social order. Thus one could say that Ōmoto's *chinkon kishin* boom was perceived as a social threat because it offered (and encouraged)

[378] See, for example, Miriam Silverberg, *Erotic Grotesque Nonsense*, passim; Kathleen Uno, "The Death of 'Good Wife, Wise Mother'?," 293-302; Marnie Anderson, *A Place in Public: Women's Rights in Meiji Japan*, passim.

an alternate vision of both masculinity and modernity during a time when significant social anxiety existed around both terms.

There is an unfortunate tendency in scholarship surrounding NRMs to consider the role that gender plays in group activity, censure, and/or suppression only when women are directly and obviously involved.[379] For the most part, this tendency has carried over to previous scholarship concerning Ōmoto—gender is only considered as an analytic category when discussing the period of Nao's leadership.[380] As we have seen, however, the *saniwa*'s maleness was an integral part of his identity and contributed to his spiritual authority. The *saniwa*'s identity as an educated male allowed him to vie with other spiritualist practitioners as well as medical professionals. As an educated, authoritative male who would lead Ōmoto practitioners toward spiritual perfection, the *saniwa* offered an alternative vision of what it meant to be a man, to be modern, to be educated. The *saniwa* posed a sufficient threat to the prevailing orthodoxy that psychologists (as well as other intellectuals) felt the need to engage directly with Ōmoto's teachings (in order to discredit them) rather than merely brushing them off as yet another group of charlatans and lunatics. Additionally, the alternate vision of modernity (and masculinity) that emerged during the *chinkon kishin* boom contributed to (if not directly caused) the police suppression in 1921. Thus, to fail to consider gender in analyzing the *chinkon kishin* boom because of a lack of female leadership elides an

[379] As Stalker has noted, however, even when women are directly involved, scholars may fail to consider gendered expectations and reactions. See Nancy Stalker, "Celebrity Gods: New Religions, Media, and Authority in Occupied Japan by Benjamin Dorman (review)," 212.

[380] Of the scholarly works that I have cited throughout the thesis, only two consider the role of gender in any detail: Emily Ooms' *Women and Millenarian Protest in Meiji Japan* and Helen Hardacre's "Gender and the Millenium in Ōmoto Kyōdan." Stalker briefly mentions the conceptions of the Transformed Male and Transformed Female (Nancy Stalker, *Prophet Motive*, 40-41), but otherwise fails to consider gender as an analytical category.

important factor that contributed not only to Ōmoto's approach to engaging with external groups but also the perception that the group posed a danger to society.

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