UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

EXPRESSING THE KAMI (DEITIES):

A STUDY OF WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

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Norman, Oklahoma
2010

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EXPRESSING THE KAMI (DEITIES): A STUDY OF WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA

A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

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Acknowledgments

A number of people have helped me throughout the research and writing of this dissertation. First and foremost, I want to express my deepest gratitude to my chair, Dr. Eric Mark Kramer, who initiated me into this academic path and supported me throughout my years at the University of Oklahoma. Now I just realized how lucky I am to work with him. I extend my further gratitude to each of my committee members: Dr. Todd L. Sandel, Dr. Patrick Meirick, Dr. Elaine Hsieh, and Dr. Stephen P. Weldon. Their valuable comments and criticisms have played significant roles in completing this dissertation. I also thank Dr. Ann Hamilton for her careful reading and professional editing of my draft. With her "magic," my dissertation has become much more readable.

A special acknowledgment is due to all the members of the Washinomiya Saibara Kagura Preservation Association. Without their support, this work would not have been possible.

Last but not least, my thanks go to my parents, Yasushi and Mitsu Sakurai, for their unyielding supports and encouragements. This dissertation is dedicated to them.

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Abstract

This dissertation explores WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA as a communication site where religious beliefs, values, and ways of life are interwoven with human expression. The *kagura* is one of the oldest forms of Shinto folk performing arts. Performed as part of local religious festivals at Washinomiya Shrine, the *kagura* evokes its powerful symbols to effectuate shamanic and magical efficacy, as well as to provide entertainment to both human and divine audiences. The existing studies tend to describe the *kagura* as "a text in motion" and to explain it as a functional and purposive behavior, but without exploring the very act of "expressing the kami (deities)." The present dissertation, therefore, relies on fieldwork centered on WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA in order to challenge the currently rationalized understandings of a symbol-filled religious expression and to explicate the very act of expressing the kami. More specifically, I take the following two approaches: (1) a phenomenological approach that enables us to disclose what kinds of and levels of experience are required to express the kami, and (2) a Gebserian approach that allows us to reveal how multidimensional modes of awareness co-constitute the act of expressing the kami. The task is threefold: (a) to offer a detailed description of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, (b) to elucidate how the kami and their corresponding expressions are shared and transmitted among the *kagura* performers, and (c) to unfold the *kagura* (expressing the kami) in various modes of awareness, freeing it from the single, unidimensional explanations offered to date.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction: The Scope and Outlook of the Study

Japan is often viewed as a nonreligious country. This is reasonable to some extent because most Japanese tend to deny belief in a particular religious doctrine when they are asked (Ama, 2005). Paradoxically, many Japanese regularly engage in Shinto activities and rituals.[1] An explanation of this paradox is that the Western term "religion" is inadequate to describe the Shinto culture because the term is too alien and institutional to the Japanese (Averbuch, 1995; Plutschow, 1996). The Japanese word *shukyou* (religion) is a relatively new term, added to the vernacular after the 1868 Meiji Restoration.[2] The word first appeared in the Commerce Treaty between Germany and Japan in 1869, and was used as an equivalent term in translation of the German *subung* (religion) (Ueda, 1996).[3] While the term "religion" has hardly been accepted by the majority of the Japanese, the kami (神) are recognized as a more common articulation of religiousness,

---

[1] Shinto is a general term that refers to "the indigenous religion of Japan" (Kitagawa, 1987, p. 139). Even today, the Japanese pray to the *ryujin*, the Dragon deity for rain making, on the national Shinto ceremonial days. They also hold the *shuubatsushiki* (a prayer for safety when new nuclear power plants are built), the *jichinsai* (a Shinto ceremony for purifying a building site before modern buildings are constructed), and the *teisoshiki* (a ceremony to mark the laying of the cornerstone of a building when the construction is done), to name a few (Buchannan, 1935; Smyers, 1999). Since ceremonial occasions such as weddings or funerals take place in Japan at Shinto shrines, Buddhist temples, or Christian churches, they appear to be religious.

[2] Furthermore, the Chinese character "宗教" (religion) is itself an equivalent term. While the character "宗" appeared in old documents, the phrase "宗教" has been used since 1869. The character "宗" can be divided into two meanings: building and description of blood running. The latter comes from the desk where a sacrifice was put to the gods. When Buddhism came into China, the character "宗" was used to refer to the best state of human minds. In the Chinese classics, the character was often used to simply a Buddhist term (Ama, 2007).

[3] Along with the word *religion*, such words as the *bunmei* (civilization) and the *kokusai* (international) were also in use around that time.

beyond simpler Western religious notions (Miyake, 1972). Although the term *kami* has no equivalent term in English, it has been technically translated into the word "deities" by English scholars (Bernstein, 2006).[4]

Another explanation, which is a focus of this study, is that the Western term "religion" connotes a concept or belief rather than a ritual or custom. Reader and Tanabe (1998) claim that Japanese religion is "less a matter of belief than it is of activity, ritual, and custom" (p. 7). Shinto, indeed, is full of acts of praying to the kami, commonly manifested in religious rituals and folk performing arts.[5] The Japanese have developed their own ways of expressing the kami in order to engage in the Shinto rituals. Accordingly, Shinto is often recognized as "a religion of symbols" (Moriarty, 1972, p. 137). Among the Shinto rituals, the *kagura* is a ubiquitous religious symbol even in contemporary Japan (Honda, 1966; Nishitsunoi, 1990). The *kagura* is generally considered a prototype of Shinto rituals and is acknowledged as originating from shamanic possession-trance (the *kamigakari*) (Iwata, 1988; Yamaji, 1987). By its nature, the *kagura* is a shamanic performance in which the kami are manifested on stage. Performing the *kagura* includes such religious acts as summoning and welcoming the kami, worshipping them, and receiving their blessings and oracles (*takusen*) (e.g., Honda, 1974; Nishitsunoi, 1934). As the *chinkon* (spirit-pacification) rite, the original divine *kagura* is believed to be not only performed in the heavenly plane (Honda, 1969), but also is the origin of all earthly rituals as well as performing arts in Japan (Yamaji, 1987).

---

[4] As seen also in the common expression of *yaoyorozuno no kami* (myriads of deities), the kami are infinite in idea. Translated word-by-word, *yaoyorozu no kami* means eight millions of deities; however, since the number "eight" (*ya*) used to refer to the "infinite," it might be better to be translated into "myriads of deities."

[5] The Japanese term "folk performing arts" incorporates a great variety of folk music, dances, and theater performed at folk festivals.

To this day, a great variety of folk performing arts in Japan combine artistic and spiritual dimensions into Shinto ritual events.

Today, however, the *kagura* is seemingly reduced to a mere choreography with the loss of authentic possession-trance. The *kagura* is often seen as a way of representing the sacred and as a means of expressing human emotions (joy, anger, sadness, and happiness) (e.g., Yamaji, 1987; Yamamoto, 1986). Consequently, the *kagura* has become a functional ritual event. In addition, the *kagura* is often discussed in terms of its functions or goals of the individual as well as community-level goals. In a group, the *kagura* serves as a means of strengthening group relationships, educating the public about morals, and giving pleasure to life (e.g., Fukushima, 2003; Moriarty, 1972). When the *kagura* is reduced to an individual, it allows the individual to feel good and motivated in life (e.g., Fukushima, 2003; Honda, 1966), and provides an identity to the individual (e.g., Averbuch, 1995; Morita, 1990). One sociological perspective contends that the functionality is a reason why the *kagura* occurred and has been transmitted from generation to generation (Gorai, 1995). In making only the functional aspects of the *kagura* salient, the *kagura* is reduced to a mere fixed choreography or simply a sign. And, because the *kagura* is no longer a basis of living for most Japanese, its meaning is obscure (Yamaji, 1987).

Once the *kagura* is reduced to a social functional symbol, it is considered to be "a set of symbols in motion" (Averbuch, 1995, 1998). In this functional assumption, the *kagura* is reduced to a representation, which dualistically assumes the kami as transcendental objects that dwell within such expressive forms of *kagura* as incantation, dance, music, poetry, drama, etc. However, the kami offered by such expressions are not

powers automatically bestowed on any activities and by any persons, but rather performers must actively assert, cultivate, and guard the kami. If not, the meanings of the kami would be fixed within the structure of the Japanese religious sign system. In other words, if we regard the *kagura* as a perceptible medium that "represents" the invisible, transcendental kami, we have to presume that the *kagura* would be an empty carrier that conveys the fixed meanings of the kami. This enables the kami to be accepted as a fixed text. In this transmitting process, a dimensional distance emerges between signs and the kami. This distinction is bound to produce all sorts of hypothetical explanations about how the kami and the *kagura* work together to form religious symbols—the latter becoming a set of external signs of the former.

Differently stated, once the *kagura* as a signifier begins to function, the signified kami are being objectified and idealized into our dualistic understanding of a sign—the signified is prior to a signifier. In the signifying process, however, the *kagura* itself constructs the meaning of the kami. The sacredness of the kami does not exist transcendentally or objectively, nor can it exist outside the religious expressions. Rather, the *kagura* gains a sense of the kami through a sequence of voiced and corporeal expressions because expressing the kami is prior to the conceptualized (rationalized) sign (communication) system, the *kagura*. Even if the *kagura* has certain religious functions within a community, and if it is a ritual text that can be examined, then it can be described as an act of expressing the kami.

For these reasons, two approaches will be used in this dissertation to challenge the dominant theses of Japanese religion. The first approach is a phenomenological one that seeks a direct experience of the act of expressing the kami. We do not deny that the

kagura may be best described as a means of communicating with the kami; however, as is seen above, it is also dualistically assumed that the *kagura* is a communication system that conveys the inner sacredness (the kami) to the outer expressions (*kagura* performances). This functional communication view provides the *kagura* with some societal and psychological functions, even though the functions do not make sense without seeing the *kagura* as a one-by-one, causal, linear system. Therefore, this approach brackets any functional or structural understanding of the *kagura* and argues that the *kagura* is at its essence an "experienceable" expressive act.

This approach is an attempt to reveal what constitutes the modern dualistic sign system and to deepen our understanding of the *kagura* (act of expressing the kami) from the signalized sign system to which it has previously been reduced. As part of a communication study, this approach explores the act of expressing the kami as a mode of expression in order to decipher the conditions that allow the *kagura* to present the kami as the kami. This first approach, then, seeks to expose the conditions that allow the *kagura* to be a religious act of expressing from the vantage point of nonreductive awareness: What essentially constitutes the *kagura* through which the kami are manifested? The purpose of this approach is to seek what constitutes the act of expressing the kami, bracketing the modern sign system that comprises the conditions for promoting dualistic understanding of the kami.

The study is not finished by merely bracketing the assumption, however. The problem of understanding the kami is related to the dualistic mode of awareness in which the kami appears to be a conflict or paradox. Suzuki (1972), a prominent Zen philosopher, argues that in whatever way the kami are described, they are somehow included in

dualistic forms because the kami appear in conflict with some materials in some way. Suzuki (1972) continues to explain this dualistic understanding of the kami, distinguishing the *reisei* (霊性), by which he means the kami (the *tamashii*), from the *seishin* (精神), a psychological "will."[6] The latter is used in a saying like: "Where there is a will, there is a way." While the word *seishin* comes from Chinese, the word *reisei* originated in the *yamato kotoba* (the indigenous Chinese language).[7] In addition, the *seishin*, referring to future will, implies something that is abstract and conceptualized. Thus, Suzuki (1972) articulates that the *seishin* refers to an idea or ideal and that it has nothing to do with awareness; rather, it leads us to see the future in a certain way, a conceptualization of the future. By contrast, the *reisei* can be taken to mean "religious awareness." The word *religious* tends to imply something doctrinal, but religion is what comes into a mode of awareness; that is, religion is not meaningful or understandable until it is signified.

---

[6] The Japanese often articulate the kami as a spiritual being or the *tamashii* (魂). The *kagura* is commonly known as a *chinkon* rite; the *chinkon* literally means "purifying the *tamashii*." The *tamashii* pacified in the *kagura* characterize the Japanese religion as shamanic in origin and allows us to trace the history as far back as the ages of the deities (Averbuch, 1995).

[7] As many scholars agree (e.g., Toyoda, 1980), there were no abstract, conceptualized meanings in the *yamato kotoba*. It is believed to have been formulated before Buddhist and Chinese characters were exported to Japan. Some archeological evidence has shown that proto-Japanese (*yamato kotoba*) was spoken in or around the time of the Yayoi (250 B.C.-A.D. 250) (Hudson, 1999). As a result of basic biological and linguistic continuities, "Japanese" is the most appropriate designation for the core population formed in the Yayoi (Hudson, 1999). There are three main arguments conducting the genealogy of Japanese, proposing genetic links with the Altaic family, contending links with South/Southeast Asian or Pacific languages (mainly Austronesian), or seeing Japanese as some kind of mixed language (mainly Austronesian-Altaic) (Hudson, 1999). Hudson (1999) argues that Japanese language first spread through Japanese Islands with agricultural colonization from the Yayoi period, replacing the previous Jomon language(s), except for Ainu in the north.

While the *seishin* carried ethical connotations because it is derived from a conceptualization, the *reisei* transcends ethics (Suzuki, 1972). In other words, while the *seishin* describes a distinct will, the *reisei* is a mode of awareness. It does *not* mean"to overcome" or "to go beyond;" rather, it is a direct mode of awareness, which is not mediated by thought or logic. On the contrary, religious awareness is manifested in the forms of expressing and experiencing the kami in the Japanese poetry and performing arts (Suzuki, 1972). That is, the kami come into the Japanese consciousness spontaneously, and intrinsically rather than through external ritual. Therefore, religious rituals and folk performing arts are highly valued by the Japanese as the expression of the kami (Fujiwara, 1971, 1994; Nishitsunoi, 1934; Origuchi, 2002; Ozaki, 1993; Toyoda, 1980).

For these reasons, this dissertation includes a Gebserian (systasis) analysis allowing the expressive powers of the *kagura* to be revealed on the level of consciousness. The plus conscious-mutation theory, advocated by Gebser,[8] provides theoretical inspiration for this second approach. The theory states that while one mode of awareness is manifested at any given time, these modes are not mutually exclusive, rather they co-exist and mutate. In *The Ever-Present Origin* (1985), Gebser traced a wide range of cultural forms throughout history and across cultures, including arts, religions, mythologies, sciences, and philosophies, each of which requires a set of symbols in order

[8] Swiss philosopher and poet Jean Gebser (1905-1973) is considered to be one of the greatest thinkers of the twentieth century, along with Teilhard de Chardin and Martin Heidegger. Prior to some prominent postmodern scholars including Derrida and Foucault, Gebser explicated the postmodern world with his concept of plus-mutation, in which he explained the discontinuous nature of history (Kramer, 1992, 1997; Kramer & Mickunas, 1992; Mickunas, 1997).

to be articulated (Mickunas, 1996).[9] Gebser traces civilizational expressions and their correlative structures of consciousness across history and culture. While Gebser (1985) has shown correlations among the most diverse domains of civilizational expressions, these correlations lead Gebser to conclude that evidence supports the emergence of an additional mode of awareness, one he calls the aperspectival/integral mode

Gebser provides a means of making sense of what we express in a certain space and time. Especially, this emerging aperspectival/integrating mode helps us with explicating the *kagura*, and understanding the dualistic modern understanding as *a* mode of expression, not as the *only* mode. Gebser (1985) was confronted with how to deal with the linearity and rationality embedded in the modern dualistic mentality, with extreme manifestations of what he calls the rational consciousness. This is an important aspect that becomes relevant for our explication of the *kagura* because this aspect allows us to notice a previously unnoticed condition of ratio, or reason, that constitutes the pervasive understanding of the *kagura* within Japanese society. Ratio, for Gebser, is the driving force that reduces thoughts to material objects. Ratio is the process through which individuals rationalize various supernatural phenomena, pushing these phenomena into a certain shape—a pre-formed form of explanation that is limited. Thus, with the systasic approach we can gain a critical method of examining the dualistic mentality that creates and sustains our understanding of religion as underlying the sacred.

Gebser's aperspectival/integral mode of expressing is used to grasp the meanings and expressions of the kami; it offers a means to appreciate pre-rational modes of

[9] Although I use an English version translated by Noel Barstad and Algis Mickunas, *The Ever-Present Origin* was originally published in German in two volumes in 1949 and 1951 under the title of *Ursprung and Gegenwart*.

expressing the kami, as well as the systematic religious nature of the *kagura*. In particular, with its focus on how the *kagura* can be a divine expression, the aperspectival view offers a means to examine how explanations of sacredness become deficient and efficient in different modes of awareness, rather than treating the *kagura* as a metaphysically pre-existing property of sacredness. It also fits neatly with the mythological world in which the kami originate, and is suited to analyzing the mythical state in which the spiritual identities of the actors are central. Finally, and most important, this viewpoint illuminates how the *kagura* performance—that is, expressing the kami—actually constitutes the divinity of the kami. A systasic approach, as the second analytic line of this study, is a way of opening the black box of the divine power of expressing the kami.

Purposes of the Study

As seen above, current functional and structural approaches are confronted with modern rationality, which allows an anthropomorphist distinction to emerge between the kami and its corresponding expression. In other words, a dimensional distance emerges between signs and the kami. Functional signalization in modern rationality takes out all essential structures from religious expression and replaces them with a sum of material parts functioning in accordance with mechanical laws. Real world synergies are missing in this approach—when analyzed this way, the events do not add up to more than the sum of their parts. This leads our understanding of the *kagura* to a linear, dualistic modern metaphysics that reduces any religious activities to functional, cause-effect, stimulate-reaction calculations. Moreover, this linearity not only reveals that signalization itself is a driving force of creating such a functional view, but also brings the issue of functionality itself. While these studies evaluate the traditional values that allow people to live healthy,

mentally and physically, they ignore (or perhaps never see) that their claims are value-laden.

This dissertation, instead, explicates the expressive "contexts" of the very act of expressing the kami in the *kagura* performance. That is, this study is an attempt to bracket the modern functional understanding of the *kagura*, recognizing that this understanding is of no interest in the ontological-metaphysical status of the kami (e.g., whether the kami exist or not), because it assumes certain knowledge and social formations about how we recognize the kami as the kami. I intend to decipher the conditions that allow us to share the kami as the kami. The term "kami" here refers to an expressive condition that positions experience as a form of truth. Accordingly, the expressive conditions of the kami will be explicated in terms of how the kami is expressive and communicative in a way that allows us to make sense of them.

Gebser's idea of conscious mutation also helps us explore how the kami in these modes of awareness work to create sacred performances, exploring the art and artifice they employ to foster impressions and share experiences—not only the *kagura* but also the kami. Expression is not *expressed* but is itself *expressive* as a signifier of consciousness. Thus this approach does not claim that there is only one way to experience, express, or describe phenomena, rather, it presents the different modalities being experienced in the real world. We do not deny the scientific explanation; rather, what is problematic is the scientific rationality that seeks a single answer, excluding what cannot be measured within a particular scale. Instead, here we seek a means of revealing the different modes of awareness insofar as their manifestation will best be viewed through another method based on the mode of awareness that is the focus of a given study

at a given time. Our present task is to demonstrate how the dualistic approaches appear deficient in a specific *kagura* group, to show that linear modes of explanation are deficient. The aim is to offer the aperspectival/integral foundations to extend our understanding of expressing the kami in a way that adds further insight to the existing literature.

The present study offers a challenge to the singular, dualistic mode of discourse that reduces Japanese religious expression to a simple signalic system. The modern perspective has attempted to find the common functional and efficient purposes of folk performing arts across cultures and historical epochs. This assumption is sustained by the linear, dualistic modern metaphysics that reduces religious activities to functional, cause-effect, stimulus-response calculations, and often unrecognizable operationalizations. Revealing what sustains this reduction would open a means of "appreciating" the multiple modes of discourse (Kramer, 1993b, 2000b). In other words, it is not an attempt to deconstruct the existence of the kami; rather it is an attempt to promote appreciation of differences without restrictive discursive "engineering." This study is not a rejection of modernity, nor is it a deconstruction of modernity in a simple postmodern sense. The former rejection of premodern nostalgia without acknowledging that religion is still an important part of life, while the latter, deconstruction, forces us to see everything as relative. The purpose of this present study, instead, is twofold: 1) to offer an expressive dimension of the *kagura*, freeing it from the modern signalic sign system; and 2) to make visible the multiple modes of Japanese religious rites and discourse.

Rationale of the Study

This dissertation seeks to free our understanding of the *kagura* from the modern, rational religious sign system. More specifically, focusing on the very act of expressing the kami, this study attempts to elucidate how the kami are created and maintained through the religious expressions that constitute the *kagura* in contemporary Japanese society. *Kagura* is an attractive topic to make a contribution to the field of comparative culture, civilization, and communication studies. Not only because it challenges the reader to unfold the modern perspectival rationality in order to understand aperspectivally the divinely expressed world without denying the scientifically rationalized world, but also because, more important, this study demonstrates differences between rational and magic/mythical worlds in terms of modes of expressing and experiencing. The following rationale is used to justify this pursuit of deeper understandings of the *kagura*.

The vast majority of intercultural communication studies employ social scientific (functionalist) approach to demonstrate how culture influences communication. These studies generally assume culture as "a variable that can be measured" (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p. 48), without taking account of its spiritual aspects.[10] However, if we are to understand a culture, we must know a people's values, beliefs, motives, and expectations in order to understand and predict their behavior—behavior that is rooted in culture defined as a particular set of shared beliefs, values, motives, and expectations. Thus, the present dissertation, explicates the spiritual dimension of Japanese culture,

[10] Intercultural communication is a relatively recent discipline that can be traced to the post-World War II era, "when the United States increasingly came to dominate the world stage" (Martin & Nakayama, 2003, p. 42). See also Jiro Sakai's *A Phenomenology of Intercultural Communication* (1997) for more detailed history of the discipline.

helping us understand why they behave as they do.[11] We recognize such a spiritual dimension at the level of awareness, more specifically in terms of the Gebserian term "civilizational awareness." Consciousness and awareness need to be considered within the context of what is civilizational, since civilizational phenomena are basic ways in which we express and make sense of ourselves. Mickunas (2000) also contends that civilizational awareness can be considered to be the most basic level of awareness that refers to phenomena that encompass everything, which are neither derivable from nor reducible to particular outside variables (and operationalizations). Each civilization has its own ways to experience and articulate universality under its own logic, within which individuals tend to interpret and locate other cultures. This logic produces behaviors described as "traditions." Mickunas (2006) explains that civilizational awareness is "[a] tradition that provides an interpretation of events that allows human reality to have sense, value, ethics, and purpose—indeed a final and ultimate purpose" (p. 21).

Furthermore, while scholars in anthropology such as Edward Tylor and those he influenced directly, and James George Frazer, Franz Boas, Bronislaw Malinowski, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, Marcel Mauss, Alfred Kroeber, Robert Lowie, Edward Sapir and Ruth Benedict studied so-called "primitive" cultures, focusing on myths and rituals. However, none of these scholars took a neo-Kantian approach like that of Gebser. Gebser's neo-

[11] The term "Japanese culture" is used broadly. According to Minami (1994), there are more than 500 authors who have approached Japanese culture. Their approaches widely vary across disciplinary paradigms: anthropology (e.g., Bachnik, 1994; Benedict, 1946; Lebra, 1976); history (e.g., Yamamoto, 1971); literature (e.g., Keene, 1952; Origuchi, 2002); physiology (e.g., Tsunoda, 1985); religion (e.g., Nakamura, 1967; Suzuki, 1972; Umehara, 1993); sociology (e.g., Nakane, 1967); statistics (e.g., Hayashi, 1997; Hayashi & Kuroda, 1997; Kuroda, Hayashi, & Suzuki, 1987); history of science (e.g., Nakayama, 1995; Watanabe, 1990); folklore (e.g., Yanagita, 1975; 1988); and foreign affairs (Itoh, 1998; Tsuda, 2003), to name a few.

Kantian approach broke with the older neo-Hegelian view of culture promoted by Tylor, especially Hegel's positivism. Tylor was influenced by the evolutionary ideas of Charles Lyell and the Hegelian notion of phases of history reflected in the notion of linear spatial history articulated as cultural "progress" and "development." By stark contrast, Gebser's approach, with its emphasis on spatial and temporal variance, is radically different and continues to have a profound influence on current approaches to cultural studies, most notably the Toronto School and related scholars including E. T. Hall, Edmund Carpenter, Harold Innis, Marshal McLuhan, Walter Ong, and later writers such as James Carey.

Gebser's neo-Kantian approach to cultural study is revolutionary and remains influential in that this approach permits us to trace to the plus mutation of consciousness through expression and to reveal the sedimentary layers of consciousness. Gebser's legacy is most evident in the work of Sigfried Giedion. Giedion's two-volume work on the history of art and architecture, *The Eternal Present* (1962) is an homage to Gebser's two-volume *magnum opus*, *Ursprung und Gegenwort* (*The Ever-Present Origin*) published in two parts in Germany—Part I in 1949, and Part II in 1953. In E.T. Hall's first major work, *The Hidden Dimension* (1966), this most influential scholar of the Toronto School credits Giedion as the origin of many of his ways of thinking about culture generally and his ideas about space and time as essential cultural characteristics in particular. Thus, the Gebserian approach offers distinct advantages over traditional frameworks found in previous studies of *kagura*, which analyze one singular story of Japanese religion and its function in conventional ways.

In sum, we seek to extend our horizon of understanding of cultural/civilizational differences without subsuming them under Western modernity. As Kramer (1992)

claimed, cultural study is valued by how much it enriches our understanding of culture, rather than whether or not a neat yet meaningless typology can be developed. Consequently, the most important question as to a theory about "culture," Kramer (1992) continues, is the degree to which a given theory helps us understand and expand our horizons. Therefore, this dissertation is intended to broaden our understanding of civilizational and cultural dynamics at a more essential level—that of explicating the complexity of civilizational awareness. As Kramer and Mickunas (1992) and Mickunas (1997) contend, Gebser's work is not finished yet, but rather it has opened a new path to extend human awareness concerning various phenomena. Hence, the purpose of this study is to contribute to such a Gebserian understanding of culture and civilization.

Washinomiya Saibara Kagura

This dissertation concentrates on one particular school of *kagura*, WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, performed by a local group, *Washinomiya Saibara Kagura Hozonkai* (meaning the Washinomiya Saibara Kagura Preservation Association).[12] The association offers its *kagura* only at Washinomiya Shrine, and is known for the "one *kagura*, one shrine." Washinomiya Shrine is located in Washimiya District in Saitama Prefecture, a suburb of Tokyo.[13] The school of *kagura* is famous for its ancient religious performance done without modern entertainment elements, and continues to be performed in this way today. It is rich in style and repertoire and highly artistic in both execution and structure

[12] The official name of the school of *kagura* is the *Hajiichiryu Saibara Kagura* (土師一流催馬楽神楽). However, the name "Washinomiya Saibara Kagura" is employed when it was selected for the National Intangible Cultural Properties in 1976. Therefore this study uses the latter name. The word *washi* of Washinomiya is said to derive from the *haji*, and the *miya* means a site where the kami dwell.

[13] Washimiya District used to be Washimiya Town. The district was incorporated into Kuki City in April in 2010.

(Honda, 1990; Sakuma, 1992). WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA inherited the eclectic world view and the practices of the Shinto tradition (Honda, 1990; Kurabayashi, 1970). This school of *kagura* is particularly rich in tradition. The oldest records about the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA are found in the *Azumakagami*, a chronicle text compiled in the thirteenth century.[14] These records show that the *kagura* was performed at the shrine as far back as 1251, although there is no way to know that the documented *kagura* in the *Azumakagami* is the same as it is performed today (Kurabayashi, 1970; Sakuma, 1992). The school of *kagura* is appropriate to examine, both as a case of traditional Shinto rituals and as an important intangible cultural property, and is worthy of scholarly attention in its own right. Three reasons are particularly significant to justify scrutinizing the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA in this study: 1) WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is considered an iconic representation of expressing the kami, 2) this study involves scrutiny of one *kagura* in order to better understand all aspects, rather than studying many *kagura* in an attempt to generalize findings, and 3) this study provides an opportunity to learn about cultural preservation and transmission in general.

With respect to the first reason, while more than 4,000 schools of *kagura* are performed in Japan as of today (e.g., Saitamaken Bunkazai Hogo Kyoukai, 2004), the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is said to be the prototype of Edo Sato-Kagura[15] and this *kagura* well represents Japanese folk religious traditions, beliefs, and practices in the

[14] The *Azumakagami*, also known as the *Tokan*, is a chronicle of the Kamakura period (1180-1266). It was compiled at least after 1266, under the directive of the Hojo family and was a record in diary form, documenting events occurring in Japan during the Kamakura period.

[15] Sato-Kagura is a collective term that refers to a *kagura* form prevailing in the Edo or Kanto area (Tokyo and the surrounding area). Edo is an old term that refers to the city of Tokyo.

divine forms (Kurabayashi, 1970; Saitamakenritsu Minzoku Bunka Senta, 2002; Sakuma, 1992). WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is a highly important intangible cultural property in Japan (Akamatsu & Okuda, 1982). It was selected as a National Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property (*jyuyomukei minzoku bunkazai*) in 1976, under the provisions of the Cultural Properties Protection Law (*bunkazai hogoho*).[16] WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA was one of the first folk performing arts selected right immediately after the law was enacted. The law was enacted largely because many traditional customs and intangible arts face crises of extinction due to a shortage of successors, the aging of performers, and lifestyle changes (Morita, 1990). Not accidently, WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is still performed today, holding on to its age-old tradition of thanking the deities for their prosperity, while many schools of *kagura* incorporate modern entertainment elements from *nō* and *kabuki*.[17] We are able to access the oldest forms and styles of the expressions of the kami. As a "living tradition," WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is indicative of Japanese religious praxis and beliefs and of their pre-rational,

[16] The "folk cultural properties," according to the Japanese governmental Agency for Cultural Affairs (2006), are:

> …indispensable for understanding the transition in the daily lives of the Japanese people. They include tangible and intangible cultural properties that people of Japan have created and passed down in the course of daily life, such as manners and customs, for performing arts and folk techniques concerning food, clothing, and housing, occupation, religious faith, annual events, and other matters; and clothing, tools and implements, dwellings, and other objects used in connection with the foregoing. (p. 38)

[17] *Kabuki* and *nō* theater arts, tea ceremony, flower arrangement, and so forth date from the medieval era and gained popularity in the Edo period. Japanese foods are even more recent. The *sukiyaki* only became common with the widespread consumption of beef and eggs in the Meiji era, and tempura and sushi dating back to the Edo era (Sasaki, 1991, p. 14-16). Rice has been of great importance to the Japanese ever since the Yayoi period. This importance is not only dietary but also in political, cultural, and spiritual manners (Hudson, 1999). The Japanese have only been a "rice-eating people" since World War II; before they shall rather be described as "a people who prayed for rice" or the *beishoku higan minzoku* (Watanabe, 1993, p. 150).

religious expressions. More important, this living tradition serves a basis for revealing the deficiency of the modern dualistic approach when applied to the kami.[18]

Second, schools of *kagura* are performed locally as an offering to the local kami. The *kagura* is not a nationally singular form; rather, it is a locally manifested form of expression. Although many expressions of the kami are common throughout Japan, the kami need a local community to make themselves present to that community. Many scholars have attempted to collect as many local expressions as possible to generalize and categorize the kami (Hashimoto, 1989; Yamaji, 1994). These attempts perspectivally explain the kami by dividing them into parts, but these studies do not explain how the kami are specifically experienced and expressed. Therefore, this study explores one locally-specific *kagura*.

Finally, among many schools of *kagura*, WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is a rare case in which *kagura* skills and techniques have been kept through the members' oral traditions during hundreds of years. WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA's oral traditions are still the main means of transmitting the knowledge and skills of the performance across generations. They are not an old, backward group that does not use written forms or visual media to keep the record and transmit the performances, but rather they avoid written forms because they are not adequate to capture the essences of the performances. Written documents might preserve the forms and manners of the *kagura*, however, without understanding the essences of the performances, it is difficult

[18] Tradition is a risky term because it implies the need for preservation before deliberating what is preserved. It is an arbitrary act of "fixing" something at one point in time and space. Alternatively, we need to deal with the *kagura* in terms of a "living" tradition. Furthermore, archeological studies reveal that many Japanese traditions orignated in relatively recent periods. Tradition is a phenomenon created through a process of what historians call the "invention of tradition" (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983).

to maintain its divine nature. And, once we lose the essence, written documents are not helpful in bringing the intangible experiences back into the present. Hence, studying WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA enables us to add valuable insight to the debates surrounding the preservation and transmission of intangible cultural property through a careful examination of those that are directly involved in such a property.

Fieldwork

Throughout this dissertation, the reader will be introduced to a group of *kagura* performers. This study is based mainly on fieldwork on the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA group, conducted from October 2008 to January 2010. Prior to the 15-month-long fieldwork activities, in order to implement the methodological procedure, I conducted preliminary research for a year, culminating in the prospectus. I have become acquainted with the group members, and the president of the association has allowed me to pursue data during the preliminary research period. Fieldwork on Shinto rituals is especially time-consuming—one year of data collection was originally planned, based on the assumption that all the major events of interest in a community would have occurred at least once during the course of a year. However, the field work was extended to 15 months to allow time for adequate data to be gathered.

The fieldwork was completed in these steps: First, I contacted a member of the group who manages the website of the *kagura* group.[19] He asked me to come watch the practice and during that time he introduced me to the president of the group. I explained my purpose in general terms and asked him to permit me to join every offering and practice. Then on the following *matsuri* day (a day when all the members gather to offer

[19] The website (http://www.geocities.jp/washinomiya_kagura/index.html) offers a brief overview of Washinomiya Saibara Kagura, schedule for the performances, etc.

the *kagura*), I was given a chance to explain my study and to ask them to allow me to conduct the study. At that time I promised them confidentiality and asked them to please inform me if there was ever a time when they preferred that I not observe them (No one ever made this request). Once my proposal was approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Oklahoma (IRB Number: 12292; Date: September 29, 2008), I gave each of them informed consent forms with my name and telephone number, in the event that they wished to ask additional questions.

The *kagura* group is not representative of all voluntary groups of *kagura*. Each local *kagura* group is unique, and the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA group is no exception. It is a group of ordinary people who at the same time are special representatives the human world entrusted to make offerings to the kami. The members include 11 *kagurashi* or *kagura* performers who voluntarily perform and preserve the *kagura*. They are 25 to 82 years old. The group in general was extremely warm and respectful toward me. Early on in my observation, however, only a few members showed welcoming gestures. My status as an out-of-country doctoral student may have been a barrier to being included in the activities of the *kagura* group. However, after a few months, I experienced a transition from being an outside observer to being a part of the environment. Around that time I was allowed to join the group in nearly all their activities, including those occurring in the dressing room. During subsequent visits the *kagurashi* have spoken and acted openly in my presence.

Three types of group activities were observed. Through participation observation and informal interviews, data was gathered on 1) official *kagura* performances, 2)

members' practices, and 3) public lessons sponsored by the shrine and the local government.

First, the association officially stages the *kagura* at the *kaguraden* or the special stage for the *kagura* at the shrine on the Shinto *matsuri* days (six times a year): New Year's Matsuri (January 1); Lunar New Year's Matsuri (February 14); Spring Matsuri (April 10); Summer Matsuri (July 31); Autumn Matsuri (October 10); and the *Tori* Matsuri (the first *tori* day of December).[20] The performance usually starts at 11:00 am and finishes at 3:00 pm. I spent the time with the *kagurashi* while they engaged in their usual habits and routines, I watched and listened to them in their usual surroundings, conducted informal interviews, and encouraged the *kagurashi* to teach me about the *kagura* from their points of view, and at a time convenient for them.

The second activity I observed was practice sessions. Members of the association practiced their performances for approximately two hours once or twice a week at the *kaguraden* at Washinomiya Shrine. In the practices, skilled *kagurashi* basically give young *kagurashi* lessons. They practice the *kagura* on a regular basis, because the older members must produce successors. I observed their practices, especially in terms of how older *kagurashi* communicated about *kagura* techniques and meanings. During practices, for example, dancing in uncounted time becomes problematic for young *kagurashi*. When learning the *kagura*, they become confused about the number of steps to take and how many times they go around on stage. This unbounded, uncountable, and

[20] It is significant that the *tori* (chichen) serves as a symbol of the creator kami. In many shrines in Japan, the *tori* is considered a sacred bird. It has been considered a messenger of the kami from ancient times, for the *tori*, it is widely believed, participated in the ancient ritual in front of the Heavenly Rock Cave. This indicates the connection to the *Kojiki* mythological story (*Amano iwato biraki*; see Chapter 2 for more details).

immeasurable *kagura* world comes to make sense only through intense concentration and practice after practice.

Soon after I began to observe these practices, I began to notice communicative aspects of the practice sessions, specifically the ways of explaining, teaching, learning, and questioning are quite useful in understanding the *kagura* world. I compiled fieldnotes of their conversations and habits during the practices. I also conducted informal interviews whenever soothe opportunity arose.

While attending their *kagura* practice, I tried to minimize my disruption of the usual flow of events by acting as an engaged, yet neutral participant. I spoke as little as possible during the practice sessions. However, before and after the practices, I attempted to talk to the members whenever possible, and listened to and observed them interacting with each other at every opportunity. In participant observation, the participation enables the observation. Participant observation—the act of simultaneously participating in and systematically observing human behavior (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2005)—indeed offers the best opportunity to watch how a local *kagura* group expresses the kami and how the group collectively shapes its kami performances.

The third activity observed was the two-hour *kagura* lesson offered to the public twice a month, sponsored by the Department of Cultural Affairs at the city government (Washimiya District) and by Washinomiya Shrine. The main purpose of these lessons is to introduce the *kagura* to the public. Skilled *kagurashi* teach participants how to perform the *kagura* at the most basic level. I joined the lessons and watched how *kagurashi* teach participants. Because the languages and manners used in the lessons are slightly different from those used only among the *kagurashi*, the lessons were good opportunities to know

the *kagura* at a more basic level. These participants are not the members of the association, therefore it should be noted that I did not use any data obtained from the lessons in this dissertation. Rather I joined the lessons because there were many chances to talk with and observe the members.

How the *kagura* can be a religious act in the contemporary Japanese society is the initial question I had at the outset of this study. The *kagura* performances are observed and read with the help of the *kagurashi*. I also obtained special language and communicative activities shared by the members not only in the performances and practices but also in their conversations. Interviewing members of the association was designed to obtain their worldviews and ways of thinking and to gain the knowledge of the *kagura* performances in detail, how the *kagura* group thinks of the *kagura*, and how they organize their understanding. The following questions were central to the interviews: What is the *kagura* to you? Why do you believe it is important to perform the *kagura*? What is it to become the kami during the performances?

Briefly the following steps were taken. The first step of ethnography is to document a set of language, behavior, and beliefs shared in the group with a clear description of who exactly is included in that group. This step includes understanding the language of the people as well as documenting the language for its own sake (Philipsen & Coutu, 2005). The second step is the analysis of the data collected. Geertz (1973) defines analysis as "the sorting out of structures of signification and determining their social ground and import" (p. 9). In other words, the researcher must figure out what it all means and decide which parts are the most interesting to examine in detail (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2005). It is also important to understand the meanings people attribute to the

communication they conduct (Philipsen & Coutu, 2005). In this sense, we need to deliberate particular "contexts" or "modes" of expressing because understanding human expression always requires an understanding of the context in which the expression occurs. Basically, the goal is to learn everything that the group members must know in order to interpret the expression appropriately. It includes the historical background, the impact of time and place, the nature of participants, their crucial relationships, and how the actual participants understand the expressions.

Several methods are used to supplement participant observation, including the most common methods of audiotaping, videotaping, taking detailed fieldnotes to document behavior, and in-depth interviewing. A wide range of other qualitative and even quantitative methods are used to collect the data in order to understand a given group of people in a natural setting (Briggs, 1986; Leeds-Hurwitz, 2005; Philipsen & Coutu, 2005). Briggs (1986) especially makes a strong statement that participant observers ought to use recording devices if they are going to use conversations as an indicator of the meaning of a culture. However, I did not record conversations or the interviews. To be sure, not tape recording all of the conversations would limit the richness of the analysis I can conduct. Nevertheless, I chose not to use a tape recorder throughout the observations for fear that it would create distance between the members and me that was potentially more detrimental than a the risk of inaccuracy in fieldnotes. To record what I observed, instead, I composed field notes during and immediately after my participant observation and informal interviews with the group. I took detailed notes on the *kagura* performances and reconstructed as much of their communications as I could recall, focusing on the conversations occurring during the *kagura* practice. In

general, my field notes are abridged versions of the actual conversations, and capture the gist, tone, and basic language of their stories. I managed to record much of the original wording of their conversations.

I attempted to bolster the validity of my conclusions in the observation portion of the study in a variety of ways. One way was to simply ask the participants directly about the involvement in their group. Another was the use of informal interviewing to gauge their individually offered attitudes and perceptions of the *kagura*. Finally, I attempted to validate stories and interpretations of the way "the community" used to be, using histories and historical documents about WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA in particular and *kagura* and Japanese religion in general (such as maps, newspapers, and documentaries and biographies complied by several institutions). I checked such things as whether religious expressions are distinctive to the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, to the *kagura* in general, or to Japanese religion.

Fieldwork is appropriate to obtain the data for this present study for the following reason. Resulting from fieldwork, the ethnography of communication provides us with a basis of data collection to examine communication phenomena. It is designed to offer description, analysis, and comparisons that signify "what people in a particular group do and say," "how they understand, and how they organize their understandings," and "what meaning people attribute to behavior" (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2005, p. 336). More specifically, speech community, speech event, and speech act are central to describe human behavior, and to discover the patterns of meaning particular behaviors have for the members of a cultural group. Patterns of communication are interpreted as culturally manifested speech acts; languages are interpreted as an understandable and recognizable form of cultural

manifestation. These interpretations involve the discovery of cultural manifestations. Thus fieldwork and ethnographies of communication permit us to conduct a detailed analysis, sensitive to nuances of meaning and the complexity of, in this case, the *kagura* performance. Furthermore, ethnography allows us to contribute a general understanding of how such particulars of communication and culture might be apprehended and formulated in any given case. According to Philipsen and Coutu (2005):

> To situate speaking in the social life and cultural system of a particular speech community suggests a commitment to the possibility that there are, in any given place and time, locally distinctive means for, and way of organizing communicative conduct, and that these ways implicate a culturally distinctive system of meanings pertaining to communicative conduct itself. (p. 355)

Acts of speaking are situated acts that occur in the context of the communicative events of a speech community. Speech community is the term used in the ethnography of speaking to designate the social unit that forms the starting point of the ethnographic study of communication in a given case.

Outline of the Study

The bulk of this dissertation applies the phenomenological and Gebserian approaches to reveal the *kagura* in its "deficient" mode and to disclose what constitutes the modern understanding of the kami. In the present Chapter 1, have described the scope and outline of the study, providing the domains, purposes, and rationales this study draws on and seeks.

Chapter 2 provides two theoretical and methodological domains beyond the current functional studies of the *kagura*. Prevailing studies of religion assume that

religion is a fixed form of concepts, beliefs, and forms of life, but they do not frequently examine the power of religious expression to effectuate religious meanings. Forms of communication and their corresponding ways of experiencing vary across modes of awareness. In Chapter 2, I first trace the literature of the *kagura*, and then explain the two lines of study offered herein. Especially I argue that expressing the kami is an act manifested in a given speech community and that the religious meanings we see in interpretations of religious expressions are not innate, but instead, are manifested through the structures of consciousness. The aims of the chapter are to explicate the current theoretical and methodological problems of modern understandings of communication, and to build phenomenological and Gebserian theoretical domains in order to more adequately explain the act of expressing the kami. Research questions are provided at the end of Chapter 2.

Chapter 3 provides a descriptive overview of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA. It includes its geography, history, Shinto *matsuri*, characteristics of the performances, theatrical devices (*kagura* setting, stage, costume, sacred props, and musical devices), and so on. This chapter sets the stage for the heart of the analyses in the following chapters by examining how the *kagura*, including all the aspects of their presentations and performances, brings its performance to the Shinto religious stage. This chapter clarifies the terminology for subsequent chapters.

Chapter 4 offers an ethnographic description of the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA to demonstrate the communicative dimensions of the *kagura*. Performing the *kagura* is communicative in nature, shaping the shared *kagura* world among the *kagura* group. I especially argue how a group develops the shared expressions of the kami. The

shared experience is central in the way the *kagura* performance and worldviews of the members are shaped, clarified, and enacted. Specifically, observation of when and how the group of *kagura* performers clarifies a shared accepted form of the kami suggests that the group communicates about the *kagura* not in specific concepts but in sharing a horizon of the kami.

Offering a detailed description of one particular dance, the *ukihashi,* as one of the representative programs of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, Chapter 5 conducts a systasic analysis to open to full view the act of expressing the kami in various modes of awareness and their expressivities in terms of aspatial-atemporal-arational multidimensionality. The purpose of the chapter is to decipher how different modes of awareness constitute the meanings of the kami. Detailed analysis of the *kagura* also helps illustrate how the *kagura* appear deficient in the modern, perspectival milieu and demonstrate the ways the past modes of awareness continue to play an important role in our current modes of awareness. At the end of Chapter 5, I conclude that the *kagura* is not a simply preserved cultural property in the perspectival sense, but rather, it is an ever-present origin, the origin that intensifies the present and that recreates the past as well as constructing views of the future.

In the final chapter, I summarize the findings and discuss these findings in terms of how we can best challenge the modern dualistic perspective that reduces the *kagura* performance to a mere functional sequence of acts.

CHAPTER 2

Expressing the Kami: Theoretical and Methodological Foundations

This dissertation involves fieldwork on WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA in order to challenge the currently dominant, singular understanding of Japanese religion and *kagura*. While the currently existing studies reduce folk performing arts (including the *kagura*) to the most reducible religious behavior that is ultimately recognized as a religious function and purpose, they do not examine the very idea of "expressing" by which the sacred is created, maintained, and transmitted.[21] For these reasons, this chapter builds a basis of how we can study the *kagura* as a form of expression and how we can challenge the dominant functional understanding of the *kagura*. The task is twofold: (1) to review the current studies on Japanese religion and folk performing arts, particularly the *kagura*; and (2) to theoretically and methodologically utilize the two approaches—phenomenological and systasis. At the end of each approach, I postulate the research questions to be addressed in subsequent chapters. The aims of this chapter are to explicate the current theoretical and methodological problems of modern understanding of an expressing act, and to build both the phenomenological and systasic foundations in order to more fully explain the *kagura* and the *kagura* group.

[21] Communication has been defined as related to the two contrasting views—transmission and ritual—throughout the history of Western thought (Carey, 1989). While the transmission view characterizes communication as "a process whereby messages are transmitted and distributed in space for the control of distance and people" (p. 15), the ritual view attempts to capture communication within the contexts of such "archaic" concepts as "sharing," "participation," "association," "fellowship" and "the possession of a common faith" (Carey, 1989, p. 18). In this sense, this study takes the latter view. However, James Carey's notion of ritual communication can be traced back to Jean Gebser's thought (see Chapter 1).

The Kami, *Kagura*, and Expression: A Review of the Literature

Background of Japanese Religion, Kami, and Kagura

Religion in Japan is shamanic in nature (Kitagawa, 1966, 1987). In ancient Japan, Shinto ritual practices were present in many daily activities. Until recently Shinto practices tended to reflect, at various levels, social, political, and economic realities.[22] Japanese typically assume that they live in a "seamless world" infused with the kami spirit (Earhart, 1984), therefore, the Western dichotomy between the sacred and the profane (*sei* and *zoku*) leads us to misunderstand when we approach the kami in a dualistic manner. Averbuch (1995) also notes that there is no word for "sacred" in the Japanese vernacular, and the meaning of "sacred" translates best to the kami itself. Therefore, the sacred (the kami) often means great fun in Japan, and is used as a description of the divine nature and celebratory quality of an event, a character, a deity and of existence itself. In this sense, the sacred (the kami) are not the opposite of the profane, as claimed by Rudolf Otto and Emile Durkheim. Ama (2005) also argues that it is impossible to simply apply the Western dichotomy of the scared/profane particularly to pre-modern Japan because the sacred dominated and guided their daily lives and activities.

[22] Japanese religion is a politically collective term used herein to refer to the religions in Japan. Although my review of the literature deals with the general aspects of the religion, there are a variety of religions across Japan. The local religions are called the *minkan shinko* or folk religion, which describes "local customs and beliefs, daily or annual rituals and festivals, most of which have no written doctrine or organization but are practiced locally by individuals and communities throughout Japan" (Miyake, 1972, p. 122). Japanese folk religion is an indigenous religion into which Shinto and Buddhism have been incorporated. Miyake (1972) articulates, "It is within the frame of reference provided by folk religion that the organized religious have made their way into Japanese society" (p. 122).

In the articulation of the kami in Shinto, any terms referring to "teachings" are not employed because the kami are not something that can be taught with canons or doctrines (Uno, 2002). Rather the Japanese easily find the kami dwelling in all things in the universe and accept the natural world as an expression of the kami. To varying degrees of intensity, mountain and water (watersheds, rivers, rain, etc.) are the most sacred (Origuchi, 2002; Yanagita, 1942). The sun, moon, and storm deities, all closely related to agriculture, are also highly ranked (Honda, 1966). Averbuch (1995) states that "the kami reside in and are natural phenomena" (p. 4).

The kami, which are sprung from Japanese mythology, have also been accepted. These indigenous mythological legends are deeply embedded in the minds of the Japanese and the proliferation of stories (Tanigawa, 1999). Moreover, the Japanese are also inspired by handicapped humans and animals and, in modern times, even inanimate objects such as industrial robots. Moriarty (1972) points out:

> [The kami] are infinitely numerous, and constantly increase in number. These gods all make up a union, and are united in peace and harmony. The beings which are called kami include everything from the spirits encharged with the creation and activatizing of heaven and earth, the great ancestors of men, to all things in the universe, even plants, rocks, birds, beasts and fish. (p. 91)

When the kami are humanized, the following four types of the kami (*gami* when it occurs in a compound word) can be recognized: ancestral deity (the *ujigami*), shamanistic or charismatic personality (the *hitogami*),[23] visiting deities or saints (the *hijiri-marebito*),

[23] Those who left their marks on Japanese history and culture are worshipped at famous shrines; Nakatomi no Kamatari (614-69) and Prince Naka no Oe (626-71) who founded the modern Japanese state in 645, after having a flight against the Soga—the *taikano*

and malevolent spirit of a person who dies away from home as a result of violence, grudge, or other unnatural causes (the *goryo*) (Hori, 1968; Plutschow, 1996). The kami are believed to have the ambivalent nature of the *ara/niki*, according to the ancient texts; the *ara* refers to the wild, unpolished, and natural, while the *niki* means the civilized, orderly aspects of experience. The beneficent and maleficent potential derives from their contacts with the living. If people fail to worship the kami in the "right" and pleasing ways, the kami would turn malevolent and cause natural disasters and social disharmony. Once the kami become malevolent, they will not change unless people ritually change their natures. In this sense, there are no absolutely evil kami. Anybody who did wrong in life can be the kami to be worshipped in Japan when he/she dies.

The kami protect the Japanese from disasters, bring an everlasting peace, and lead them to better lives, which is ultimately recognized as Shinto. The word "Shinto" first appeared in the *Nihonshoki*, compiled in 720. The word is originally from the Chinese term *Shentao* 神道, which is made up of two kanji or Chinese characters: the shin "神" (gods or spirits) and the tou "道" (a philosophical way or path). As such, Shinto is commonly translated into "the way of the kami" in English. The way of kami means the way of being with the kami, the way in which the Japanese accept the kami's will. The word *inori* (pray for the kami) is derived from the Chinese character "祈," which originally referred to "accept the kami's will" (Origuchi, 2002). If one disobeys the kami's will, one would have disaster and misfortune. If one obeys the kami's will, the

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kaishin—at Tanzan shrine; Minamoto no Yoriyoshi (995-1082) and Yoshiie (1041-1108), founders of a prominent military clan, at Shima shrine; Minamoto no Yoritomo (1123-1160) at Kamakura's Shirahata Shrine; Oda Nobunaga (1534-82) at Kyoto Takeisao shrine; Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-98) at Kyoto Toyokuni shrine; Tokugawa Leyasu (1542-1616) at Nikko Toshogun shrine; Emperor Meiji (1852-1912) at Tokyo Mieji Jingu shrine, to name a few.

kami would bring them the *gokoku houjyou* (good harvest of rice), peace and prosperity. Thus, the Japanese seek to live as the kami orders. Picken (2002) claims,

> The religious traditions of Japan, particularly Shinto, remain alive in habits of thought and behavior rather than in a formal way. People visit shrines at times like New Year and on special occasions within the cycle of life's events. There is less general discussion of religious ideas and a minimal history of religious controversy as compared to the West. (p. *xxvii*)

Furthermore, Shinto is neither a fixed nor independent religious form. There is no singular idea of Shinto except in political (especially modern) and metaphysical ideologies. Instead, Shinto is a collective term used to refer to local kami with which the Japanese live in their everyday lives (Sakurai, 1984).[24] Shinto indeed became identifiable when Buddhism was introduced to Japan from China in the sixth century (Ama, 2007; Tanigawa, 1997), and became recognized as a folk or indigenous religion (Averbuch, 1995). The kami are local first, before they are identified as an ideological, singular religious form of Shinto.

The kami in Japan are worshiped in the presence of their symbols, or later in shrines (Tanigawa, 1999). The oldest shrines are located in places that inspire awe and wonder in their observers, such as waterfalls or in mountains that convey a sense of power; most shrines were built under the *Ritsuryo* System (8^{th} to 10^{th} centuries), in which the Imperial Court regulated the folk rituals as tools to maintain imperial stability. In

[24] Encounters with different religion such as Buddhism and Taoism have reshaped what Shinto looks like. In Japan, indeed, the terms like "Shinto," "Buddhism," and "Taoism" do not refer to monolithic wholes, but rather they are hardly differentiated one from another. The conventions and practices of these schools of thought and/or faith are sometimes used interchangeably (Inagaki, 1988).

gaining and maintaining imperial stability, leaders required shrines be located as the "fixed" places under the Buddhist influence relatively later in history (Okada, 1985). Before building shrines, ancient Japanese began to identify certain places and natural objects as the houses of the kami, and offered foods to the objects, often at midnight. In order to separate what is sacred, such as special trees and rocks or mountains, from normal (i.e., non-sacred) surroundings, the Japanese hung a *shimenawa* (sacred rope) around the objects, a piece of whitepaper strips signifying a divine presence. Every sacred place with such ropes indicates a divine presence (Ama, 2007). Such arrangements are called the *yorishiro* (place of divine descent). These *yorishiro* later became the shrines. Among the shrines, the *yama-miya* (mountain shrines) and the *sato-miya* (village shrines) were especially important as indications of the permanent house or a constant place of divine descent.

Rather than Western forms of logic and conceptualization, Japanese religious beliefs were exercised in the annual cycle of seasonal *matsuri* (Iwata, 1988; Moriarty, 1972).[25] While the *matsuri* means "festival" or "divine worship," the term implies gathering and having fun with the kami. During the *matsuri*, the kami are invited to a celebratory communal feast with human worshippers. The religious belief in ancient Japan was formed, shared, and transferred as the experiences of the kami on the *matsuri*.

Another relevant point is that religious festivals (*matsuri*) and governing (*matsuri-goto*) were inseparable. The blurring of divine and human realms did not differentiate religion from politics in the ancient court (Kitagawa, 1987). Thus, the emperor was ruler,

[25] Today the term *maturi* is used in many ways including movie festivals and school festivals, however the Japanese consciously and unconsciously know there is a distinct difference between them.

highest priest, and "living kami." The *matsuri* has three purposes: 1) to entertain the kami, 2) to make known the kami's will, and 3) to serve that will (Honda, 1966). As the term *Shinto* (ways of the kami) implies, what was important in ancient Japanese religion was following the way of the kami, that is, to live according to the kami's wills. This does not mean that the Japanese surrendered to the kami; rather, they hoped to be *with* the kami, and could thereby purify themselves and gain magical powers.

During the *matsuri*, the Japanese sing, dance, and recite the *norito* "祝詞" (oracle) as ways of effectuating and strengthening their relationships with the kami.[26] These expressions that summon the kami effectuate the shamanic and magical power, and are known as the *kagura*. At the climax of the mythological original Shinto *matsuri*, the *kagura* was offered to the kami (Yanagita, 1942). This is called the "dance of deities" (e.g., Aston, 1905; Averbuch, 1998; Sadler, 1970). The *kagura* is a performance through which the Japanese can become the kami in order to show their sacredness to the kami. Nishitsunoi (1990) argues that the *kagura* is a *chinkon* (spirit-pacification) rite that effectuates the magical power beyond human control, by giving the kami a human face and personality and by forcing them to behave according to human desire and interest. Thus many scholars (e.g., Honda, 1966, 1969; Ishizuka, 1979; Nishitsunoi, 1934; Yanagita, 1942) argue that the *matsuri* is synonymous to the *kagura*. The *kagura* is, indeed, discussed as a ceremonial ritual that brings together humans and deities. Thus, the

[26] The *norito* is one of the most fundamental terms that sustain the system of ancient Japan. It refers to words addressed to the kami in the most appropriate manner. The Shinto priest recites the *norito* on behalf of the faithful. It was believed that beautiful, correct words brought about good, and that words of the opposite sort caused evil (Origuchi, 2002). The *matsuri* is the ritual during which the *norito* is recited, and serves the kami in order to embody the kami's will. The *norito* is recited by the *mikotomochi* (the priest), who addresses the *mikoto* (the orders of the kami). In this sense, the *matsuri*'s essence is the attempt to serve the kami's will in order to embrace and embody the *mikoto*.

kagura is the original ancient shamanic ritual in Japan, and simply itself a ceremony (Honda, 1969), and the original divine *kagura* is believed to have been performed in the Heavenly Plain, an imaginary place in Japanese mythologies (Nishitsunoi, 1934).

According to believers, Japanese traditional dances such as *kabuki* and *nō* resulted from the same source: the original *kagura* performance in heaven (Averbuch, 1995; Gorai, 1995; Nishitsunoi, 1934; Sugiyama & Fujima, 1937). The *kagura* is as ancient as the deities in the mythologies, and preserves the most ancient shamanic aspects of native religion (Honda, 1996; Nishitsunoi, 1934). The term *kagura* (神楽) was labeled relatively late for the ancient imperial ritual of the *chinkon* or *tamashizume* "鎮魂," both of which literally refer to the spirit-pacification rite. The term is a contracted form of the *kamukura* (神座) or the seat for the kami; it is also sometimes called "the house of the kami" (Honda, 1966, 1969, 1996; Kurabayashi, 1970). It implies the presence of the kami in the *kagura* performance, or the performance itself as the dwelling place of the kami. Ashihara (1965) describes the *kagura* as:

> …an invocation to a deity with its earliest forms in which performers could become possessed by the power of the deity and thereby enter into a trance-like state of mythical communion with the deities. (p. 135)

Although most *kagura* performances today seem to have lost their original association with shamanic trance, they are still performed as a part of religious and efficacious rites.

Kagura as Mythological Stories

While the word *kagura* (神楽) appeared first in the court records in 885 and again in 889, scholars commonly trace the origin of the *kagura* to the mythological age of the gods (Nishitsunoi, 1934). The composition of the *kagura* is based on the mythologies in

the *kiki shinwa*, two ancient collections: the *Kojiki* (complied in 712), and the *Nihonshoki* (complied in 720). These are stories of the emergence and establishment of the ancient kingdom of Japan.[27]

The original *kagura* is attributed to the myth of "Opening the Rock-Cave Door" (*Amano iwato biraki* 天岩戸開き) recorded in the *kiki shinwa*. The myth describes the performance by the heavenly god *Ame-no-Uzume* to persuade the sun goddess *Amaterasu-Omikami* to come out of the cave where she had hidden herself. *Amaterasu-Omikami* was hiding in the cave because she was angered by the naughty pranks of her ill-behaved brother, Susanoo. When the *Amaterasu Omikami* was in the cave, the whole world was engulfed in darkness, and life was threatened. The *yaoyorozuno kami* (myriads of deities) gathered in the heavenly riverbed and conducted a complex rite aimed at luring *Amaterasu* out. They sang like the birds, and made sounds of the *sasa* (young bamboo) and the *suzu* (bell). At the rite, the goddess *Ame-no-Uzume* performed a shamanic dance. The *Kojiki* describes the scene as follows:

> Ame-no-uzume-no-mikoto [*Ame-no-Uzume*] bound up her sleeves with a cord of heavenly Pi-kage vine, bound together bundles of sasa leaves to hold in her hands, and overturning a bucket before the heavenly rock-cave door, stomped resoundingly upon it. Then she became divinely possessed (*Kamu-gakari*), exposed her breasts, and pushed her skirt-band down to her genitals. Then

[27] In Japanese mythology, the origin of Japan is traced in the myth of *Izanagi* (male-who-invites) and *Izamami* (female-who-invites). From the primeval oily ocean mass, a reed-like substance emerged, which became a deity, and simultaneously two other divine being appeared. After a period of unmeasured time, a pair of gods was finally created—*Izanagi* and *Izanami*. According to the *Kojiki*, *Izanami* died after giving birth to the fire *kami* and was consigned to the land of *Yomi*, which might mean a netherworld, comparable to the Hades of Greek mythology (Bernstein, 2006).

> Takama-no-para [the Heavenly Plain] was shocked as the eight-hundred myriad deities laughed at once. Then Ama-terasu-opo-mi-kami, thinking this strange, opened a crack in the heavenly rock-cave door… (Philippi, trans, 1968, p. 81-85).

When *Amaterasu Omikami* heard the myriad of deities laughing at *Ame-no-Uzume*'s dance, she was curious to she opened the door a little bit and asked *Ame-no-Uzume* about her singing and dancing (*asobi*). Then, the myriad of deities used the mirror to trick *Amaterasu* into thinking that a sun deity greater than herself had appeared in the heavens. They pulled her out of the cave and life returned to the universe.

The *Nihonshoki* text describes *Ame-no-Uzume's* dance as the *wazaogi*, instead of the description of the *asobi* in the *Kojiki*:

> Ama no Uzume no Mikoto, ancestress of the Sarume no Kimi, took in her hand a spear wreathed with Eulalia grass, and stood before a mimic dance (*waza ogi*). She took, moreover, the true *Sakaki* tree of the Heavenly Mount Kagu, and made of it a headdress, she took club-moss and made of it braces, she kindled fires, she placed a tub bottom upwards, and gave forth a divinely-inspired utterance. (Aston, trans, 1972, p. 44)

Although there are slight differences in these two descriptions of *Ame-no-uzme'*s dance—the *asobi* in the *Kojiki* and the *wazaogi* in the *Nihonshoki*—both portray her dance in a trance state. The *Kojiki* uses the Chinese character "楽," for the *asobi*, which refers to "music and dance" or "pleasure." The *Nihonshoki*, on the other hand, employs the Chinese character "俳優" meaning "inviting the spirits," or "a mimic dance." These

meanings derived from the words *asobi* and *wazaogi* constitute our understanding of the *kagura* today: music and dance, pleasure, mimicry of deity, etc.[28]

Thus, the *kagura* is the *chinkon* rite to pacify and rejuvenate the angry spirit of *Amaterasu Omikami* (Hoff, 1978). In ancient Japan, both spirit-pacification and rejuvenation were achieved by means of songs and dances, and held by the Asobibe clan, a special professional clan-guild in charge of *asobi* performances (songs and dances) (Hoff, 1978; Honda, 1969; Origuchi, 1991).[29] The Asobibe were the reciters of myths and believed to transmit divine power. Even today, the special *chinkon* rite (often called the *chinkon-sai*) is still held for *Amaterasu Omikami*'s descendants, the Emperors of Japan (Origuchi, 2002). This rite is conducted in the Court annually on the 24th day of the 11th month as part of the *nenjyugyouji* or annual Shinto rituals.[30] These rites are achieved by means of the *kamigakari* or possession-trance and the resulting special kami words such as the *norito* and the *takusen* (Origuchi, 2002).

Kagura as Folk Performing Arts

"Dance" is a common term to describe the communication form of *kagura* (e.g., Averbuch, 1995, 1998; Moriarty, 1972; Plutschow, 1996; Royce, 1977). However, the Western term "dance" is apparently inadequate to describe the *kagura*. In many languages, more than one word is used to describe what is called "dance" in English. In Japan, two different words are used—*mai* and *odori*, to refer to different types of dance.

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[28] Origuchi (1991) also contends that *kagura* used to be called the *kamiasobi*, which meant "music and dance."

[29] Also, the Nakatomi and Imibe clans were the prominent ancestors who conducted these *kotodama* rituals and gained much political power in the Heian period (794-1192).

[30] Several *nenjyugyoji* are still conducted throughout the year in Japan. For example, a New Year's ritual to rejuvenate the spirit of the sun goddess *Amaterasu-Omikami* is one; it is believed *Amaterasu-Omikami* was in danger of losing her vitality during the low point of the winter solstice (Raz, 1981).

The *mai* refers to dance in circular movement, while the *odori* means to dance in verticals (Origuchi, 2002).[31] In addition, the word *minyo* means both folk song and folk dance. Indeed, the word *kagura* includes a great variety of folk music, dances, and theater performed during folk festivals. The folk performing arts combine artistic and spiritual dimensions into functional ritual events (Thornbury, 1995). Finding so many local performances still playing, Davis (1977) claims, "In Japan, the little tradition is the great tradition" (p. 6).

In contrast to Western dancing, the *kagura* may be described as "downward oriented" or "earthbound" (Averbuch, 1995). Western dancing often involves attempts to defy the laws of gravity by soaring upward and hovering, the *kagura* performer seems to be pumping his/her body out of the earth and redirecting his energy into it. This effect is largely due to the *ashi-koshi* posture, in which the hips are fixed, unmoving and low. Even when leaping high, this downward orientation prevails; the dancer lands low, into a kneeling position, as if with his whole body. The *kagura* high leaps are not an attempt to defy the pull of the earth, but rather a powerful magical device to pacify the earth by the *kagurashi*'s impact (as with the magical stomping described above). In its general earth-bound orientation, this *kagura* stands prominently in the lineage of traditional Japanese dancing style.

Minzoku geinou is a recently coined term equivalent to "folk performing arts" that has been in use for only about 30 years, after Honda Yasuji, the father of the *minzoku geinou*, who built a scholarly field on the folk arts and coined the term. Honda's (1966) well-cited typology of *minzoku geinou* identifies three major types of folk performing

[31] *Mai* is derived etymologically from *mawaru* (go around) and is originally from spinning dances. In Okinawa, what is *mai* in the rest of Japan is referred to as *odori*.

arts: (1) *kagura*, aimed at revitalizing human and divine life; (2) *dengaku*, aimed at promoting the fertility of fields; and (3) *furyu*, aimed at preventing calamities and diseases (Honda, 1966). These distinctions, however, have appeared only recently. The term *kagura* is indeed a collective term for the most ancient genre of folk performing arts, yet its rich mythological tradition gives it the top position in any categorizations. Originally *kagura* was a divine activity that combined these genres. These distinctions probably became identifiable when festival performances were specialized and professionalized (Nishitsunoi, 1990). At today's festivals, *dengaku* and *furyu* are often juxtaposed with the *kagura*.

While more than 4,000 schools of *kagura* are preserved and still performed today across Japan (Saitamaken Bunkazai Hogo Kyoukai, 2004), they are mainly categorized into two types: *mi-kagura* and *sato-kagura*. While the former is performed in the Imperial Palace and its shrines, the latter is so-called "folk kagura" performed at every local place—and it is these local *kagura* that are the concern of this study. Honda (1966) divides *sato-kagura* further, into four types: *miko kagura*, *Ise kagura*, *Izumo kagura*, and *shishi kagura*.

Miko kagura, which is believed to the oldest type of *kagura*, is danced only by women at Shinto shrines and during folk festivals. The *miko* were formerly shamanesses, but are now considered priestesses who serve the shrines. *Miko kagura* is considered to have directly descended from the divine dance of shamanic trance; the divine ancestress of *miko* is the mythological goddess *Ame-no-Uzume*. It is performed in the larger Shinto shrines (*taisha*), such as Ise and Kasuga. Among the *miko kagura*, the *kagura* in the Izumo area (Shimane prefecture) is believed to be "the true kagura" because of its slow,

elegant, and circular movements that emphasize the four directions and the central use of the *torimono* (the sacred props).

Ise kagura (also called *yudate kagura*) is a collective term for a great number of rituals that have their origin in Ise Shrine. *Ise kagura* includes all the ritual events at which the *yudate* (boiling water rites) are performed. In the *yudate* performances, because the kami are believed to be present in a pot of boiling water, the performers dip their *torimono* in the water and sprinkle it in the four directions for purification and blessing. Until the Meiji Restoration, this *kagura* was performed as an offering by visiting pilgrims.

Izumo kagura is another type of *kagura* centered in Sada Shrine of Izumo in Shimane. It refers particularly to two types of *kagura*: *torimono mai* (dance), unmasked dances that employ sacred props; and *shinno* (sacred *nō*), dramatic masked dances based on mythological stories. *Izumo kagura* has spread during the Edo period and penetrated into the Kanto area; therefore, it is considered to be the most widespread type of *kagura*. What make the *kagura* unique are the "sacred canopy" and a spirit-revitalization performance utilizing the *tatami* mat (*goza*) in which the kami are believed to reside. While the *torimono mai* is performed for the original purpose of *chinkon*, the *shinno* is more for educational and entertainment purposes. WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, on which this study focuses, is generally categorized as *Izumo kagura*.

Shishi kagura is the *shishi* (lion-like animal) masked dance, which indicates the image and presence of the deity.[32] In this type of *kagura*, the kami are constantly present in the *shishi* head-mask, even when not performing, while in the other types of *kagura* the kami appear only temporarily during performances.

[32] Shishi is the mysterious and supernatural animal figure, consisting of large wooden heads to which long robes are attached.

The Kagura: A Review of the Literature

The *kagura* attracts interdisciplinary and other researchers; it has been studied frequently in anthropology (e.g., Averbuch, 1995, 1998; Sadler, 1970; Thornbury, 1995), Japanese literature (e.g., Aston, 1972; Miller, 1982; Plutschow, 1990, 1996), the *kokugaku* or study of ancient Japanese thought and culture (e.g., Origuchi, 2002; Uno, 2002), the *minzokugaku* or study of folklore (e.g., Honda, 1969; Kuribayashi, 1970; Nishitsunoi, 1934), and theater arts including choreography (e.g., Gorai, 1995; Hoff, 1978; Immoos, 1969). Sociological anthropology was relatively late in finding performative aspects of religion (the *kagura* performance included) worthy of serious academic consideration. For these scholars, folk performing arts are a social action or ritual practice that provide a means for understanding society and the world (Yamaji, 1994). Thus, important considerations about folk performing arts as a significant human phenomenon followed the advance of the functional approach (subsequently replaced by evolutionism) of the 1950s and 1960s through the ideas of Edward Burnett Tylor, James George Frazer, and Bronislaw Malinowski (Hanna, 1979). This functional approach has provided a view of the *kagura* as a societal and cultural vehicle that not only reflects but also produces and sustains patterns of culture.

Current studies of the *kagura* are generally concerned with its functions either on the individual level or on the societal level. The former is manifested as psychological fulfillment and the latter as community-building (Averbuch, 1995, 1998; Fukushima, 2003; Moriarty, 1972). Yamaji (1999), for example, claims that folk performing art is a means of expressing human emotions (joy, anger, sadness, and happiness), and is inseparable from everyday living in terms of the individual as well as community levels

across historical epochs. However, many Japanese people no longer consider participation in the *matsuri* a social responsibility (Morita, 1990). Nevertheless, there are still a large number of *matsuri* ongoing across Japan. What do they seek in the *matsuri* and why do they perform the *kagura*? Previous studies have attempted to find the universal meanings of the *matsuri*, but the studies are too spectacular in the sense that they seek the historical origin of the *matsuri*. Traditional religious functions such as blessings of fertility, protection, and giving thanks to the deities are fulfilled through the *kagura* which also meets cultural needs of developing a sense of identity and group solidarity, as well as providing the group with artistic pleasure. Some current sociological perspectives contend that functionality serves as a reason why religious rituals occur and continue to be transmitted from generation to generation.

Matsuri's functions in a group have been well explained by many anthropologists: To activate interactions in a group and promote group identity (Moriarty, 1972), and to create various services and support systems within a group (Fukushima, 2003), for example. To an individual, Honda (1966) claims that the *matsuri* let people feel good and motivate their lives. Morita (1990) states the *matsuri* provide identity elements to individuals. In the *matsuri*, folk performing arts designed to strengthen group relationships, to educate the public about morals, and to give pleasure to life (Honda, 1966). For example, Fukushima (2003), in her study on *Takachiho Kagura* (Miyazaki Prefecture), illustrated the *kagura* performance within the context of the healthcare system in rural areas. She demonstrated that the *kagura* give the community "effective" everyday lives in terms of modern functionality and psychological fulfillment on the individual level and stronger community bonds on the societal level.

More recently, the *kagura* studies have become a site for examining human uses of symbols. In these studies, Geertz's (1973) well-known, often-cited definition serves as a starting point:

> A system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long lasting moods and motivations in men [*sic*] by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic. (1973, p. 90)

This is largely due to the shift in anthropology from functionalism to structuralism during the 1970s; accordingly, the domain of anthropologic study has shifted to a system of sociological symbolism and meaning (Williams, 1991). The *kagura* is then viewed in terms of a sign system that conveys meanings. In appreciating symbols as meaning-carriers in social action, these symbols are likened to their linguistic counterparts (Williams, 1991). In this trend, the *kagura* is seen as a cultural text-in-motion and lends itself to examination of religious texts functions as communicative devices aimed at expressing the kami (e.g., Averbuch, 1998).

Within the structuralism framework, many have acknowledged the *kagura* as a system of communicative acts (e.g., Averbuch, 1995, 1998; Fukushima, 2003). Through its symbols, they claim, the *kagura* communicates sacred ideas. What these theorists mean by the term "communication" is a medium among the Japanese and the kami, a medium that conveys what is sacred to the people. In this view, the kami is assumed to have an *a priori* existence, and communication is reduced to an empty carrier. The problem with these assumptions is not that the term "communication" has been widely

used in the religious studies, but that the modalities embodied in the term lead us to create a view of religion in a only one, less accurate and less useful way.

More specifically, the current structuralism framework is problematic for at least two reasons. First, when the *kagura* is reduced to a text to be examinee, the *kagura* is objectified and projected without elucidating the very mentality that constitutes such values and purposes central to the phenomenon under study. Thus, this view of communication creates an inner/outer condition that sustains the following hypothetical thinking: What is sacred (the kami) is "internal" while the expressive structure (the *kagura*) is "external." This inner/outer understanding attaches the kami to "the" meanings. Put differently, in this signifying process, the signified gains its independent meaning from a signifier and is accepted as the *a priori* meaning. In this sense, we would have to assume the signified has priority over the sign. The signified, however, does not transcendently exist over the signifier, but rather the signifier itself is actively involved in the signifying process, and the process of signification is manifested on the expressing dimension. That is, the signification is created in the act of expressing interaction rather than in the ritual text.

A second problem, involves the refutation of the idea that the kami are structured and exist in Japanese religious objects such as texts, rituals, and folk art. This argument may lead one to assume that the kami are a culturally mediated form of expressing. However, this is based on the same deficient dualistic assumption of the inner/outer distinction. The structures are the ways we assume the *kagura* as the communication that does not exhibit emotional or spiritual dimensions, central to the essence of the kami. That is, we see the kami in indifferent mechanical communications that become

culturally and socially constructed signs. Furthermore, this implies that something universal exists; however, if so, it is that the human creature is always sociocultural, that it is pure hypothetical speculation to imagine a human who is not cultural, and that the human species is essentially the symbol maker. The problem is that they are all essentially semiotic systems of arbitrary values that carry the force of convention, but not of accuracy, completeness, or relevance to life. These methods and approaches shut out too much of the essence of the phenomenon under study.

Thus the modern dualistic understanding of the *kagura* is that it is manifested in the signal/sign view of communication itself. In dualism, we merely interpret the communication "in itself" and hardly see it as a set of independent events to be understood on their own, but rather the communication is understood only with its meanings, that is, the signified (Pilotta & Mickunas, 1990). However, with this view, we would have to assume the signified priority over the sign. In this sense, as in functionalism or structuralism, it is deemed that the kami are "internal" while the expressive structure is "external." In other words, religious mind is located "inside," while the expression would be an anatomical external carrier. The duality, however, is not a transcendent criterion that exists *a priori*, but rather a value-laden condition to pursue what scholars wanted to examine, a condition that reveals particular values, beliefs, and worldviews of the scholars themselves. If we take this dualistic account for granted, we would have to claim that the "inner kami" is located in its outer expressions prior to the cognition of the signs of the inner sacred states.

This study, therefore, is more concerned with the idea of "expression" itself that the previous functional and behavioral studies have undoubtedly assumed. That is, this

dissertation offers an explanation of folk performing arts as what they are, how they are expressed, rather than from functional point of view. My focus here is not in defining the expression, however. Defining, either operationally or conceptually, is a common way of studying something, which emphasizes certain modalities over others. Here the intention is to demonstrate that the currently used term "expression" is deficient in explaining multiple modes of awareness that co-exist. Expression is a term used frequently and widely with little consideration and attention from communication scholars; however, it is one of the most preeminent aspects of communication. Pilotta and Mickunas (1990) contend, "Although perhaps most obvious and 'natural,' it is extremely difficult to delimit, because it cannot be identified by any 'material' or even 'mental' language" (p. 105). Hence, it is important to disclose what constitutes the modern understanding of "expression," the type of reality it constructs, and to reveal the ways it shapes our understanding of the kami.

The Kami as a Shared Linguistic Community: A Phenomenological Approach

Religion is often defined as a system of symbols (e.g., Geertz, 1973). The *kagura*, in this respect, is considered to be "a set of symbols in motion" (e.g., Averbuch, 1995; Hoff, 1978; Plutschow, 1996). In the *kagura* performances, the kami are believed to dwell within symbolic acts such as incantation, dance, music, poetry, drama, and so forth. Since these scholars assume religion is constructed by the sign system that serves as cultural and societal roles and functions, we shall start our theoretical and methodological interests with functional structuralism and the reasons it is not adequate for use in this present study.

Functional Structuralism

Structuralism is often employed to analyze communication phenomena, specifically linguistic forms; it is widely used by the Prague school, linguistic theorists, studies in structural semantics, semiotics, and others (Kramer, 1992; Pilotta & Mickunas, 1990). Structuralism generally refers to "a manner in which a building, an organism, or any other complex and complete whole is constituted" (Pilotta & Mickunas, 1990, p. 35). That is, it focuses on not any materials of which it is composed, but on how these materials are arranged to form a coherent whole. From this analogy, we can assume that communication is a structure with linguistic materials such as language and gestures selected to fit the requirements of a given situation. This idea of structuralism, thus, implies functionalism: A communication system is constructed to serve a purpose, and signs in the system are devised to serve the purpose as well. Even if the system produces no functional value or even if the signs have components serving no expressive ends, still the system is for the purpose of communication. Therefore, in language, the function determines the structure.

Semiotics developed from linguistics. Ferdinand de Saussure, the father of semiology, and Charles Peirce, the founder of semiotics, claim that the structure of language is useful for understanding any sign system.[33] In this assumption, language makes meaning only differentially; in other words, meaning is derived from words only by reference to other words. A particular language system creates meaning through grammar rules, conventions, distinctions, syntax, etc. de Saussure reveals an important

[33] Structuralism is often considered to be a method, while semiotics is considered a field. Eagleton (1983) points out, "The study of the relations and structures between objects or events comprises the methodology of structuralism; objects or events (or images) treated as signs constitute the semiotic field of inquiry" (p. 99-106).

difference between *la langue* and *parole*; the former is an individual act of speech, the latter is essentially a social system. While *la langue* is hardly systematized because what it expresses is always different, *parole* is an implicit system of language through which speakers and listeners implement their social processes. Given that *parole* is a phenomenon internalized into human consciousness, a system of language is not a physical entity, but rather a system of differences. de Saussure (1983) states, "In the language itself, there are only differences [therefore], a linguistic system is a series of phonetic differences matched with a series of conceptual differences" (p. 118).

In this way, de Saussure questions the traditional assumption that language refers to the world and to human thought, and presents another view that language is a value system of differences in meanings. de Saussure divides signs into signifiers and signifieds. The former is the sound or mark, which stands for the signified, while the latter is the concept or meaning. Signs are therefore composed by signifiers and signifieds, however, the relationship is arbitrary. The letters R I C E form a word signifying the concept *rice* and may refer to particular pieces of food. Because signifiers establish their meanings by reference to what they are not, *rice* is understood as not bread or not noodle. A different group of markings also serve as signifiers for the signified rice as well. Thus meaning is the functional result of the differences among signs, and always might be different meanings among the people involved. Therefore, the structuralism assumption that an analysis of structure would reveal knowledge or truth about reality seems to be fixed, and therefore inappropriate for the questions posed herein.

While structuralism assumes that the structure of language or any other system of signs is stable and fixed, the certainty and stability of any particular meanings are

critiqued. For example, Reinelt (1992) claims, "If meaning is always only present in difference, the stability of any particular sign system overturns" (p. 111). That is, structuralism reduces linguistic phenomena to models of structures, and these structures are not concrete manifestations of reality, but cognitive models of reality (Noth, 1990). If this assumption is applied to our theme of the *kagura* (expressing the kami), the meanings of the kami would be fixed in the structure of the Japanese religious sign system. Because a signifier has been considered to be a perceptible medium that "presents" invisible transcendental meaning, expressing the kami is presumed to be an empty carrier that conveys religious meanings, and the kami are treated as fixed texts. In this transmitting process, however, a dimensional distance emerges between signs and the kami. Thus, we fall into the dualistic understanding of a sign; the signified is prior to a signifier. This is not how "expressing the kami" is accomplished; the explanation misses the essence of the kami as experience rather than the kami through ritual.

In structuralism and functionalism, once the *kagura* as a signifier begins to function, the signified kami are being objectified and idealized (and operationalized), becoming what Husserl (1970) calls an "'ideal' objectivity" (p. 356). In the signifying process, however, the act of expressing the kami itself constructs the meaning-structure of the idealized kami. Although such sacredness tends to be given an *a priori* status of transcending meaning, if we presume so, we would make the same argument as in structuralism. The sacredness of the kami cannot exist transcendentally or objectively, nor can it exist in religious expressions. Rather, the *kagura* gains sacredness through a set of voiced and corporeal expressions. Thus, we cannot argue the sacredness exists without deciphering a signifier—in this case, the very act of expressing the kami—the only

directly experienced expressive dimension. For these reasons, methods and explanations involving structuralism and functionalism (and dualism) are not useful for this study directly; they are useful to help define what "expressing the kami" is and is *not*, in de Saussure's term.

Austin's Speech-Act Conditions

As it is well known, speech act theory (Austin, 1962) opens a new way to study language, freeing linguistic analysis from systematic conceptualizations, and recapturing the use of language as a performative act in communicative situations.[34] The theory explains that language not only describes the world but also possesses the forces that influence the world and interpersonal relationship and that construct shared structures, including culture, language, and society. Austin (1962) claims that speech acts should be evaluated on the basis of appropriateness/inappropriateness, rather than on truth/ falsehood:

> [Utterances] do not 'describe' or 'report' or constate anything at all, are not 'true or false'; and the uttering of the sentence is, or is a part of, the doing of an action, which again would not *normally* be described as saying something. (p. 5)

By uttering such a sentence as "I name the ship the Queen Elizabeth," for example, is a person merely describing the fact that he or she names the ship the Queen Elizabeth. Austin (1962) devised the three types of speech acts present in every utterance

[34] Linguistics is located in a very important turning point in history. Before Austin, language scholars and philosophers were primarily interested in grammars of language and their examinations are based on statements of some fact, which ultimately forces us to consider statements as being either true or false, even though it is only a part of the activities people engage in when producing utterances. Against these traditions, Austin found that utterances humans make do not simply state a fact, rather some utterances themselves functions as speech acts.

to explain the example above: locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary. Locutionary is considered to be "an act of 'saying something'" (p. 94). Illocutionary is "an act *in* saying something as opposed to performance of an act *of* saying something" (p. 91). A perlocutionary act is "the real production of real effect" (p. 102). For example, Person A states, "It is cold here." Person B hears it. This statement is locutionary in the sense that Person A describes his feeling about the temperature in the room. But if Person B closes the window after hearing Person A, the statement becomes an illocutionary act because this statement becomes a request that produces a behavior from Person B (i.e., closing the window). In a perlocutionary sense, this statement contains a real effect that forces Person B to close the window. Thus Austin concludes that utterances are not merely descriptive, but are also performative.

The following are Austin's six conditions that sustain appropriate speech acts (1962, pp. 14-15):

> (A1) …an accepted conventional procedure having a certain conventional effect, . . . include[s] the uttering of certain words by certain persons in certain circumstances, and further,
>
> (A2) the particular persons and circumstances in a given case must be appropriate for the invocation of the particular procedures invoked.
>
> (B1) The procedure must be executed by all participants both correctly and
>
> (B2) completely
>
> (F1) …the procedure is designed for use by persons having certain thoughts or feelings, or for the inauguration of certain consequential conduct on the part of any participant, then a person participating in and so invoking the procedure must

in fact have those thoughts or feelings, and the participants must intend to so conduct themselves, and further,

(F2) must actually so conduct themselves subsequently.

The first four rules (A 1 & 2; B 1 & 2) are concerned with convention and its procedures, while the latter two (F 1 & 2) are about speakers' intentions and honesty. Austin's performative speech act idea is basis of two concepts: "convention" and "intention." While Austin relies heavily on social and cultural conventions in his analysis of performative utterances, he puts some emphasis on "speaker's intention" in some "peculiar" cases, cases in which speech acts do not take place in what he calls "ordinary circumstances" and are not conducted in what he calls "normal use." Austin (1962) describes,

> …a performing utterance will, for example, be *in a peculiar way* hollow or void if said by an actor on the stage, or if introduced in a poem, or spoken in soliloquy. This applies in a similar manner to any and every utterance—a sea-change in special circumstances. Language in such circumstances is in special ways—intelligibly—used to seriously, but in ways *parasitic* upon its normal use—ways which fall under the doctrine of the *etiolations* of language. All this we are excluding from consideration. Our performative utterances, felicitous or not, are to be understood as issued in ordinary circumstances. (p. 22)

Those performative utterances on a stage or in a poem, from which Austin excludes his analysis, are not necessarily felicitous speech acts. As long as they are performed in certain conventions, we could understand them well enough. One of the reasons why Austin labeled these types of speech acts as "unsubstantial" and "invalid"

utterances is perhaps because they do not meet his "F" rules. Austin would argue that any utterances on stage do not have "certain thoughts or feelings." This implies that any speech acts that are not supported by "serious intentions" are considered to be empty and invalid. Obviously here, the "ordinary circumstance" and "normal use" of speech acts are prescribed not by "conventions" but by "intentions." In his "explicit performative" category, Austin (1962) further explains,

> …what we should feel tempted to say is that any utterance which is in fact a performative should be reducible, or expandible, or analysable into a form with a verb in the first person singular present indicative active (grammatical). (p. 61-62)

With this statement, Austin (1962) articulates that performative utterances must be made in the contexts of "present," "here," and "me." In other words, he presumes that any performative utterance has to be done with "speaker's direct presence." If so, according to Austin (1962), "there is something which is *at the moment of uttering being done by the person uttering*" (p. 60, emphasis in original).

Derrida's Critique of Austin's Speech Act and Husserl's "Direct Experience"

The *kagura* may be excluded from the above-mentioned outline of speech acts; it is not supported with what Austin calls "speaker's serious intention." However, it is not the intention here to simply exclude the *kagura* from a normative form of performative utterance; rather, our attempt is to understand the *kagura* as a form of human expression, freeing it from modern, rational metaphysics, as stated previously. Derrida (1991) identified "speaker's direct presence" as the most important constituent condition of Austin's performative utterance concepts. Thus we rely on Derrida's (1991) critique of

Austin's (1962) speech act theory in order to free the *kagura* from the modern obsession of "speaker's direct presence."

Derrida (1991) first questions the traditionally presumed distinction between written communication and spoken communication. While spoken communication requires the perceptible presence of speaker and listener, written communication allows the absence of both reader and writer. Derrida (1991) argues,

> All writing, therefore, in order to be what it is, must be able to function in the radical absence of every empirically determined addressee in general. And this absence is not a continuous modification of presence; it is a break in presence, "death" or the possibility of the "death" of the addressee… (p. 91)

Derrida's (1991) argument relies on Husserl's (1970) essay, *The Origin of Geometry*. In the essay, Husserl (1970) seeks the "meaning-structure" of geometrical reasoning in its repeatability of "written, documenting linguistic expressions."

According to Husserl (1970), a "meaning-structure" uttered by the first geometrician becomes the object that is shared by all the members of a linguistic community through linguistic sounds, and the linguistic community is given the atemporal ideal object through written signs. The latter process requires the meaning-structure to be "sedimented" in a text and "reactivated" by readers. In other words, once the original meaning that is sedimented in a text is reactivated by readers, the original self-evidence that occurred with the first geometrician is recovered. Husserl (1970) concludes that the only foundation of ideal objectivity lies in this repetition of sedimentation and reactivation. Husserl's conclusion implies that a meaning sedimented in a text is possibly reactivated by countless readers through the mediation of written

signs, and these readers are not located in any particular space or time. It can be infinitely repeatable, and this possibility is the condition that constitutes the ideal objectivity, according to Husserl (1970).

Derrida (1991) extends this repeatability of written linguistic expressions to a transcendental condition of communication in general; he applies repeatability to spoken communication as well. Although Austin's (1962) speech act theory includes written utterances along with verbal utterances, Austin demands that written utterances be attached to a "signature" in order to maintain a writer's direct presence. However, to Derrida, the signature does not connect writer's intentions to written utterances, but rather it justifies the independent status of signature:

> The effects of signature are the most ordinary things in the world. The condition of possibility for these effects is simultaneously, once again, the condition of their impossibility, of the impossibility of their rigorous purity. In order to function, that is, in order to be legible, a signature must have a repeatable, iterable, imitable form; it must be able to detach itself from the present and singular intention of its production. (p. 107)

That is, Derrida claims that signature does not support writer's (or speaker's) direct presence. If it does, it is nonsense to make a signature. Rather, the effect of signature is supported not by writer intention, but by its repeatable and imitable formality, a formality that is independent from a writer's intention.

Derrida (1991) expands this argument into performative utterances in general. That is, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts such as promises and demands are not supported by speaker's or writer's intention, but rather they are conducted using

repeatable linguistic forms. In this sense, performative utterances on a stage or in a poem, which Austin (1962) excludes from his analysis due to its "ways *parasitic* upon its normal use" (p. 22), become significant speech acts in Derrida's argument. This is because they are the type of speech acts that are thoroughly conducted in the repeatable, imitable linguistic forms. Therefore, repeatability and imitation can be recognized as the speech-act conditions. Applying Derrida's critique of Austin to our concern, we would be allowed to examine the *kagura* as a form of speech act that is thoroughly conducted in the repeatable, imitable linguistic forms. The *kagura* contains a variety of forms of utterances including singing, dancing, poetry, and reciting the *norito* (the kami's words). They are uttered or performed in certain "repeatable" and "imitable" forms in order to experience expressing the kami. With the "repeatability" pointed out by Husserl and Derrida, we no longer necessarily seek the objective, absolute truth of expression; rather, we need a return "to the things themselves." This means that one should take experience on its own terms, as it is given, whether this experience is empirical, logical, theoretical, or practical. What Husserl is interested in is direct experience, because, he argues, that is "where" we live, and "direct" experience is the only kind known. "Direct experience" is the foundation on which Husserl makes his argument. It is an experience without resorting to reductionism or reducing (or operationalizing) something that is outside existence into something that is often very different.

Husserl's seeking "direct experience" serves as a basis of investigating what is required for communication about the *kagura*. In an essay entitled *The Origin of Geometry*, Husserl treats the objective world as a "linguistic community of those who can reciprocally express themselves, normally, in a fully understandable fashion" (1970, p.

359). Within this community, he argues, “Everyone can talk about what is within the surrounding world of his civilization as objectively existing” (p. 359). Thus, each community has its own way to experience and articulate something they cannot doubt under its own logic, within which they tend to interpret and locate Others. This logic is often considered to be a “tradition,” which Husserl (1970) calls the “we-horizon,” where “the whole cultural world, in all its forms, exists” (p. 354). Husserl states:

> Tradition is precisely tradition, having arisen within our human space through human activity, i.e., spiritually, even though we generally know nothing, or as good as nothing, of the particular provenance and of the spiritual source that brought it about. (p. 355)

This “tradition” is manifested in linguistic, synchronic communicative acts. Thus, a shared linguistic community is the most fundamental condition that promotes the existence of truth within the community. That is, what we need to do first in expressing the kami is to understand the *kagura* group in which the kami are shared. For example, a *kagura* performer shares what the kami they are presenting in the performance are like with other members and without any outside variables. Were we to return to the things themselves, we would discover that expressing the kami is much broader than any hypotheses we might construct. To examine how a speech community shares the kami helps us examine how the *kagura* is shared in a community, within its own cultural mode of being and experiencing, and to analyze the *kagura* within its own languages.

Accordingly, in this study we employ a specific method called bracketing to determine what is meant by the experiential dimension of expressing the kami. The term *bracketing* means that all assumptions about nature and empirical phenomena, all beings,

in brief, all reality, must be placed into parentheses, i.e., must be set aside (Pilotta & Mickunas, 1990). This does not mean that we doubt the existence of nature, rather bracketing allows us to direct our attention away from naturalistic assumptions toward the experiential process. Naturalistic assumptions include anything that allows us to have certain knowledge on a particular thing: nature, history, psychology, physical processes, cultural objects, ethics, aesthetics, and even scientific theories (Pilotta & Mickunas, 1990). This is not to say that the validity of the assumptions are questioned, instead we are allowed to have questions concerning the assumptions, i.e., what kind of experience would be required for their presence.

Summary and Research Question One

In order to explore how the kami are experienced and understood beyond the modern dualistic metaphysics, it has to first be a study of the act of expressing, more specifically, how the act of expressing the kami gains a sense of the kami manifested in a shared linguistic community. The phrase "a sense of the kami" here refers to a religious condition that allows the experienced world to be a form of truth. Accordingly, the religious condition will be explicated in terms of how the kami can be expressive and communicative in a way that allows us to experience them. In other words, the condition will be revealed within the cultural horizon through which we experience and make sense of the kami. Hence, this study is required to elucidate the act of expressing the kami from the vantage point of nonreductive awareness. It is of less interest to answer the questions above in a particular way than to explain and understand the conditions that make the questions answerable. In other words, our argument is not based on a set of propositions,

but on the contexts of "experience" that sustain and support the divine *kagura* world. Therefore, within this experiential context the main question is postulated:

> RQ1: What essentially constitutes expressing the kami through which the *kagura* group experiences the kami in its cultural world?

With the ethnographic description, thus, we would demonstrate what experiences are required to express the kami. As described in the previous chapter, this line of study is the main part of this ethnography.

More specifically, to answer the above research question, I describe the communicative nature of the *kagura* group, relying heavily on participant observation in the natural settings of the *kagurashi*. One of the characteristics of ethnographic work is an emphasis on data collected from naturally occurring events, rather than laboratory methods or hypothetical examples (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2005). I am concerned with how the *kagura* group members communicate among themselves and how they share the kami including the "manifestations and derivations of language for which speaking can be a surrogate term" (Hymes, 1974, p. 45). Such manifestations and derivations include systems of body movements, gestural expressions, music, graphic communication, and drum and chanting systems. Ethnography refers to an approach to speaking that situates it in the social life and the cultural systems of particular speech communities, with a commitment to notice and formulate the speech community's distinctiveness in particular times and places.

Concretizing the *Kagura*: A Gebserian Approach

The current literature of the *kagura* illustrates the *kagura* as either a cultural text (in motion) or an outcome out of its functionality. With Gebser, we find these studies to

be a one-sided, perspectival, mechanical mode of understanding. The rest of the chapter explicates Gebser's philosophy and offers an explanation of how the plus conscious-mutation theory helps us deliberate the kami and their corresponding expressions, and to concretize these expressions as a manifestation of the spiritual.

Magic, Religion, and Science: Locating Gebser's Conscious-Mutation Theory

In contemporary academia, while religion has often been juxtaposed to magic, myth, and science, magic has been a central theme in the theoretical literature of the modern religious studies since the discipline emerged (Malinowski, 1948; Styers, 2004; Tambiah, 1990). This theme has been incorporated as a fundamental category of cultural analysis by leading anthropologists including Edward Burnett Tylor, James George Frazer, Emile Durkheim, and Bronislaw Malinowski. To the anthropologists, magic is a means of understanding human society and nature. Whereas magic has been placed either inside or outside religion, there is a widespread scholarly consensus that religion cannot be separated from magic (Tambiah, 1990). Magic first emerged as a topic of major analytical concern for scholars of religion in theories of religious evolution during the nineteenth century. While some scholars argued that religion was a *sui genesis* phenomenon and that magic was fundamentally distinct (e.g., Bronislaw Malinowski), others argued that magic constituted an early stage in the evolution of religion (e.g., Edward Tylor and James Frazer).

Modern anthropological study of magic and religion probably started with Edward Burnett Tylor, the founder of British anthropology. In his *Primitive Culture*, Tylor (1924) argued that the earliest stage of religion is to be found in animism, a belief

in the existence of souls and other spiritual beings.[35] Animism emerges, according to Tylor, in the processes through which primitive men reflect on the difference between living and dead bodies, and through which they work to understand the appearance of human figures in dreams and visions. Although he did not demonstrate a clear boundary between religion and magic, Tylor talked about magic primarily in the context of cultural "survivals." His term "survivals" meant superstitions, allowing Tylor to avoid the stigma attached to "superstitions" (Styers, 2004). Since Tylor's work, scholars have proposed either that magic was the initial stage of religion, that magic constituted a stage of social evolution prior to the emergence of religion, or that magic and religion both originated from an amorphous sense of the supernatural (Styers, 2004).

Tylor's theory of animism was challenged by fellow English intellectualist James George Frazer. Proposing the theory of "sacred kingship," Frazer (1958) especially emphasized the distinction between magic and religion and proposed his typology of various forms of magic. Although Frazer shared Tylor's view of magic, he was more concerned with Tylor's evolutionary notion of human development, and reshaped it in a more rigid form. Frazer sees humanity moving through a fixed sequence of stages: magic, religion, and then science. Frazer (1958) argues that magic operates on an intellectual foundation that is fundamentally different from that of religion. While magic depends on a view of nature as regular and mechanical, religion involves the view of nature as subject to personal intervention by divine beings. This distinction led subsequent scholars

[35] The Western concept of "spiritual" may be derived from the Greek *vous* and *novos*, and from the Latin *spiritus*, *animus*, and *mens* (Gebser, 1985). The difference between the spiritual and the psychical can be traced back to the Greek concept of the *tveuva* (Stern, 1965). With the classical Greeks this concept had still not the total immateriality which we customarily associate with the concept of the spirit (Stern, 1965).

including Malinowski and Levy-Bruhl to argue that magic shares its fundamental conception with modern science, which also understands nature to be orderly and uniform.

While Tylor and Frazer shared the views of religious development to some extent, different views of magic and religion emerged between them. These views produced interest in the origin of magic and religion in impersonal notions of spiritual power and the idea that magic and religion were better understood not as successive stages within the evolutionary framework, but rather that magic and religion served as comparable subcategories of a broader field of supernaturalism, such as the "magico-religious" or the *mana* (Marett, 2004).[36] In *The Threshold of Religion* (2004), for example, Marett challenged the very basic idea of religious development proposed by Tylor and Frazer and invoked the notion of diffuse supernatural power. Marett (2004) attempted to configure religion as a fundamental component of human identity, and described the earliest stage of human religion as the *mana*. Regarding magic and religion, Marett (2004) also acknowledged that the magic-religion distinction is an artificial framework imposed on practices that are not so clearly delineated by their practitioners.

Rather than relying merely on a generalized notion of the magico-religious as the source of religion, a number of scholars sought the origin of religion in totemism and clan gods, in which magic played a central role (e.g., Durkheim, 2001). In these theories, religion is seen as coming from a stage in which social groups worship various types of totemic creatures such as animals, birds, and plants. One of the important theories came from Durkeim's sociological perspective on magic. Durkheim developed his theory of

[36] The idea of *mana*, the amorphous supernatural force, was formulated by R. H. Codrington in his 1891 study of the Melanesians (Styers, 2004).

totemism in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* (2001), in which the well-known principle of religion—the classification of the world into the sacred and the profane—was formulated. Durkheim (2001) explains that religious beliefs belong to the group and foster group unity. The word "church" denotes a society sharing beliefs about the sacred and the profane. Magic, on the other hand, fails to bind together its adherents or to unite them into a common life. Durkheim claims that religion is not born of the failure of magic, but rather it is only under the influence of religious ideas and rituals that magic takes shape.

As science was incorporated as an integral component of the debates concerning the relationship between magic and religion, the notion of religion was rationalized. The domains or categories of magic, religion, and science were concretized by Bronislaw Malinowski in his 1925 essay, *Magic, Science and Religion* (Tambiah, 1990). Malinowski rejected Frazer's claim that science emerged in the last states of human development and instead argued that magic and science are based on essentially different mental attitudes and serve fundamentally different cultural functions. Malinowski (1948) clearly distinguished science from magic, taking a different path from Tylor and Frazer who characterized magic as "pseudo-science." Malinowski (1948) viewed science as a "profane" activity, while magic, grouped with religion, belonged to the sacred domain.

In his study of magic, Malinowski (1948) focused on the dimension of expressive experience. He stated that magic was performative, expressive, and a speech act, which requires performers to experience it. Malinowski selects the spell as the most critical component of the Trobriand magical system, claiming that magic was "reasonable" because it functioned when addressing certain psychological needs of the individual, and

because its practice brought some positive effects to the community. Magic spells and manipulations may not causally change nature, but these words and acts did influence human emotions, intentions, motivations, and expectations. So Malinowski's answer would be that magic was reasonably effective in creating a change of stage for the human actors.

While Malinowski (1948) functionalized magic, making a simply functional distinction between magic and practical knowledge, Gebser (1985) proposed a very different idea of religion against functionalism, insisting that magic, religion, and science are different not because of their functions but because of their expressive forms and corresponding modes of awareness. This idea facilitates a new way to view religion, creating the potential for escaping it as a predetermining mode. From Gebser's view, religion is an invention of the revitalized perspectival attitude manifested as religious reflection. Unlike Malinowski, Gebser (1985) mends this split between science and magic. The split between supernatural and scientific fact occurred during the Renaissance in Western Europe, and coincided with the shift in consciousness toward abstract reasoning and the valuation of efficiency as a manifestation of scientific- technological power over the forces of the supernatural (Gebser, 1985). Gebser argues a functional view of magic and science is itself a reflection of a particular mentality (i.e., a bias), found in the mental/rational mode of awareness. Tambiah (1990) makes a similar claim, "Rationality itself is a driving force of creating such a conflicting view between science and religion, but also brings the issue of rationality itself and the limits of science as a paradigm" (p. 3).

Gebser (1985) criticizes Tylor's theory of animism, claiming that "its validity must be restricted in the sense that 'aminism' is, in psychological terms, and in all likelihood, merely a 'psychic projection'" (p. 194). Gebser points out that Tylor focused on the one-sided aspect of *mana* and conceptualized it in the rational mentality. The rationalized model of animism equates consciousness with soul. Within this psychological projection, consciousness has been equated with knowledge. However, "consciousness is more than mere knowledge, recognition, or cognitive faculty" (Gebser, 1985, p. 204). In Gebser's view, Tylor focused on one aspect of the consciousness of soul, not on the awakening of consciousness. Besides, for Gebser, Frazer's and Marett's "pre-animism" and later "animism" and Levy-Bruhl's "participation" are convenient working hypotheses and still in use.

Furthermore, Gebser's plus conscious-mutation theory is different from Frazer's evolutional theory, in that Gebser argues that magic and science are not mutually exclusive, rather they co-exist. Frazer's evolutional theory leads to a specialization of functions within a particular environment—a minus mutation. The minus mutation that is claimed by Aristotelian and Spencerian scholars reflects a perspectival mentality, through which science itself becomes a paradigm through which to understand magic and religion (Kramer, 1997; Kramer & Mickunas, 1992). By contrast, the "plus" conscious-mutation best describes the discontinuous nature of events that occur in quantum-like, discontinuous "leaps" in the modes of awareness (Gebser, 1985, p. 38). In other words, consciousness mutates in unforeseen ways and rises to a new intensity or dimension that does not negate previous structures; instead the previous structures become the most fundamental characteristics of an emerging structure of consciousness. Thus, each mode

of awareness is not mutually exclusive, but rather co-constitutive (Gebser, 1985; Kramer, 1993a, 2000b; Kramer & Mickunas, 1992).[37]

Rationalistic thoughts of "progress" or "development" are inapplicable to the phenomenon of consciousness. Within the Gebserian approach, such ideas as "progressive" or "better" cannot be assumed, because they presume specific goals or "telos," which are manifested only in the perspectival mode of awareness. Since the linearity of minus mutation is a form of expression manifested in the rational mode of awareness, its linearity is deficient in an emerging mode of awareness. Gebser continues, "Every consciousness mutation is apparently a sudden and acute manifestation of latent possibilities present since origin" (p. 39). In this sense, plus conscious-mutation theory does not assume or require the disappearance of previous potentialities and properties, which, in this case, are immediately integrated into the new structure. We are thus required "to maintain the very necessary detachment from such concepts as progress, evolution, and development" (Gebser, 1985, p. 204) when conducting this and similar studies.

The Structures of Consciousness and their Forms of Expression

Gebser introduced the idea of conscious mutation to cultural studies. He identifies five types of structures of consciousness in human expression and articulation across

[37] According to Gebser (1985), the conscious-mutational process is "spiritual," rather than biological or historical. He claims that the concept of mutation is a discontinuous process and its transposition into consciousness underscores the originally present spiritual content latent in consciousness from origin. Thus Gebser's plus conscious-mutation unfolds toward overdetermination: toward "structural enrichment" and "dimensional increment" (p. 38). Therefore, the plus conscious-mutation theory allows us not only to correlate some expressions with certain modes of awareness, but also to decipher diverse cultures as dynamic interconnections of two (or more) civilizational awarenesses (Mickunas, 2006).

history and culture: the archaic, the magic, the mythical, the mental/rational, and the aperspectival/integral. The term "structure" is chosen by Gebser in order to avoid any spatialization that only reflects the mental/rational mode of awareness. Each of the structures has a predominant mode of expression. Gebser (1985) argues that civilizational expressions concretize awareness in the complex and multiple modalities of expressing, including making, manipulating, imaging visualizing, rationalizing, and so forth. Civilizational expressions include linguistic, religious, social, artistic, architectural, and others. It is important to note that Gebser's terms "consciousness" and "awareness" do not imply metaphysical or universal notions; rather, they indicate that consciousness itself consists of concrete structures given in various modalities of expression (Kramer & Mickunas, 1992; Mickunas, 1972, 1996).

Gebser (1985) argues that the magic structure emerged from a mutation toward a one-dimensional unity identified as the archaic, zero-dimensional structure. It is necessary to note, before proceeding, that the archaic mode of awareness is scarcely discussed in this dissertation because the archaic is assumed as a truly empirical world, where there is no dimensionality or dissociation, as is characterized as zero-dimensional.[38] Archaic human was attuning, pre-consciousness. Consciousness began with the one-dimensional magic communication/interaction. Expression can occur only with dimensionality. Gebser (1985) characterizes the archaic structure of consciousness

[38] The archaic structure is zero-dimensional. It is origin and akin to dreamless sleep (Gebser, 1985; Kramer & Mickunas, 1992); the word "archaic" is derived from the Greek *arche*, which means "origin" (Gebser, 1985, p. 43). Therefore, it is hardly traceable and articulate. One of few evidences is Chaugn-tzu's statement about 2300 *ya*: "Dreamlessly the true men of earliest times slept" (Gebser, 1985, p. 44). What this statement means is that the unidentifiable, perfect unity between humans and the world is such that this structure of consciousness can neither be symbolized, translated to any forms, nor conceptualized in any way.

as “dreamlessness,” which means, “beyond doubt, an unconcerned accord, a consequent-full identity between inner and outer, expressive of the microcosmic harmony” (p. 45). The archaic structure has been implied in such metaphoric expressions as the human oneness with the god or the perfect identity of man and universe.

The magic structure emerged from a mutation toward a one-dimensional unity which is identified as the point of departure to a new dimensional structure, or a turning point from the archaic, zero-dimensional structure (Gebser, 1985; Kramer, 1997). The magic structure is vital, and was once predominant. The point-unity magic expresses the spaceless and timeless one-dimensionality comprising the magical world. This structure is a mode of consciousness that is more accessible to our own experience. Magic here refers to human civilization, which Mickunas (1972, 1997) calls a “web of relationships,” and to the unity of experienced spatial and temporal events. In magical awareness where everything is vitally connected there is a peculiar kind of spatial-temporal structure, and that is known as puncti-formal structure whereby everything that is vitally important relates to everything else and is translatable in terms of everything else (Kramer, 1997; Gebser, 1997).

The magic mode of awareness is articulated by a predominance of idolic expression, which is characterized as one-dimensional, univalent. The magic mode is articulated in *pars pro toto*, in which the part stands for the whole.[39] “In the magic world,

[39] In the magic world, an identity emerged against others one-dimensionally. People left the archaic dream-like state of awareness and became differentiated from nature. Once people are separated from the world in their consciousness, the wholeness of the world is detached in parts. “The more man released himself from the whole, becoming conscious of himself, the more he began to be an individual” (Gebser, 1985, p. 46). Therefore, the world is realized in a spaceless and timeless manner. The creation of a common pre-

there is practically no dissociation or detachment of emotional commitment between what expression means and its concrete presence" (Kramer, 1997, p. *xiii*). That is, since magic idolic communication is its own meaning, there is nothing represented in it and, in turn, there is no misunderstanding. In magic expressions, like incantation, there is one expression to make something happen. In other words, without expressions nothing happens. Accordingly, there is no semantic space between the expression and the expressed in the magic world. Magic expression reveals an identifiable, point-like unity between humans and their world. The expression is also already full and alive with vital force and energy such as the *mana* and spiritual stages (Gebser, 1985; Kramer, 1997).

From this one-dimensional consciousness that already has a rudimentary striving to deal with nature, to counter nature, there emerges a movement that creates polarity, a movement toward the mythical or psychic structure. This movement, whenever it appears in conscious experience, is immediately depicted within the present, with the presence of mouth, with the presence of mind. "Myth" comes from *mythos*, meaning "mouth." It is not mystical or mysterious but is rather a particular dimension of human experience which encompasses the entire world (Gebser, 1985). He explains,

> Myth is the closing of mouth and eyes; since it is a silent, inward-directed contemplation, it renders the soul visible so that it may be visualized, represented, heard, and made audible. Myth is this representing and making audible. (Gebser, 1985, p. 67)

As a result, all sorts of imagery emerge. The implicit attempts of magical man to extricate himself from the vegetative, vital sphere and to re-orient himself, lead toward

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conscious experience of being human brings a bonding with other human, and allows people to work as a group in part due to an inherent drive to do so.

polarity and a resultant mutation to the psychic consciousness and a mythical civilization. Distance emerges when human beings began to see, and vision emerges from mythical expressions (Kramer, 1997). The mythical structure is distinctive from the magic because of this "imagination (*imago*, Latin 'image')" (Gebser, 1985, p. 67). A first experience of the mythic dimension, a rhythmic process, a polar process like the experience of breathing (Gebser, 1985). There is a consciousness of breathing but at the same time there is another development following that sort of rhythmic process and that is the development of mythological expressions (such as the mythologemes of sea voyage, of Narcissus, of the birth of Athena, etc.) (Gebser, 1985).

With the accrual of another dimension, the mythic mode of awareness is recognizable by two-dimensional, symbolic expressions.[40] The term *symbolic* here means "a nascent dissociation or separation between the expressed and the expression;" that is "ambivalence" (Kramer, 1997, p. *xv*). In the mythic world, emotional response appears against the magic non-contingence. The mythical mode of awareness opens up the differences of expression between what is literal and what is figural. When dimensionality accrues to the two-dimensional, expression becomes less direct, i.e., more ambiguous, and more open to interpretation than in the magical world. In the mythic expression, by contrast to the magic expression, images fill the emerging differences between the expressed and expression. Thus, mythical people preserve the past, poetizing their expression in audial rhythm (Gebser, 1985).

[40] In the two-dimensional stage, following the Greeks imitation, hermeneutics began (Kramer, 1997). Hermeneutics is about problems of interpretation and conflict of interpretation. Hermeneutics was added to Western knowledge in ancient Greece, along with studies of grammar, logic, and rhetoric (Kramer, 1995, 1997).

From the mythical to the mental/rational mode of awareness is a mutation from polarity to duality, according to Gebser (1985). The structure is based on either/or duality, manifested in the subject/object duality that constitutes the foundation of the mental/rational mode of awareness. Here the self is fully aware of Self as a separate, material entity. It is an ego consciousness that organizes experiences around Self. It is well spelled out in Protagoras famous saying: "Man is the measure of all things." The mental/rational mode of awareness is oriented toward the external world, relying on abstraction and logic for information (Kramer, 2003b). The emergence of the mental/rational mode of awareness coincided with the discovery of space and causality. Time is epitomized in the concept of linear flow from the past to the future, and is spatialized and abstracted. Reality is measured, quantified, and systematized (Kramer, 2000b). In the mental/rational mode of awareness, communication is reduced to a process from output to input, a tool of logic and grammar to convey meaning.

The perspectival mode of awareness is set apart by three-dimensional, sign-filled expressions. Expressing the kami becomes merely instrumental, reflecting its arbitrary awareness. The mathematical model of communication proposed by Shannon and Weaver (1949) reflects this mode of awareness that regards communication as a mere transmitter of information across space based on arbitrary signs and codes; for example, digital codes consist of the arbitrary, binary code of either 0 or 1.[41] Perspectival

[41] Binary code makes sense in this dimension where everything is arbitrary (e.g., money clearly represents arbitrariness in this dimension). In these dimensional modes of awareness, for example, family began with individuals and became tribes in the magic mode of awareness, clans in the mythical mode of awareness, nuclear in the perspectival, and finally comes back to individuals. Religion can also be described as a sociological form of human institution. Religion spirit began with animist in the magic, and becomes pantheism in the mythical, where god can be a "distant-iation" (e.g., god in mountain top

expressions are dissociated from the real, and extend themselves to what they see and what they imagine. The people become less emotional, more detached from their existences.

Perspective is rational and superficial, i.e., surface-level understandings are used. When the accrual dimensionality has reached the perspectival mode, the ego hypertrophy increases. Kramer articulates that ego hypertrophy is "accompanied by all sorts of intolerances, competitions, and divisions in our special/temporal manifold" (1993a, p. 262). In the modern perspectival world, incantation and spiritual expressions have little relevance. In a similar sense, the semiotic division of the sign into a signifier and a signified in the perspectival mode of awareness does not offer clues to understanding magic and mythical expressions (Kramer, 1997). The logical, the propositional, the rational, and the mental domain of communication comprise the world of experience deployed in a serial manner. The world is a sum of objects and their characteristics have determinate spatio-temporal locations and relationships. For example, there is one right way to do things. This presents a narrow view of the possible; audacity becomes something to be scoffed, avoided, i.e., a liability.

Once again, interpreting Gebser in terms of a *sequence* of structures of awareness is not adequate to appreciate Gebser's achievements (Kramer, 1992, 1997; Mickunas, 2000, 2006, 2008).[42] Mickunas (2008) states that structures of awareness do not follow

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in Tibet) (Kramer, 1997). As the universe expands, religion becomes monotheism and god becomes noninteresting, where free will and individualism are manifest. Finally religion becomes cosmology, with no god.

[42] Kramer (1997) proposes the theory of dimensional accrual/dissociation. The idea of dimensional accrual is based on Gebser's dimensional consciousness and the idea of dissociation comes from Lewis Mumford and Seigfuriel Giden (Gebser's student). The theory states:

one another, but "each appears in and through the others and thus is either efficient or deficient, but never left behind" (p. 2). For example, technology and science, as manifestations of rationality, are replete with magic and myth. In the following section, we deliberate the aperspectival/integral mode of awareness to see how the *kagura* can be revealed through the co-presence and intertwining of all structures of awareness.

Aperspectival Mode of Awareness: Its Foundations

The arational, aperspectival, or integral structure of consciousness is the one to be used in this exploration of the *kagura*. Aperspectival expressivity is not conceptually concrete because conceptuality is a mode of expression whose concern is with abstraction and fragmentation (Gebser, 1985). Aperspectivity instead allows us to gain a basis that transcends the inherent limitations of ratio. As the term "aperspectival" indicates, this mode of awareness emerges from the perspectival mode (modern Western civilizational awareness, logic, etc.) that is currently reaching the deficient state (Mickunas, 2006). Perspective, according to Gebser (1985) is "the pre-eminent expression of the emergent consciousness of fifteenth-century European man, the palpable expression of his objectification of spatial awareness" (p. 18). "Perspectival thinking spatializes and then employs what it has spatialized. All inferences or deductions are expressed in language

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> As one moves from the magic univalent, to the mythic bivalent, and to the perspectival trivalent modes, the dimensionality of awareness accrues or increases. When accrual increases, abstraction, fragmentation, and dissociation also increase; simultaneously, emotional attachment and identification decrease. (Kramer & Ikeda, 1998, p. 37)

The theory of dimensional accrual/dissociation articulates not only how the mode of awareness can be identifiable by its level of expressivity, but also how the modes of awareness are related to the four types of expressivity. What the theory emphasizes is that an increase in dimensionality contributes to increased dissociation. From one-dimensional idolic, to two-dimensional symbolic, to three-dimensional signalic (i.e., use of signals) ways of being and expression, the individual becomes more dissociated from his/her here-and-now.

by spatial concepts" (p. 258). The fundamental symbol of this mode of perception is the triangle, an expression of the form of contemporary thinking (Kramer, 1997). For example, the expression is manifested in the perspective of Leonardo da Vinci and his "visual pyramid" (Gebser, 1985, p. 256).

The term "perspectival" itself reveals its dualistic orientation and mentality, but at the same time, it is a latent basis, "aperspectivity" (Gebser 1985; Kramer, 1997). Gebser designates the term "aperspectival" to describe a new mode of what he calls "a-warning." Using the Greek prefix "a" in conjunction with the Latin-derived word "perspectival," Gebser intends to articulate a sense of *alpha privativum* rather than *alpha negativum*. The prefix gives a liberating character to the term "perspectival" (*privativum* is derived from Latin *private*) (see Gebser 1985, p. 2). Gebser assigns the new term not in an antithetical manner but in an integrating manner that makes all modes of awareness presentable at the same time and in any sequence. "Perspectival" is a mode of expression in the mental/rational awareness; it has a dualistic tendency to see the previous modes of awareness as opposed to the "unperspectival." However, Gebser divides the unperspectival mode into the two types: the magic mode and the mythical mode, and calls them "preperspectival" and "unperspectival" respectively. These modes (preperspectival, unperspectival, and perspectival) are integrated into the aperspectivitally dynamic process.

Differently put, the mental world once went beyond the experiential capability of mythical man, and this world of the mind became reality. The aperspectival mode rejects neither the rational nor the irrational. We pay attention to deficient manifestations. This means that even the pre-rational was not just valid at one time, but rather that its structure

continues to be present in us as one of our co-constituent parts. That is, the prerational, irrational, and rational are "apresentiated" through the others, i.e., they remain and are mediating forces in an individual's life. Therefore, the aperspectival mode of awareness should be recognized as a multidimensional awareness without accepting or denying other modes of awareness. This mode of awareness is demonstrated through an insightful process of intensive awareness.

One of the avenues toward this integration is for us to unfold the previous structures that constitute us. That is, the previous structures are present simultaneously in our awareness, in their respective degrees of presence. Kramer (1997) claims that each mode of awareness contains another dimensional awareness that is manifested and integrated into the "new" structure of consciousness. That is, each of the archaic, magic, mythic, and perspectival modes of awareness constitute our integration of experiences in our lives. Our realizations of once-contradicted worlds appear to us the way the world "should be" (Kramer, 1997). It allows us to be aware of all structures of consciousness through the differences in those structures. The aperspectival/integral mode of awareness serves as a basis to interpret the *kagura* performance and to disclose how the modern dualistic account of the *kagura* appears deficient when different modes of expressing are taken into account.

Systasis

The aperspectival world goes beyond our conceptualization. The world, which is arational, does not represent a synthesis. To be a synthesis, it would have to unite two worlds—for instance, the rational and the irrational—an attempt which only paradoxical thinking would undertake. Instead, Gebser (1985) uses "systasis" to articulate the "whole"

expressed by the aperspectival mode of awareness. The term *systasis* in Greek refers to "put together," or "connection;" it also has the connotations of "forming" and "origin" (Gebser, 1985, p. 292). He contends, "Systasis is the means whereby we are able to open up our consolidated spatial consciousness to the integrating consciousness of the whole" (p. 310). However, the whole does not mean any systematic construction, because systems are dualistic in nature, which implies object-subject, inner-outer, chaos-order, etc. A system, thus, can be understood only by a static metaphor and reification (Gebser, 1985). The term may mean an "a-system" rather than a system, since it does not intend to systematize categorical parts, but instead to conjoin or fit together acategorical parts into an integral whole. Gebser further contends that acategorical systasis:

> …comprehends the ever-latent presence of the incalculable time-energy component in the measurable space-matter state; it is the expression of our recognition of the mutability of all phenomena to which no systematization can do justice. (p. 311)

While the term "system" stresses static elements, "systasis" highlights process (Kramer, 1997). Whereas static elements are perceived as physical, causal, and as a linear way of thinking, systasis is aspatial and allows the efficacy of non-static elements to present in "the sphere of experience" (Kramer, 1997, p. 144). Systasis does not posit a static whole but "an incessant integrating [process] that constantly traces the origin and latently prefigures consciousness in its entirety" (Mickunas, 1994, p. 8). Systasis, i.e., integrative awareness, is not a deconstruction of systems into a sum of parts, but an attitude of "seeing through" various systems and appreciating differences that co-constitute their respective uniqueness. Difference is constituted by comparative identities, and vice versa.

The systasic attempt is characterized as *synairesis*, rather than synthesis. *Synairesis* is the term derived from the Greek *synaireo*, meaning "to synthesize, collect," and fulfills the aperspectival, integrating perception of systasis (Gebser, 1985, p. 310-312). Synairesis is an (a)warning, emerging from "modern perspectivism and radical pluralism" (Kramer, 1997, p. 15). That is, what is perceived through this synairesis is a precondition for diaphany (rendering transparent), and is able to be realized in a systasic manner. This diaphany is called "presentiation," which delineates all types of manifestation and aspects of "time." Only presentiation allows us to realize the awakening consciousness of the whole.

Within the context of systasis, we also need to understand the term "eteology," which Gebser (1985) designs to replace "perspectival philosophy" to denote a new form of articulating, just as philosophy once replaced myth. That is, in Gebser's terms, the "philosopheme," a rational, analytic schema, needs to be replaced by the "eteologeme" (Gebser, 1985; Kramer, 1997, 2003b), derived from the Greek *eteos*, meaning "true," or "real" (Kramer, 1997, p. 137). This is an important idea that gives us a basis for understanding the design of the mental/rational (perspectival) mode of awareness. Eteology is not simply an ontological approach, focused on being or existence. A "being versus non-being" question is dualistic—commensurate with the mental/rational structure. Eteology, in contrast, suppresses this duality and opens multidimensional modes of awareness to interpretation. Gebser (1985) contends, "Every eteologeme is a 'verition', and as such is valid only when it allows origin to become transparent in the present" (p. 309). And, eteologeme is totally different from the idea of representation. While the world of the whole is represented in philosophical approaches, in an eteological frame,

the world can be “pure statement,” and thus “verition.” In the eteological approach, the *eteon* or “being-in-truth” comes to statement of truth and conveys the “verition” that comes from the “a-warning” and “imparting of truth.” In the eteologeme, we do not make an interpretation, but rather an “imparting of truth.” Gebser calls “awaring-of-truth” a truth-imparting act of presentiation or making-present. Making-present the past can be achieved “only where time emerges as pure present, incorporating the future into the present” (Gebser, 1985, p. 26).

In sum, systasis is an approach that examines phenomena through multiple cultural systems and their correlated consciousnesses. Systasis allows each mode of awareness to emerge as unique and valuable. In systasis, the “aperspectivity” component is valid only when we gain the spiritual senses that are latent and make them transparent (making-present) (Gebser, 1985; Kramer, 1997). Thus, systasis is discussed as a means to avoid problems of seeing religious expression as arising from the logic of perspectival rationality. Systasis leads us to consider notions of multidimensionality. The multidimensionality is described as a means of legitimating pre-rational and irrational expressions. This reveals the respective modes of awareness on the basis of evidence and explains their unique forms of linguistic as well as visual expressions. Hence systasis presents the respective modes of awareness in visible, audible, and even intangible forms within which the contexts of their specific modalities and unique constitutions are manifested. Keep in mind, though, that differences revealed in modes of awareness are not totally without measurable standards. What is important is to avoid attempting to understand different worlds through the lenses of other contexts (Mickunas, 2006). Given

the accumulated depth of a linguistic tradition, we can suggest that a particular mode of thinking is, at its root, inadequate to provide human understanding.

Concretizing Time

Gebser's systasic approach emphasizes the integrality of time, which ultimately constitutes the presence of whole. Systasis circumscribes the efficacy of all acategorical elements, that is, all types of manifestations and aspects of "time" across the modes of awareness. Thus our concern with the *kagura* is to concretize time—to realize and become conscious of the aperspectival, which furnishes a means whereby we may gain "an all-encompassing perception and knowledge of our epoch" (1985, p. 16). The term "time" can be traced back to the Indo-Germanic root *da*, which meant in the original language of the Greek "to divide, to take apart, to lay apart, to tear apart, to lacerate" (Gebser, 1985, p. 173) and "time and day are essentially the same and both are dividers of the night" (p. 176). Time, in this sense, serves as a divider that leads to an abstraction. The term "concretize," Gebser adds, is a way of realizing the present in its eternity. So, to concretize time means that considering the temporal context in which events occur is necessary to legitimize analysis of those events. Or we deal with events/analysis in "real time", i.e., the present.

The concretion of time is one of the preconditions for the integral (aperspectival) structure. By integration, Gebser (1985) means "a fully completed and realized wholeness—the bringing about of an *integrum* (the re-establishment of the inviolate and pristine state of origin by incorporating the wealth of all subsequent achievement)" (p. 99). The concretion of time contributes to a diaphanous present and to a diaphanous presence. To disclose the transparency of individuals as a whole, and the interplay of the

various consciousness structures that constitute the individual. The diaphanously revealed space-time continuum is bound by integral continuity. Gebser states,

> This transparency or diaphaneity of our existence is particularly evident during transitional periods, and it is from the experiences of man in transition, experiences which man has had with the concealed and latent aspects of his drawing future as he becomes aware of them, that will clarify our own experiencing of the present. (p. 7)

The concretion of time, thus, does not occur in the following order: pre-temporality, magic timelessness, mythical temporicity, and mental-conceptual temporality (Gebser, 1985). It is rather an integrating process of unfolding each mode of consciousness into a present-moment. It allows us to transcend simple categorized units of time such as "beginning" and "end." Integrality contributes to a sense that is neither temporal nor eternal, but rather an appreciation of each as seen through the other (Kramer, 2003a, 2003b; Kramer & Ikeda, 2002). This approach does not seek to escape from the present, rather it is rooted in the present without being fixed *on* the present or confined to a particular moment within the flow of the past to the future. We are always immersed in a horizon of past and future without sharp boundaries between them, and our theories of knowledge and reality are merged into these horizons. Therefore, we are attempting to unfold the *kagura* not as "knowledge," but as what Gebser (1985) calls "a time being in the broadest sense as wakeful presence" (p. 42). That is, systasis is neither a mental concept, nor is it a mythical image, nor is it a magic experience, but rather is a sense of origin that is prior to all spatio-temporalization. This origin is unfolded only in a systasic manner, that is, with and through the previous modes of awareness. Gebser's concept of

latency enables us to see an emerging "new" structure of consciousness and those that are latent, in the "behind" and "before" worlds of our past experience.

The Ever-Present Origin and Research Question Two

Although the word "origin" implies a much too static idea of a thing's formation, primarily because beginnings are not identified at any single moment, rather the "origin" must be considered in the present, rather than at a particular point in the past. Gebser (1985) contends, "The aperspectival entirety and integrity are always both origin and present" (p. 281). When the origin is recognized as ever-present, we also recognize that our entire human past and the present contain the future. Gebser's central thesis in support of this idea is:

> With each mutation of consciousness, origin acquires an intensified conscious character of present-ness; origin which bears the imprint of the whole and of the spiritual and 'is' before time and space, becomes time-free 'present'…Origin is present. Anyone who is able to perceive this spiritual state of affairs has already overcome decisive reality of the whole: that unique entirety and integrity which is always both origin and present. (pp. 280-281)

Therefore, Gebser attempts to disclose such an interplay, in which the various modes of awareness (i.e., levels of consciousness) constitute these ever-present origins. Hence, we postulate the following research question:

RQ2: How is the *kagura* a presentiation of the ever-present origin?

In this study, our task is to *presentiate* (make present) the past in ourselves, not to lose the present to the transient power of the past. To *presentiate* requires us to deepen the temporal foundations of the aperspectival world by investigating the conscious

mutation. What we mean by a mutation is less a biological/evolution phenomenon; it is more akin to "unfolding," a notion which acknowledges the participation of a spiritual reality in mutation.[43] These processes of relocation make it possible for intensified spiritual origins to be assimilated into human consciousness. The presentiation of the ever-present origin is fulfilled through what Gebser calls "the coalescence of the spiritual" within the various modes of awareness. This means that we need to reveal the kami in the aperspectival mode of awareness that is the form of appearance (epiphany) of the spiritual thought (diaphaneity or transparency) (Gebser, 1985). In other words, we reveal our experience of the spiritual or the kami through all modes of awareness. Gebser (1985) contends that this new spirituality must "emerge from its present concealment and latency and become effective, and thereby prepare the transparency of the world and man in which what is the sacred can manifest itself" (p. 6). In other words, what is sacred should be disclosed in the transparency of human as a whole and through the interplay of the various modes of awareness, which Gebser calls "a-warning." This a-warning involves an extensive treatment of the "essence" of expressivity and the origin(s) of the spiritual. Spiritual reality in its intensified form is also becoming an effectual mode of awareness (p. 5). Origin, being pre-spatial and pre-temporal, presents itself in the respective consciousness mutations, intensifying and integrating them.

[43] Completion of integration is not an expansion of consciousness as the term is used today, particularly by psychoanalysts and certain "spiritual" or quasi-occult societies. Here we mean "an intensification of consciousness."

Method: Interpreting the Kagura with Gebser

Further clarification of the methodological stance for the second approach is needed. Methodological difficulty in studying the kami is its immeasurable nature. With respect to this immeasurability, Gebser (1985) said,

> Manifestations of the psyche are infinite; the material which must be sifted through is, in the final analysis, beyond our grasp, comparable to the flow and flux of the ever-changing water which runs through our hands or to the incessant gusts of wind in the air. (p. 190)

In this sense, previous studies have come from the perspectival attitude. They are a form of pure speculation because they attempt to force an object that is timeless into a pre-cast temporal framework. Differently put, the interpretation of a cultural text tends to be situated within the mode of civilizational awareness of the interpreter. This reduces interpretation to merely reading a text from the reader's own context and perceptual frame. It may be impossible to translate the special languages used and the activities practiced by the members of the school of *kagura* into a single, linear text. Rather than doing this, we must interpret the *kagura* based on the ways that civilizational traditions comprise an awareness of the world. Following Gebserian scholars (e.g., Kramer, 1993b, 1995; Mickunas, 2006), today it is no longer possible to begin with such questions as: "What are the kami?" and "What is the *kagura*?" because such questions inherently assume that we know and have a preunderstanding of reality and that reality can be fully understood through linguistic framing (of a tradition, for example). These questions require a definition, a final answer, and that once the answer is given; the assumption is that we have a definite understanding of the phenomena. Thus, among various modes of

speaking, one mode of speaking was selected as capable of providing propositions that are either true or false. A true expression would allow something to appear as it is. But this process is one involving abstractions, specifically, categories and assumptions far from the present; the process involves removing a specific expression from its dynamic context and the presumption that it can fix, once and for all, something in the phenomenon's essential nature, and/or describe it for all time—ignoring the dynamic nature of life.

The perspectival impossibility is well described in "the hermeneutic circle" (Kramer, 1993b, 1995, 2000a)[44]. The Gebserian major hermeneutical procedure is to comprehend the preunderstanding of a given text, in this case, the *kagura*. The preunderstanding that allow us to understand a text is the product of two types of historical situatedness: one that makes essential the analysis of relevant realms of history that preceded, and another that is based on contemporary historical situatedness (Gadamer, 2004). The preunderstandings we present are not in a simple chronological description, but as "a living tradition," in which a civilizational awareness itself serves a tradition that offers an interpretation of the *kagura*. According to Mickunas (2006),

> One major rule of the hermeneutical method is to learn how to read a text within its own context. This points to a civilizational awareness that is framed by a preeminent text whose validity is neither objective nor subjective, but rather which serves as the source of both. (p. 22)

Within the hermeneutic circle, Gebser's systasis provides us with a new way of talking about the *kagura*. Gebser claims, "Contemporary methods employ predominantly

[44] The term "hermeneutics" is derived from the Greek word *hermeneuein*, meaning "to announce, say, express, assert" (Mikunas, 1972).

dualistic procedures that do not extend beyond simple subject-object relationships; they limit our understanding to what is commensurate with the present Western mentality" (p. 7). The aperspectival is "to emphasize the basic import that we accord to the present, for both space and time exist for the perceptual capacities of our body only in the present via presentiation" (Gebser, 1985, p. 25). Once again, "presentation" is used here to mean "making the past present to consciousness," which means to "actualize, that is, bring to consciousness, all of the temporal structures of the past latent in each of us" (p. 25), in other words, our conscious and unconscious present and past self.

Most methods used in social science are predominated by a particular mode of awareness. Gebser's "method" is not just a "measured assessment," but above and beyond this, is an attempt at diaphany (rendering transparent). Thus our method deals with a multitude of dimensions of human experience without reductionism, unlike other empirical and idealistic schools of thought. The method allows us to be free from a limited scientific methodology based on dichotomies such as subject-object, Self-Other, and cause-effect, and also to recognize that such dualistic methodologies are founded on the three-dimensional morphologies of the perspectival mode of awareness.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have explicated the theoretical and methodological domains of the phenomenological and Gebserian approaches in terms of how we study the *kagura* and how we challenge the dominant functional understanding of the *kagura*. The two research questions developed from this explication serve as the basis for subsequent chapters. To review, the research questions posed are:

RQ1: What essentially constitutes religious expressions through which the *kagura* group experiences the kami in its cultural world?

RQ2: How can the *kagura* be a presentiation of the ever-present origin?

In the following chapter I will provide a descriptive overview of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA in order to set the stage for answering the research questions.

CHAPTER 3

Washinomiya Saibara Kagura: A Descriptive Overview

This chapter provides a descriptive overview in order to set the stage for the contexts of the analyses in the chapters that follow. What is the performance of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA? What constitutes the performance? What underlies Shinto rituals? This chapter explores these questions by examining how the *kagura*, including all the aspects of the performances, is brought to the Shinto religious stage. WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA uses a number of symbolic devices to present mythological worlds of the *kagura*. But to understand how the *kagura* creates its divine Shinto world entails demonstrating the locus of the powers of the *kagura* in its every detail. The details include its history, the setting, tools, and structures as well as each step of the dances. As we shall see below, the *kagura* utilizes rich symbolic meanings of the setting, costumes, props, and choreography to produce the total impact of the performance. The detailed descriptions below are based on fieldwork (observation and interviews) conducted with the members of the Washinomiya Saibara Kagura Preservation Association from October 2008 to January 2010. The purpose of this chapter is to provide readers with much detail about what WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is like and how it presents the divine mythological world.

Washinomiya Saibara Kagura: Its Background

Washinomiya Shrine and Washinomiya Saibara Kagura



Figure 1: The Main Entrance of Washinomiya Shrine (2009)

Washinomiya Shrine (see Figure 1)[45] is located in Washimiya District in Kuki City, in the northwest part of Saitama Prefecture, approximately 50 km north of Tokyo, in the middle of Kanto Plain (see Figure 2 & 3).[46] The shrine is in the western edge of an embankment that has been naturally constructed by the flooding of the *Tonegawa* (Tone River) in Eastern Saitama Prefecture. For this geographic reason, this area has suffered from floods throughout history. Washinomiya Shrine has never flooded, so the people in Washimiya sometimes call the shrine "the floating island." The Japanese people especially enjoy talking about the legends and history of the shrine. The population of Washimiya District is approximately 40,000 (Washimiya Town, 2009). The district used to be a small community (the population was less than 8,000 until the 1960s) where most people engaged in agriculture. Since the 1970s, however, the population has greatly

[45] All the photographs throughout the dissertation were taken by the author.
[46] Although the district is still often called Washinomiya District, Washimiya is the official name of the district. The "no" of Washinomiya has been omitted in 1955 when the village of Sakurada was merged into Washimiya Town. Washinomiya Town was merged into Kuki City in April, 2010, and became a district of the city at that time.

increased from 20,576 in 1975 to 34,552 in 1995 due to large municipal housing projects and the development of transportation systems (Washimiya Town, 2009).

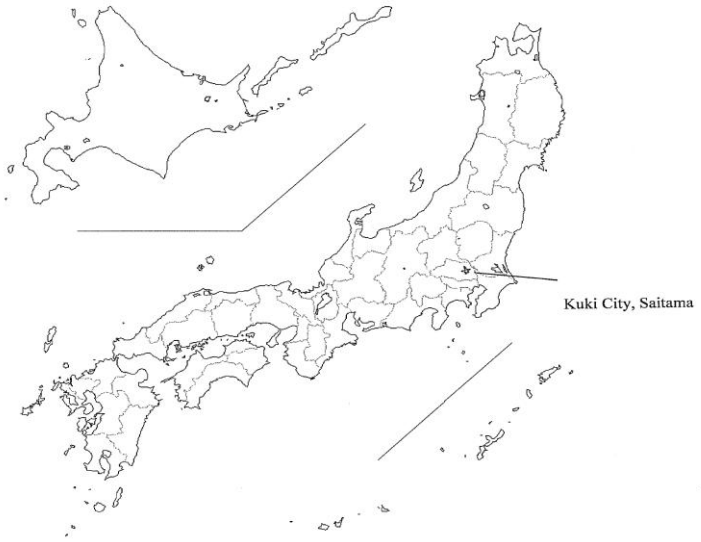


Figure 2: Map of Japan

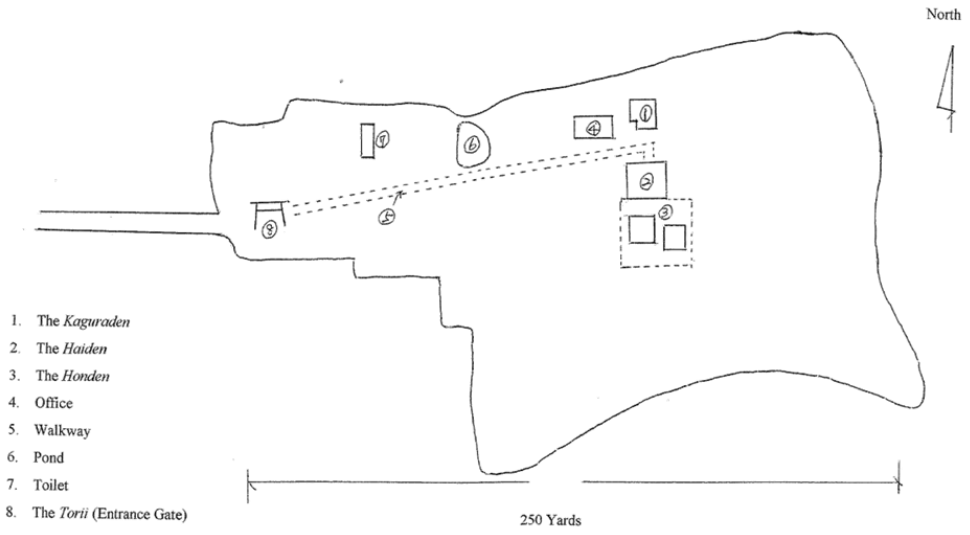


Figure 3: Map of Washinomiya Shrine (2010)

Washimiya District originated and has been developed with Washinomiya Shrine, known as a *monzencho* (a typical community originally built in front of a shrine) (Tanaka, 1989). Washinomiya Shrine was built by the *Haji* family, an artisan group who made the *Hajiki* (Haji's earthenware); however, the detailed history of how and when the shrine was built is unknown as of today. These people were believed to have come to this area from Izumo in Shimane Prefecture. Izumo is a prominent place where Japanese mythologies originated. Some archeological evidence found in the district, specifically the Horinouchi remains, suggests that people settled here more than 3,000 years ago. Many remains of the Jomon (4500 *ya* to 2250 *ya*) and Kofun (250 to 550) periods have been found in the precincts of and around the shrine; it is said that the history of Washimiya District is thousands of years old (Inamura, 1999). The term *washi* is a corruption of *haji* of the *Hajiki* (Haji's earthenware) found around the shrine. *Miya* refers to a small, inhabited forest surrounding the shrine.

Washinomiya Shrine is dedicated to three kami: Amenohohi-no-mikoto, Takehitonari-no-mikoto, and Oonamuji-no-mikoto. According to the *shaden* (a secret document kept in the shrine), Amenohohi-no-mikoto and his son, Takehitonari-no-mikoto, with a group of 27 people, settled in this place, built a shrine (*kanzakisha*) dedicated to Oonamuji-no-mikoto, the kami of ruling lands. Later, in order to enshrine the other two kami, the main building (*haiden*) at Washinomiya Shrine (see Figure 4) was built. Today the *kanzakisha* is located to next to the main building.


Figure 4: The Main Building at Washinomiya Shrine (2009)

The oldest document that describes WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is the *Azumakagami*. The *Azumakagami*, also known as the *Tokan*, is a chronicle of the Kamakura Period (1192-1333), compiled sometime after 1266, under the directive of the Hojo family. The *Azumakugami* was a record in diary form of events occurring during this time. The document stated that the remarkable *takusen* (or oracle) recited in the *kagura* protected the land of Washinomiya Shrine from the enemy on April 13 and April 22 in 1251. It is widely believed that the recorded *kagura* (described in the *Azumakugami*) is not directly related to the *kagura* performed today, (Kurabayashi, 1970; Sakuma, 1999). Although there are a large number of historical documents about Washinomiya Shrine, few documents focus on the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA (Saitamakenritsu Minzoku Bunka Senta, 2002).[47]

The direct connection to the current WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA can be found in two documents written in the Edo Period (1603-1868): the *Hajiichiryu Saibara Kagura Uta Jutsuroku* (A True Record of Leading Songs of the Hajiichiryu Saibara

[47] The Tokugawa government gave the second largest territories to Washinomiya Shrine. This indicates that the shrine was highly valued by people at that time.

Kagura; see Appendix A, Figures 31 & 32) and *Washinomiya Koshiki Kagura Shoroku* (A Record of Ancient Kagura at Washinomiya). The former was written by Fujiwara-no-Kunihisa, then the chief priest of the shrine, in 1726. The historical text offers detailed descriptions of the costumes and the *torimono* (sacred props) in the *kagura* performances, including the lyrics of the *saibara* (special songs sung in ancient court) and other *kagura* songs (see Appendix A for the *Hajiichiryu Saibara Kagura Uta Jutsuroku*). The latter was rewritten later in the Edo Period. This document traces the origins of the shrine and the *kagura* and also provides detailed descriptions of the *kagura* performance.

According the latter document, Fujiwara-no-Kunihisa opened the shrine's secret book (the *hidensho*) to the lower orders of the priests at the shrine in an effort to revive Shinto rituals (the *saishi*) that had ceased before. He also rearranged the *kagura* repertoire from 36 to the 12 programs, and offered the 12 dances on November 20th and 21st in 1708. From these two documents, the 1708 *kagura* performance was believed most likely the origin of the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA that is being currently performed (Kurabayashi, 1970; Sakuma, 1999; Saitamakenritsu Minzoku Bunka Senta, 2002). The latter document also mentions that the rearranged 12-program *kagura* was offered on the following dates: the special Shinto days in March, 1715; the second of April, 1715; the 10th and 11th of March in 1717; and from the 20th to the 24th in March, 1726 (Kurabayashi, 1970). The *kagura* was then called the "Shindaidai Kagura Saibara."[48]

Matsuri at the Shrine

Washinomiya Shrine schedules several Shinto *matsuri* dates annually: the *tsukinamisai* (the *matsuri* of the first and fifteenth of every month); the *taisai* (seasonal

[48] Since the number of 12 originates from 12 months a year, we can easily find many schools of *kagura* consisted of 12 programs.

matsuri); and the *resai* (several different forms of *matsuri*). In total, WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA conducts 55 *matsuri*. Among them, on the *taisai* days (six days annually), the door of the main building is opened, and on those dates WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is offered at the *kaguraden* (the special stage in the shrine). The six dates are: New Year's Matsuri (January 1); Lunar New Year's Matsuri (February 14); Spring Matsuri (April 10); Summer Matsuri (July 31); Autumn Matsuri (October 10); and the *Tori* Matsuri (the first *tori* day of December) (see Table 1 for a summary of the *matsuri* dates).[49] However the dates of the *kagura* performance offered in a year (six *matsuri* days a year) was relatively recently determined. According to the 1941 shrine report submitted to the local government, the *kagura* was offered on 15 *matsuri* dates a year. Of the 15 *matsuri* dates, all of the 12 current *kagura* programs were offered in the Spring Matsuri (*shunkitaisai*) and the Autumn Matsuri (*shuukitaisai*). Today five to six programs are offered in a single day.

	Date	Matsuri Names		
		Original Japanese	Japanese Pronunciations	English Translation
1	January 1	歳旦祭	*saitansai*	New Year's Matsuri
2	February 14	年越祭	*toshikoshisai*	Lunar New Year's Matsuri
3	April 10	春季大祭	*shunki taisai*	Spring Matsuri
4	July 31	夏越祭	*nakoshisai*	Summer Matsuri
5	October 10	秋季大祭	*shuuki taisai*	Autumn Matsuri
6	The first *Tori* Day of December	大酉祭	*ootorisai*	the *Tori* Matsuri

Table 1: Matsuri Dates

[49] Along with these six dates, the *kagura* is also offered at a branch of Washinomiya Shrine in Hanpo District within Washinomiya District.

The *taisai matsuri* days, the main Shinto ceremony, is held in the *haiden* (the main building of the shrine). The president of the association joins the ceremony as a representative of the *kagura* group (see Figures 5 & 6). After the ceremony, the *kagura* is offered. So the *kagura* offerings usually begin at 11:00 am and continue to 3:00 or 4:00 pm. Breaks are freely taken between the dances. Unlike today's strictly scheduled theater arts, the *kagura* group offers the *kagura* performances at their convenience. This is why the *kagura* is not performed for human audiences, but rather offered to the kami enshrined in the shrine. At each *kagura* performance, the shrine pays the performance fee to the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA Preservation Association.



Figure 5: Shinto Matsuri at Washinomiya Shrine (1) (In the Garden of the Shrine, 2009)



Figure 6: Shinto Matsuri at Washinomiya Shrine (2) (On the Main Street in front of the Shrine, 2009)

Kagura Setting: Stage, Costume, and Sacred Props

Kaguraden: The Stage for Kagura

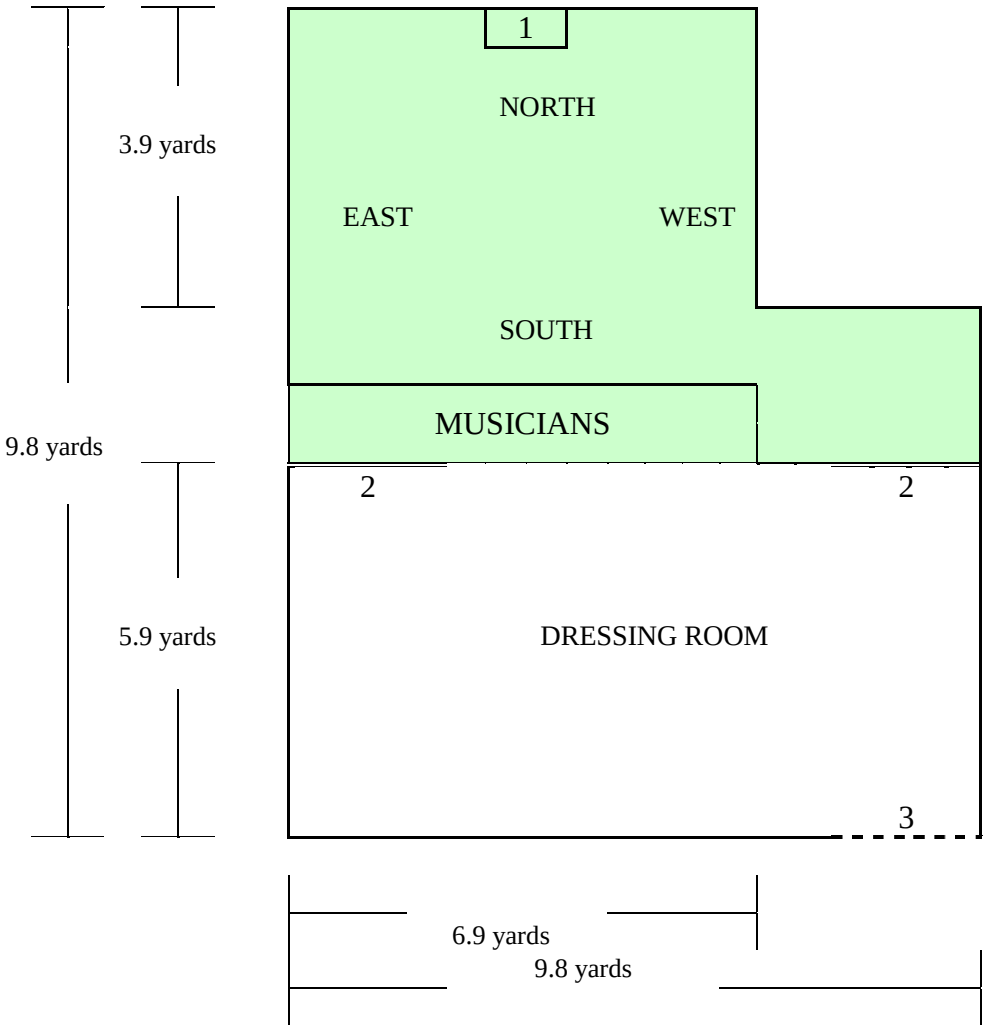
The *kagura* is offered at the *kaguraden* (a special building made specifically for the *kagura* performance (see Figure 7). The *kaguraden* is designed to directly face the inner sanctuary of the *haiden* (main building) so that it is reasonable to conclude that the *kagura* is offered to the kami enshrined in the *haiden* (Figure 8). The current *kaguraden* was rebuilt in 1821 by Oōuchi Kunihisa, then priest of Washinomiya Shrine. It is open on three sides and features a hip-gabled roof. A rising-sun-and-pipe motif is painted on the front of the panels. The stage measures 17.7 feet (5.4 meters) wide and 15 feet (4.5 meters) deep. As seen in Figure 9, each place on the stage is named after the four directions. At the rear of the stage is a 2.95-feet (90-cm) seat for the musicians, and past that, on the west side, is a passageway called the *hashigakari*; it is 8.86 feet (2.7 meters) long and 5.90 feet (1.8 meters) wide. The *kagurashi* enter and exit the stage via the *hashigakari* while musicians use the east side of the stage. At the end of the passageway, there is a dressing room (*gakuya*). Curtains hang down on to hide these two passageways from the front of the stage. The curtains also mark the border between the two realms: the kami and the people.



Figure 7: *Kaguraden* (2009)



Figure 8: *Kaguraden* (right) and the Main Building (2009)



Colored: Stage
1. Shinzen
2. Passageway
3. Entrance

Figure 9: *Kaguraden* Illustration



Figure 10: *Shinzen* (the Sacred Table) (the 2009 Lunar New Year's Matsuri)

When the *kagura* is offered, the *shinzen* (the sacred table, or altar) is placed downstage center (see Figure 10). A large Shinto paper offering is set up on the altar with a small white paper offering placed on the right side of the *shinzen* and a colored paper offering on the left. These paper offerings are called the *gohei* and serve as the *yorishiro* (the "channel" or passageway through which the kami travel to earth) indicating the kami's arrival on the stage. When *kagura* performers enter the stage, they bow in front of these *gohei*, facing the main building. This bow, needless to say, means a bow to the kami enshrined in the main building. It is the first thing to learn in the *kagura* performance. The stage is also decorated with the *kagura* curtain (*maku*). The curtain is hung down from a rod that surrounds the stage; the *shimenawa* (sacred ropes) are placed in the center of each of the four directions. Every *kagura* has its own distinctive curtain. WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA curtains are deep purple, flanked by their distinctive Washinomiya *Kagura* crests. This *kagura* group raises a flag on the west side of the stage, on which the name is written in bold white letters at the center (see Figure 11).



Figure 11: The Flag of the Washinomiya Saibara Kagura Group (the 2008 *Tori Matsuri*)

Set up in this way, the *kagura* stage ritualistically becomes a sacred enclosure where the kami manifest themselves (see Figure 12). The stage setting creates a symbolic universe in which the kami commute between their heavenly abode and the human world, and on which the dancers are both manifestations of the kami and the priests who summon them. Until very recently, the *kagura* stage was considered too sacred for grown-up adult women to be on it for fear of ritual pollution. Hence, the *miko* (shrine maidens who are less than 12 years old), were the only women allowed to perform the special *miko kagura*. Other female kami roles were performed by male performers. As a result, female kami are sometimes as tall or taller than male kami. Today, however, female performers of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA successfully perform many programs and play active parts in transmitting the *kagura* tradition (Makishima, 2002; Saitamakenritsu Minzoku Bunka Senta, 2002).


Figure 12: *Kaguraden* (2) (2008)

There are a few audience members who watch the *kagura* around the *kaguraden* (see Figure 13); however, there are no seats for audiences, and—strictly speaking—there are no human audiences as far as believers are concerned. One must be careful when referring to the "audience," because in ancient times there has been no clear boundary between performers and audiences. The whole community gathered around the *kaguraden* and the *kagura* performances were offered to their local kami, who would bring the whole community permanent peace and a good harvest.

Unfortunately, this traditional shamanic orientation disappeared when other *kagura* started being performed in modern theaters, where the audience sits only in front of the stage. On such stages, an unavoidable distance between the *kagura* performers and audiences emerges, and the totality of the *kagura*, i.e., the spiritual integration of kami and humans, disappears. Nevertheless, WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, however, maintains the old tradition. During the performances, the "audience" can go anywhere to watch, dance with, and feel the *kagura* performances with the *kagurashi* and the kami.



Figure 13: Audience members around the *kaguraden* (the 2009 Lunar New Year's Matsuri)

The Characteristics of Kagura Performance

Like other schools of theatrical *kagura*, the programs in WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA are based on the myths (i.e., the oldest official histories) found in the *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki*, both compiled in the early eighth century. Unlike *kagura* that feature strong theoretical elements, the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA largely avoids such elements, instead preferring to organize their performances on the basis of the strict formality of Shinto tradition, including dancing forms such as *shihougatame* (四方固め) and *sando* (三度). The former refers to a walking pattern from corner to corner, making a distinctive step at every corner, a step to purify the corner; the latter is a way of moving forward and backward with either three steps or six steps. With these dancing forms, the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA presents a strong Shinto flavor, and is often characterized as an elegant, ceremonial *mai*. The *kagura* is a refined dance that evokes images of ancient Shinto ceremonies and the decorum of that time (Honda, 1958b).

Due to long-term, accumulated choreographic influences, it is difficult to determine the exact moment of origin of the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA. It displays a wide range of choreographic influences. Generally the *kagura* is dated to at

least 800 years ago in the Heian Period (794-1191) for two reasons: WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is a rare case of singing the *saibara* (a type of poetry widely sung in the late Heian Period) during their *kagura* performances; and the magical stomping discloses a close relationship with the Buddhist rites of the Heian period (e.g., Kurabayashi, 1970; Nishitsunoi, 1934). The magical *sando* step also shows the mixed Taoist and Esoteric Buddhist influences in the Kamakura Period (1192-1333) (Honda, 1958b). The extensive use of swords suggests a connection to the warrior tradition, and a later Edo period (Nishitsunoi, 1990). Yet some of the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA dance elements indicate much earlier origins, elements including shamanic circling, trance leaping, *miko* steps. These choreographies disclose ancient Shinto roots, as mentioned in the Heavenly Cave myth (Honda, 1962).

In terms of dance structures, folk performing arts scholars tend to differentiate masked dances from unmasked dances. Masked dances refer to ancient *Sarugaku* traditions that ultimately gave rise to the classical *nō* theater; unmasked dances were more common in ancient Shinto rituals. This division, however, is arbitrary and speculative (Honda, 1990). WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA contains both masked and unmasked dances. But, the lack of textual evidence means one can only speculate about the origins of the dances themselves. Some of them have developed into a stage performance; *kabuki* and *nō* performances that were developed from the *kagura* are now being influenced by the *kagura*. Even today, the *kagurashi* of the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA polish their effects of power and beauty, and put forth much effort to cultivate the quality that makes the performance look good on stage. Thus,

WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is believed to be the prototypical form of *Edo Sato Kagura* (a type of *kagura* prevailing in Tokyo and its neighbor prefectures).

Performers

WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is unique in that it has been transmitted "at one shrine only." The special families who have served the shrine were given the roles to perform the *kagura*, known as the *kagurayaku* (*kagura* performers), by the shrine, and they transferred the *kagura* for generations. The shrine's old documents describe that the *kagurayaku* performed the *kagura* at the shrine during the Genroku Term (1688-1703) (Kurabayashi, 1970). These documents also provide information about how the *kagura* at that time was transmitted from generation to generation. The first sons of the *kagura* families succeeded in the *kagura* business. At the age of 15, the sons began to learn the *kagura*, serving a three-year apprenticeship with the strict conditions for transmitting the *kagura*. When they developed their *kagura* skills well enough to be Kagura Masters, their families were given 900-*tsubo* of farmland (approximately 0.74 acres or 3000 m^2) by the shrine. Seven to eight Kagura Masters actively performed the *kagura* at any one time from the late Edo Period until World War II (from the middle 1700s to the early 1900s). From the Meiji Period (1868-1912) until today, the *kagurayaku* was referred to as *kagurashi*.

During World War II, however, all but one of the *kagurashi* died and the *kagura* was not performed in the later war period. After the war the only *kagurashi*, Shiraishi Kunizo, remained, the last *kagurashi* of the traditional *kagura* family. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, under the direction of Shiraishi Kunizo, the *kagura* was revived with a few young men. Some of them still play active roles in performing and in transmitting the

kagura to the next generation. Some detailed descriptions of the current *kagurashi* are presented in the next chapter, but it is important to note here that the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is currently performed not by the traditional *kagura* families, but by those who have voluntarily gathered to perform the *kagura*.

The Kagura Performance

The *kagura* consists of a combination of rhythm and music performed by dancers and musicians. The dancers are called the *maijin* and the musicians are called the *hyoushigata*. The number of dancers varies from one to four, depending on the specific program; the number of musicians is five. As seen in Figure 14 and 15, four of the musicians play instruments—the small drum, the large drum, the rhythmic drum, and flute, and one is a *saibara* singer. All of the five musicians sit in a line from west to east. Each *mai* (dance) consists of three parts: introductory (*deha*), main (*maigakari*), and the ending (*hikkomi*). The special kami character of each dance is manifested in during the main part. *Saibara* is sung between the introductory and main parts.



Figure 14: Kagura Musicians (1) (the 2008 *Tori* Matsuri: the *Sakaki Mai*)


Figure 15: Kagura Musicians (2) (the 2008 *Tori* Matsuri: the *Iwato Mai*)

The repertoire of *kagura* movements contains several fixed routines or patterns (*kata*). Changing the sequence of the movements creates different dances. Many of these patterns have special names, often related to the special kami performed and the kinds of and the ways *torimoto* are used. For example, the *sakaki* dance uses the *sakaki* (sacred tree) as *torimono*, and in the *ukihashi* dance, the *hashi* (the Heavenly Bridge) is placed on the center of the stage. Other names used to describe certain routines are the same as those used for the movements themselves; thus the *yose-ashi* is the gliding steps or move-closer step. The basic position in the *kagura* is *ashi koshi* (legs-hips) style. This posture is performed by bending the knees deeply and lowering the hips toward the floor, while keeping the back straight (see Figure 16). It is extremely difficult for young people because most kami are supposed to be old. This *ashi koshi* posture serves as the basis of the *kagura*.


Figure 16: The *Ashi Koshi* Style (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri, *Sanshujingi Mai*)

The beauty of the *kagura* is determined by the *shosa* (detailed dancing gestures, forms, and styles); the *shosa* refers to these things in *kagura* and Japanese traditions in general. Although many of the divine meanings performed as part of the *kagura* seem lost, the meanings are still manifested in certain *shosa*. The *shosa* give the meanings to any Japanese cultural artifacts and performances such as geisha, sumo wrestling, *kabuki*, *nō*, and so on. Incorporated into the *kagura* tradition and practices, the *shosa* serve exorcism and protection purposes. Even subconsciously the *kagura* performers dance, following quite strictly to the *shosa*. It is an endless task to make more beautiful *shosa*, because the *shosa* are the details through which the *kagurashi* can be the kami. The importance of the *shosa* cannot be overemphasized.

Costumes and Masks

Mask making and mask wearing in religious rites is a universal phenomenon, often endowed with deep religious implications (Hoff, 1978). Much has been written about the roles and meanings of masks in performances all over the world. Japan is no exception; masks have a long and rich history in Japan. The Japanese word for mask is *men* or *omote*; these words also mean "front," "surface," or "face," implying the concept of putting on a different face, or transforming oneself into the kami identified with the

mask. Masks are considered a type of *yorishiro*,—the channel for the kami to be manifested in the dancers who wear the masks. Masks are also viewed as disguises used by the kami in order to appear among people. Put differently, masks depict not only humans dressed as kami, but also kami dressed as humans. This ambiguity and reflexivity is the very foundation of masks and their use (Hoff, 1978). Perceived as the presence of the kami, masks are often treated as sacred objects.[50]

The *kagurashi* typically wear the *chihaya*, traditional Shinto formal dress, on the Shinto *matsuri* days (see Figure 17). The *chihaya* has very large sleeves, a long strip falling along the back and strings that are tied over the chest. The *chihaya* trouser, in the case of the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, is a turquoise *hakama* (trousers-skirt). A dancer is required to wear the special kami's costume, depending on which kami he/she represents. The special costumes also include the masks, even though there are some unmasked dances in the *kagura* repertoire. The section *The Twelve Programs*, later in this chapter offers pictures of the costume and masks (or unmasked) of the 12 programs. Each costume represents the stories of a certain myth, with each kami having his/her own particular costume. When a *kagura* dancer puts on a special kami's costume and mask, he/she becomes a representative of the kami. The costumes and masks are therefore treated with great reverence and care.

[50] Some are enshrined in many places in Japan, and the *okina* mask of the *nō* theater is treated with great respect even today.



Figure 17: A Kagurashi Clad in the *Chihaya* in front of the *Kaguraden* (the 2009 Lunar New Year's Matsuri)

The Basic Movements

Stomping the Feet. Other shamanic elements to effectuate the *chinkon* rite (spirit-purification) include stomping the feet (*senpei*), an ancient magical means of pacifying the spirits of the earth and is often understood by believers to be a sign of trance-possession. Honda (1962) and Nishitsunoi (1990) consider the act of stomping the feet central to Japanese religion, and trace it as the origin of Japanese dance movements. The magical stomping pacifies evil spirits and summons vital forces from the earth (Nishitsunoi, 1990). Because stomping the feet is repeated in a certain rhythm and order, Averbuch (1995) considers this act "a shamanic device which served both to include trance and as the contextual manifestation of it, that is, the possession of the dancer by the kami" (p. 13). This stomping is also an important audio and visual device, which contributes to the richness of the kami/kagurashi characters.

Sando. In WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, *sando* is a way of moving back and forth using three steps. The *sando* combines the magical lore of the Shinto with Esoteric Buddhist traditions. This stepping has an earth-pacifying function, and according to believers, is a protection against evil and harmful earth spirits of disease. *Sando* can also

be viewed as the creation and purification of the universe with the intent to bring forth the life forces of the earth (Nishitsunoi, 1990).

Kadomawari. It is a walking style in which the kugaraishi move from corner to corner. *Kadomawari* includes two types of walking: the *heisoku* and the *shihougatame*. The *heisoku* is walking through the corners; the *shihougatame* involves making special steps at every corner. Stepping at the corner also is believed to have an earth-pacifying function. The kami enact the special fertility charm, by purifying the four corners with bells, and the bell is waved and sounded in order to symbolically energize the forces of life and growth (Nishitsuoi, 1990). The attention to the four directions is the most meticulous and detailed of all the *kagura* dances.

Shihougatame. This is a special pattern that requires the *kagurashi* to make a turn at each of the four corners on the stage; it is widely used in the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA. It means literally to go around on stage through the four corners; it is here the dancer pacifies east, west, north, and south.

Sanyo. The *sanyo* is the posture used when moving from centerstage to a corner. When the dancers make a *sanyo*, the turn requires the dancers to swing a bell over their heads when moving to the right. When changing directions, the bell is lifted only up to the dancer's waist and the left hand is lifted rather than the bell.

Yoseashi. *Yoseashi* is a type of approaching step. A dancer walks on the stage with the left leg forward and the right foot sliding behind to join it, "brushing" the floor. This step has an earth-pacifying purpose (Honda, 1966; Nishitsunoi, 1990).

Spinning. The spinning is a means of purification as well as a characteristic choreographic pattern indicating shamanic possession. Spinning stems from the Shinto magical system and is meant to create a safe and protected space for the kami.

The Torimono (The Sacred Props)

As a rite of spirit pacification and rejuvenation, the *kagura* is held in a shamanistic manner. Not only is the frenzied dance of *Ame-no-Uzume,* mentioned earlier (see Chapter 2, pp. 36-39), understood as a dance of shamanic possession, but various shamanic elements are incorporated into the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA as well[51]. An example is the use of the *torimono* (meaning "things held by hand" or sacred props, as stated previously) peculiar to *kagura* performances. In the *Manyoshu* (a collection of Japanese poetry), the compound characters for *kagura* are marked to be pronounced as *sasa* (young bamboo) (Nishitsunoi, 1990; Honda, 1962).[52] The *sasa* is one of the most important tools used by *Ame-no-Uzume* in the heavenly *kagura,* and the *sayasaya* (sound of waving bamboo leaves) is considered efficacious in summoning the kami (Honda, 1966). That is, the *sasa* is the sound of *kagura*. The *torimono,* originally natural objects like the *sasa* leaves, were later developed to include artifacts like swords, bows, fans, and bells. These props serve as the *yorishiro,* (the passageway or channel the kami are believed to use to come down and enter the body of the *kagurashi*), and also as a means of the *chinkon* (sprit-purification) that shakes and activates the power of the kami who came down through them. These *torimono* are believed to be attractive and inviting

[51] For example, the *torimono* used in Washinomiya Saibara Kagura are: sacred *sasaki* branches; paper offering (*mitegura*); cane (*tsue*); fan (*ōgi*); bamboo grass (*sasa*); bow (*yumi*); sword (*tsurugi*); spear (*hook*); ladle (*hisago*); and vine (*kazura*).
[52] The *Manyoshu* "万葉集" is the oldest existing collection of Japanese poetry, compiled in the Nara Period (710-794).

places to the kami, and skaing them is considered to have an energizing effect in ancient Japan (Nishitsunoi, 1990). In the *kagura* today, the fan and the bells, which were added more recently, are the most frequently used and sometimes serve as the symbols of the *kagura* itself.

All WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA use some kind of *torimono*, and often two or more are used in one dance. Dancers appear on stage with the *torimono* in their hands or tucked in their obi, ready to be produced. As with other costume components, every character has its own specific *torimono* that the dancer manipulates in a specific manner. The *torimono* are the hallmark of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA (Kurabayashi, 1970). The *torimono* demonstrate the most ancient shamanic traditions of the Heavenly Cave myth, and the ancient Shinto ritual traditions; they later incorporated Buddhist meanings and uses into the *kagura*, turning the *torimono* into active magical tools, in the eyes of believers (Honda, 1990). The *torimono* are also sometimes used as practical tools or stage props, and their active magical power is emphasized along with their skillful manipulation. This adds beauty and detail to the dances. Although the *kagura* costumes and *torimono* may have changed their methods of fabrication, they have not lost their essential symbolic meanings and powers. Every component of the *torimono* is prepared with shamanic intentions, to attract the kami to manifest divine presence, and to activate the divine powers of magic and blessing (Aberbuch, 1995). Frequently employed *torimono* include:

Bamboo Leaves (Sasa). As one of the preparations before her shamanic dance in front of the Heavenly Cave, the goddess Ame-no-uzume took young bamboo leaves (*sasa*) in her hands to hold as *torimono*. The *sasa* is considered to be a sacred tree to

which the kami are naturally attracted. It is etymologically connected to the *torimono* that Ame-no-uzume used in her dance.

Bells (or Bell-Wands). In *kagura* tradition, the *sasa* are often paired with bells (*suzu*); the beautiful sounds are believed to attract the kami. Although the bell-wand (also called *suzu*) has been added more recently to the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, it has been widely used in the *kagura* of Shinto shrines. The bell-wand is a small rounded stick pointed on the bottom, with two or three small bells tied with a cluster of hemp strings attached to the top. The tip of the hemp-cluster is dyed blue or green. In the hand of the dancer, it also serves as a musical instrument, shaken and rung to the rhythm of the drum, contributing to the sights and sounds of the dance. The bells are handmade by *kagura* members. The sharpened tip of the bell reminds participants of the days when props were makeshift weapons for the traveling *kagura*.

Fan. The fan (*oōgi*), intimately associated with beauty and grace, is one of the most famous props of traditional Japanese dancing. Since ancient times it was mainly considered as a tool to summon the gods; etymologically the verb *ōgu* means "to invite," and remains an auspicious symbol even today. WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA uses large, white fans used in many of the *kagura* dances, sometimes as a prop to describe particular objects or actions, or as a magical tool of purification, and with skillful manipulation that at times borders on the art of juggling. The fan is important as a magical prop to invite the kami, for spirit purification, and as a visual device to enhance the beauty of the dance. The opening and closing of fans signifies the beginning and end of the dance.

Sword. One of the major *torimono* of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is the sword (called *katana* or *tachi*). The sword is an iconic Japanese symbol. In Japanese mythology it appears as a symbol of masculine fertility, authority, and power, closely connected with Amaterasu Omikami and the Imperial household. It is one of the three Imperial regalia, along with the mirror and the tama-jewel, described below. Since ancient times, swords have been considered as the place the kami come down. In the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, the sword figures prominently on stage and is used in all the ferocious dances (*aramai*). The dancer carries it on stage, tucked into the obi and unsheathed during the dance. WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA usually uses imitation swords (made for the stage) in its performances to avoid injury. The sword is commonly employed as a *torimono* of both preventive and active purification/exorcism. In the combined Shinto/Buddhism tradition, in its double function as a symbolical and a practical tool, and especially in its magical power of exorcism, the *torimono* of the sword reveals what symbolically constructs the Japanese magical powers and efficacy.

Wand (gohei). The *gohei* is the unique Shinto sacred wand of neatly cut white paper streamers.[53] With the *gohei*, the dancer performs a series of purification (*harai*) movements and marks the beginning of the chanting. WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA uses several colored *gohei* along with the main white one. These serve the "doors" through which the kami enter the *gohei*. Originally made of cloth and hemp, white paper has been widely used relatively recently. As one of the *torimono* held by Ame-no-uzume in front of the Heavenly Cave, the *gohei* became the most common Shinto tool, the hallmark of Shinto rituals. The *gohei* is used in the hands of priests to perform

[53] The *gohei* is also called the *nusa*, *mitegura*, or *nikite*.

purification (*harai*), as its swishing sound is believed to be the whispers of the kami. It also serves as a *yorishiro* for the kami to descend to the stage. In itself, the *gohei* signifies the presence of the kami, and its white steamers mounted on a wand, or paper streamers hanging on a sacred rope demarcate a sacred place.

Kagura Musical Instruments

The *kagura* music is both instrumental and vocal, and the dancers add to the music with the sounds of the bells, *sasa* (young bamboo), and stomping feet. The difference between the vocal and the instrumental music lies in the influences of different periods of time. Origuchi (2002) points out that the kami songs (*kami uta*) and narration (*shamon*) are, like dances themselves, medieval in style, while the instrumental music of the drum and flute shows a later, Edo-Period influence (see Figure 18).

Flute (Fue). The *kagura* flute (*fue*) provides the melody of the *kagura*. It is a side-flute of seven holes. It is usually hand-made by the flutist, most often of clay-like paper (in earlier times they were made of bamboo). It is a difficult instrument to play, requiring much practice. The flutist sits at the back of the stage. The sound of flute is believed to be the voice of the kami. The flute usually starts the music of the dance to be performed, cueing the drums to follow. WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA has its own set of flute tones, but the flutist is allowed a great deal of freedom in developing the patterns used.

Drums. The drum, along with incantation, draws the kami from their abode and into the human world. The drum is the focal part of both music and dance in *kagura,* and the whole performance revolves around it. The special attention that is given to the drumsticks emphasizes the shamanic role of the *kagura* drum. The drum not only summons the kami, but also provides the rhythm for their dancing. All the members of

the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA are capable of this drumming. WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA uses three drums: the big drum (*oo-daiko*), small drum (*ko-daiko*), and rhythmic drum (*dai-byoushi*).

The Rhythmic Drum (dai-byoushi). As with other schools of *Sato Kagura*, the measure of this drum face is 16.5 inches (41.9 cm) tall and 15.55 inches (39.5 cm) in diameter. Unlike other schools, however, the sound/tone of the rhythmic drum is loosened. The drumsticks are handmade of thin pieces of bamboo; they are approximately 24 inches (60 cm) each. The edges of the sticks are planed smooth. The rhythmic drum leads all the music in the *kagura* and in some programs, it starts the music.

Big Drum (oo-daiko). The *oo-daiko* is made of a 17.13-inch (43.5 cm) cowhide head, and its height is 20 inches (51.1 cm). The body is painted black and the shrine's crest is drawn in the middle of the body. When it is played, the drum is placed so that the crest is pointed toward the main building of the shrine. The drummer beats the drum on both sides interchangeably with two drumsticks. The drumstick is 15.6 inches (39.6 cm) long and 1.18 inches (3 cm) in diameter (a little narrower on the beating edges). It is capable of producing a very loud sound that can be heard from a great distance. The Washinomiya drumming style is elegant and subtle. The drummer kneels down in front of the drum, striking it on both sides. The drummer uses two drumsticks (*bachi*), which are made of a special sacred tree. The wood materials used in the drums and drumsticks are said to have magical qualities. The *oo-daiko* and the *ko-daiko* (small drum) play the same rhythm.

Small Drum (ko-daiko). The *ko-daiko* is 6 inces (15.3 cm) tall, and the cowhide drumhead is 13.8 inches (35 cm) in diameter. The drum head is loosely tuned up, and the drum is placed with the cowhide.



Figure 18: Drums and Flute (L to R, the small drum, the large drum, the rhythmic drum, the flute player, and the singer (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

Saibara. What makes WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA unique from other schools of *kagura* is that the *saibara* is sung in every program of the *kagura*. The *saibara* is the common term for the *tanka* (Japanese poetry) widely sung in the Heian Period (794-1122), especially on the way to the Palace, while driving horses carrying tributes from local people. The songs summon the kami. The *saibara* are in the classical, Heian-period *waka* (or *tanka*) style, having 31 syllables structured in five sentences, with a syllable cadence of 5-7-5-7-7. The *saibara* is a type of vocal music emphasizing the nature of the kami voice as magical incantation rather than to entertain in the common sense. One special single reciter has been used only in recent versions of the *kagura*. The *saibara* were formerly sung by many, but as the number of the *kagurashi* decreased, the part has been reduced to one. Precursors of the *saibara* are found in the old, secret collection kept in the Washinomiya Shrine. The *saibara* are explicitly religious in character, expressing the content of the *kagura* performances. The content of the saibara

vary. Some are dedicated to specific kami, and others are about offerings, asking for the blessings of fertility of the fields, long life, prevention of calamities and diseases, and for general prosperity.

Musical Effects Produced by the Dancers. The *kagura* music is part of local religious worship. Accompaniment produced by the dancers themselves contributes greatly to the overall musical effect. On stage, the *kagurashi* believe that they make important musical, as well as magical, effects by rhythmically swinging the bells, waving the branch of the *sasa*, and stomping their feet.

The Twelve Performances

WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA has had 12 programs since Fujiwara-no-Kunihisa rearranged the programs in 1708. The number 12 has cosmological significance, symbolizing the entire universe of heaven, earth and time, combining symbols of Shinto traditions (Nishitsunoi, 1934). Although dances vary in structure, setting, costumes, and *torimono*, they share the basic patterns of organization, movement, and gestures. The number of *kagura* performers is varied from one to four, depending on the program. The length of the programs ranges from five minutes to more than 30 minutes. Each part is given a name—its traditional name if available—or a name the members give it. Here I give a brief overview of the 12 programs. At the end of this section a table summarizing the 12 programs is offered (see Table 2). A detailed description of an entire dance (*ukihashi*) is provided in Chapter 5.

1. Amateru kuniteri futo norito shinei no mai

The first dance of the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is performed by a single dancer without a mask (see Figure 19). In this program, the dancer, who is believed to a

human representative of the kami, brings the *norito* (oracle) on stage, and offers it to the kami. The *kagurashi* reads from the *norito*: "We are going to humbly offer the deities this *kagura* performance today. Please let there be peace while we do so." This program is performed to express the attitude and will to perform the *kagura* for the kami and to pray for a successful *kagura* offering to the kami. Therefore, this program is offered first. *Amaterasu kuniteru* means to shine everything without dividing heaven from earth, and *futo norito* refers to a great oracle. The *shinei* means the *waka* or Japanese poetry recited by the *Susanoono mikoto*, the kami of the *waka* (Japanese poetry). The *futo norito* (great oracle) is said to have been chanted when Amateraru-Omikami, the sun goddess of Japanese mythology, was hiding in the Heavenly Cave, and Amanokoyane-no-mikoto came to the door of the cave and sang the *norito* in a beautiful voice. According to the *Kojiki*, this song was also sung at the time the god Susanoo-no-mikoto slew Yamata-no-orochi, a large snake with eight heads and eight tails, at Izumo, a site of Japan's oldest existing shrine, in Shimane Prefecture on the Japan Sea.



Figure 19: Norito (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

2. Tenshin ikkan motosue kagurauta saibara no mai

The second performance, known as the *sakaki* dance, is performed by two dancers without masks (see Figure 20). This is a symbolic paired dance of Yama-ikatsuchi-no-kami and No-tsuchi-no-kami (mountain deities believed to protect the mountains and the fields). Yama-ikatsuchi-no-kami dances with the *sakaki* (sacred branch) and the bells, and No-tsuchi-no-kami dances with the *shino* (another sacred branch) and the bells. According to the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki*, while Amaterasu Omikami was hiding in the Heavenly Cave, a great number of sacred *sakaki* braches were taken by Yama-ikatsuchi-no-kami from many evergreen trees, and No-tsuchi-no-kami also brought the same great number of sacred *sasa* branches from many small bamboos. The *sakaki* and *shino* are used not only in the *kagura* performances but also in many other *shinji* (Shino rituals) because they are both trees of celebration. The *sakaki* is said to be the ancestor of all trees, known as the "tree of prosperity," and the small bamboo, which also holds its green leaves for many years, will grow up straight to become a parent of other small bamboo. These trees are thus considered to be the *tokiwa* (forever unchanging) trees and can be found growing at all shrines around Japan. This *sakaki* dance is also offered as purification ceremonies prior to the construction of buildings.


Figure 20: Sakaki (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

3. Urayasu yomo-no kuni-katame no mai

The third performance (see Figure 21) is performed by four dancers without masks, and is modeled after the Five Elements (wood, fire, earth, metal, and water).[54] While the yellow *gohei* is placed centerstage, each of the four performers dances with a different color *gohei*—blue, red, white, and black. *Urayasu* refers to a country at peace and is another name for Japan. "Yomo-no-kuni-katame" means that the country is made up of the four directions (yomo)—east, west, south, north—as well as the heavens and the earth, and includes a belief that the three (red, while, and black) pillars of the heavens will unify the country and keep it at peace. The blue paper offering represents the east and the ancestral god of trees, Kukunuchi-no-mikoto; the red offerings represent the south and the ancestral god of fire, Kakusuchi-no-mikoto; the white offering represents the west and the ancestral god of metal, Kanayamahiko-no-mikoto; and the black offering governs the north and the ancestral god of water, Mitsuhame-no-mikoto. The yellow paper offering at the center represents Haniyasuhime-no-mikoto, the main god of the

[54] The Five Elements refer to one of the philosophies of ancient China: that the myriad objects revolving around the earth are made of some combination of wood, fire, earth, metal, and water.

earth. These kami also guard the changing of the seasons. At times of snow, frost, wind, rain, and unseasonable weather, it is believed that the weather will be fine when this *kagura* is performed and these deities are worshipped.



Figure 21: Kunigatame (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

4. Korin misaki sarutahiko uzume no mai

The fourth performance (see Figure 22), is a duet *mai* of Sarutahiko-no-kami and Ame-no-Uzume-no-mikoto. The former kami wears the *tengu* mask (a long-nosed goblin) and carries a halberd (a combined spear and battle ax) and a cluster of bells, while the latter kami carries a *gohei* with red paper, bell clusters, and a folded fan during her dance. The halberd in this *kagura* is used by Sarutahiko to drive away the clouds and mist along the mountain paths while he led the way for Niniki-no-mikoto. This is a celebratory *kagura* praying for bountiful harvests and peace in the country. It is said that this *kagura* has also been performed as a prayer for easy childbirth. The story of this *kagura* goes as follows: When the god Niniki-no-mikoto tried to come down from the heavens, he encountered a strange god with bright red eyes at a crossing in the path, whereupon Uzume-no-mikoto was called to the scene. When she asked for the god's name, he

replied, I am Sarutahiko-no-kami, a god of the earth. I came here because I wished to serve as your guide from this point on." This story is based on the myth about Niniki-no-mikoto who was ordered by the sun goddess Amateraru to descend to earth. Later, Sarutahiko and the ancestress of *kagura*, Ameno-Uzume-no-mikoto, are wed.



Figure 22: Sarutahiko (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

5. Iwato shokai shojin daiki no mai

The fifth *mai* (see Figure 23) is a dance performed with one old-man deity and two *miko* (shrine maidens). The old-man deity, Tajikarao-no-mikoto, wears the *okina* mask (an old holy man) and carries a white paper offering and a bell. One of the *miko* is Ameno-Uzume-no-mikoto, who wears no mask and carries a colored *gohei* branch with the bell. The other *miko* is Okiyame-no-mikoto, who holds a white *gohei* and a bell during the dance. This *kagura* portrays the Opening the Heavenly Cave, wherein the sun goddess Amaterasu Omikami hid and cast the world into darkness. The detailed story is described in Chapter 2, herein. This story, too, is gleaned from Japan's ancient *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki*. When the world became bright again, the kami gathered in front of the Cave and performed a celebratory dance, and this *kagura* portrays that happy scene.


Figure 23: Iwato (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

6. Yashima kigen ukihashi waza no Mai

The sixth *mai* called *ukihashi* (see Figure 24) is one of the representative dances of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, and performed by two dancers with a bridge placed centerstage. One wears the mask of the god Izanagi. At his waist, he carries a long sword, and in his hands, a round mirror representing the shape of the sun, a folded fan, and bells. The other dancer wears the mask of the goddess Izanami and carries a round mirror, the center of which has been cut out in the shape of the moon, a folded fan, and bells. *Yashima* refers to ancient Japan and means "a number of islands." This *kagura* is based on the land-creation as described in the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki*. The bridge, called the Ama-no-Ukihashi (heavenly floating bridge), links heaven and earth and is used by the gods when they descend from heaven to this world. Izanagi and Izanamai stand on this bridge and aim the halberd toward the ocean. Then, they stir up the oceans with it and when they raise it, the salt in the water dripping off the tip of the halberd solidities to form an island. They create islands one at a time until there are a total of eight. These "Eight Great Islands" represent the completion of the Japanese archipelago. In this *kagura*, Izanagi and Izanami dance around the bridge, and while doing so they meet and

produce a child. This represents the beginning of happiness among people. Today, this is a *kagura* of gratitude, like the sun (a man) and the moon (a woman) journeying through the heavens and around the earth. This *kagura* has also been performed as a prayer for the prosperity of one's descendants or for better fortune.


Figure 24: Ukihashi (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

7. Daido jinho sanju jinki waza no mai (*sanjyujingi)*

The seventh *mai*, called sanjyujingi (see Figure 25), is performed by three dancers. One of them is the governor of jewels who wears the mask of *okina*, an old holy man, and carries bells and a large heavenly jewel. Another is the governor of the sword who wears the mask of *senzai*, another aged man, and he carries bells and a sword. And, the third is the governor of the mirror who wears the mask of *izanami* while holding bells and a mirror during the dance. *Daido* (Great Road) refers to the path that sustains the country, and it is said that three divine implements—Yata-no-kagami (mirror), Yasaka-no-magatama (jewels), and Kusanagi-no-tsurugi (sword)—are required to govern successfully. These items represent sacred treasures, which are claimed to have been passed through the ages with each succession of the Imperial throne. According to Japanese mythology, the sun goddess Amaterasu Omikami presented these implements to

her successor, Ninigi-no-mikoto, on the occasion of his descent to earth, instructing him to use them in governing the world for as long as the world continued to exist. The dancer carrying a jewel is Kushiakarudama-no-kami, the progenitor of jewel making; the dancer carrying a mirror is Amanonukado-no-kami, progenitor of mirror making; and the dancer with a sword is Amanomahitotsu-no-kami, the progenitor of metal-working. This *kagura* is said to pacify and protect Japan.



Figure 25: Sanjyujingi (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

8. Batsujo shojo shaku no mai

This *kagura* is performed by two dancers without masks, both of whom carry a ladle, a fan, and a bell during the dance (see Figure 26). It seems that originally one of the dancers carried a *sakaki* branch with a cloth offering and with hemp attached. Although this *kagura* is performed by two *miko*, it has not been limited to women; men have also performed this *kagura* in the past. In the story, gleaned from the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki*, Izanagi returns from Yomi-no-kuni but finds his mind dispirited and his body unclean. To refresh himself, he goes down to the Odo River in Hyuga, whereupon he finds the river upstream flowing rapidly while the downstream flow is more gentle. So Izanagi picks a spot in between and enters the current where he both cleans himself and

revitalizes his spirit. This act became known as the Body and Mind Purification. In this dance, the ladle is used to signify the action of drawing water and pouring it over oneself to clean the body. The fan is opened three times during the dance to give protection from the bridge sunlight reflecting off the water. This *kagura* is believed to cleanse the body and mind, encouraging us to overcome our shortcomings.



Figure 26: Misogi (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

9. Gokoku saijo kokka keiei no mai

This ninth *kagura* (see Figure 27) is performed by two dancers. One of them, the god Ukanomitama-no-mikoto, wears the mask of *sanbaso* (an old holy man) and carries a small wooden offering table, a folding fan and bells, while the other dancer, the god Ukemochi-no-mikoto, wearing the mask of Ukemochi, holds a lacquered wooden pot, fan, and bells during the dance. Following the *kagura uta* (song), seeds (cleansed rice) are taken from a lacquered wooden pot and placed onto an offering table, whereupon the motions of seed planting are performed. *Gokoku Saijo* refers to rice, the "root of life," (the pinnacle of the five crops) as the most essential source of nourishment among the five harvests of rice, barley, millet, soybeans, and barnyard grass. Because rice is planted to enrich the country, the popular name of this dance is *tanemaki* (planting of the seeds).

Kokka Keiei refers to the building of the nation. In order to bring peace to a country, it is very important to develop great agriculture that can provide enough food for the people. The people are taught that the sovereign brings the people peace of mind, while the people in turn should devote their energies to working in agriculture to nourish the sovereign; if each of them works diligently, the country will be able to achieve peace and security. The dancers in the *kagura* portray the ripening of the crops and the abundant prosperity of the country: Ukemochi-no-mikoto is said to preside over the five harvests, while Ukanomitama-no-mikoto presides over the food itself, particularly rice.



Figure 27: Tanemaki (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

10. Okina sanjin bugaku no mai

This *kagura* is performed by three dancers (see Figure 28). One of them wears the Okina mask, another the Sanbaso mask, and third wears the Senzai mask. All three dancers also carry fans with the red sun motif during the dance. These three gods, which represent holy old men, are the three Suminoe gods of Sumiyoshi Shrine in Osaka: Uwatsutsu-no-mikoto, Nakatsutsu-no-mikoto, and Sokotsutsu-no-mikoto. Since ancient times, the three gods were believed to protect the oceans and the routes of travel over them. This dance resembles *shikisanba,* a festive routine found in *nō* theater, and is very

different from the other *kagura* dances. The *shikisanba* refers to *okina* of *nō* plays. This play is a highly felicitous number and is performed as a prelude to some *nō* performances. In *Sarugaku*, an early prototype of the *nō* drama, these three old men are imbued with a Shinto interpretation: Okina is the sun goddess Amaterasu; Senzai is Hachiman Daibosatsu; and Sanbaso is the *kagura* god (*myojin*). *Bungaku*, which appears in the name of this *kagura*, means the "study of martial arts;" no matter how peaceful the world may be, there is still no guarantee that the plotting and execution of evil acts will not occur. This dance thus teaches vigilance and that training in martial arts (*bungaku*) is no less important during times of peace than it is at any other time.



Figure 28: Okinasanjin (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

11. Chinakujin hakkyu utsubo no mai

This *kagura* is performed by two dancers (see Figure 29). One wears the mask of U-daijin (the Minister of the Right) while the other wears the mask of Sa-daijin (the Minister of the Left); both are high officials in the government of ancient Japan. Both dancers carry bows and arrows and bells. *Chinakujin* refers to the pacification of ill-behaved deities. *Hakkyu* means the bows and arrows that the sun goddess Amaterasu Omikami gave to the various deities so that they could pacify the earth. *Utsubo* is a

quiver that the deities used to carry arrows. According to the myth on which this *kagura* is based, when Susanoo-no-mikoto tried to meet Amaterasu, the sun goddess saw ill intent in his heart, dressed up as a god and went to see him with a quiver on her back containing a large number of arrows. In this *kagura* featuring dances with bows and arrows, even the skilled warrior Susanoo-no-mikoto is intimidated by Amaterasu's disguise, whereupon enemies are scattered and the devil is forced to surrender. The lively dances portray the quelling and removal of the myriad evil forces in this world. It is said that this *kagura* has also been performed in times of pestilence.



Figure 29: Chinakujin (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

12. Tenjin chigi kanno noju no mai

This *kagura* is performed by two dancers (see Figure 30). One is the god Ugayafukiaezu-no-mikoto who wears the mask of Izanagi and carries blue paper, sacred offerings and bells, and the other is the goddess Tamayorihime-no-mikoto who wears the mask of Izanami and carries a five-colored paper offering and bells. *Tenjin Chigi* refers to all gods and goddesses of heaven and earth. In the myths of the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki*, when the sun goddess Amaterasu passed the sacred mirror to one of her descendants who was to travel down to earth from the heavens, she admonished, "Please devote yourself

whole-heartedly to honoring this mirror in the same way that you would revere me, as it is an extension of my heart." According to the story, the good and evil of all people are reflected to the gods, as if they are in this mirror, and if good deeds prevail, the deities will respond and comply favorably with an individual's wishes. Even if farmers never neglect their crops and work diligently, it is believed that there will be years of beautiful harvests, the climate will improve and successive years of abundance will be assured. This *kagura* is said to have been placed at the end of the series of 12 because it finishes with a prayer that one's wishes be fulfilled.



Figure 30: Kannou (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

	Abbreviated Name	Number of Performers	Mask or No Mask	Torimono Used	Length of Performance
1	shinei	1	No Mask	Fan, Wand Bell, Fan	20 minutes
2	sakaki	2	No Mask	Sakaki and Shino Branches, Bell	15 minutes
3	Kuni-katame	4	No Mask	Wand, Bell	17 minutes
4	sarutahiko	2	Masked	Halberd, Wand, Fan, Bell	22 minutes
5	iwato	3	one masked, two unmasked	Wand, Bell	25 minutes
6	ukihashi	2	Masked	Fan, Wooden Board (the Sun and the Moon), Bell	25 minutes
7	sanjyujingi	3	Masked	Bell, Jewel, Sword, Mirror	23 minutes
8	misogi	2	No Mask	Fan, Ladle, Bell	17 minutes
9	tanemaki	2	Masked	Lacuquered Wooden Pot and Wooden Offering Table, Bell	20 minutes
10	okinasanjin	3	Masked	Fan, Bell	30 minutes
11	chinakujin	2	Masked	Bows and Arrows, Bell	20 minutes
12	kannou	2	Masked	Colored Wand, Bell	15 minutes
extra	amagitsune	3	Masked	Colored Wand, Bell	20 minutes
extra	origami	1	Masked	Long Sword, Folded White Paper, Bell	12 minutes
extra	hakagura	1	No Mask	Wand, Bell	5 minutes

Table 2: A Summary of the 12 Washinomiya Saibara Kagura Programs

In summary, I have briefly described the 12 *kagura* programs offered by WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA.[55] However, not all the programs are offered on the *matsuri* currently. On each *matsuri* day, five or six programs are selected and performed according to the availability of *kagurashi* and their conditions. The members of the *kagura* group are especially fond of the *sarutahiko mai* (number 4) and *ukihashi mai* (number 6). Here are some comments about the *kagurashi's* favorite dances:

> *Sarutahiko* is my favorite *kagura* program because of its peculiar energetic rhythm. Some dances are very active but the *sarutahiko* dance is played with active music. This is the only *kagura* program with accompanying music that is active. (A 20s *kagurashi*)
>
> I do not have any favorite dances in particular, but the *ukihashi* is elegant. The *sarutahiko* dance has a different flavor, which is apparently unique from the other groups' *Tengu* (Sarutahiko) dances. (A 70s *kagurashi*)
>
> From viewers' points of view, the *sarutahiko* dance is beautiful. The *miko* dances are beautiful. The *ukihashi* is also a beautiful dance. (A 50s *kagurashi*)
>
> I have wanted to perform one dance called the *chinakujin*. But the dance is supposed to be performed by two male dancers. I was a little short, and I am only one female dancer so I have not had a chance yet to do the dance. There emerges a large difference in height. Also, I have played the *ukihashi* more than 15 years. I like it very much. (A 30s *kagurashi*)

[55] Along with these programs, there are three additional dances: *tachi origami no mai, amatsu kunitsu kitsune no mai*, and hakagura."

Chapter Summary

The examination of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA in this chapter has shed light on the locus of the powers of the *kagura* in detail including its history, the settings, tools, and structures, as well as each step of the dances. WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA consists of a number of symbolic devices used to create the divine Shinto world. The *kagura* utilizes the rich symbolic meanings of the setting, costumes, *torimono*, music and choreography to produce the total impact of performance. Based on the information presented in this chapter, the next chapter provides an analysis of the communicative nature of the *kagura*—the act of expressing the kami.

CHAPTER 4

Expressing the Kami: A Shared Linguistic Community

In the previous chapter I offered an overview of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA. Various components and aspects of the *kagura* performance are believed to show how the heritage of the Shinto tradition is imbedded in the *kagura* performance. This chapter offers an ethnographic description of the *kagura* group in order to show the experiential dimension of the *kagura*. More specifically, I demonstrate how the *kagura* is shared and communicated and how this sharing and communicating are manifested in their experience. The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate the communicative and expressive nature of expressing the *kagura* that is shared, clarified, and enacted among the group members in order to decipher the knowledge and experience is required to perform the *kagura*.

Especially I argue that informal interaction should not be overlooked because the *kagura* is shared through their interaction mainly through teaching and learning. Observations of the interaction suggest that identifying themselves as *kagurashi* as well as being recognized as a member of the group appear to be significant in gaining a sense of the kami. This is an analysis of how the *kagurashi* experience the *kagura*, that is, how they collectively develop fundamental meanings of our most central concern here: expressing the kami. I am interested in the process through which members of the association create the contexts in which a sense of expressing the kami is shared—transmitted to young performers and audiences. Expressing the kami, with which we are concerned, is not an absolute truth or set of truths in the perspectival sense, but rather, it

is the shared and transmitted meanings that allow the act of expressing the kami to become sacred.

During one-half years of fieldwork activities focused on the Washinomiya Saibara Kagura Preservation Association, I observed more than 50 practices. Practices vary according to which members are available and which dances need to be practiced. A typical *kagura* practice would go as follows: young *kagurashi* practice the *kagura* under the direction of veteran *kagurashi*. During and after the dance, veteran *kagurashi* point to what the performers fail to do and how they should improve their dances. Along with the ethnographic observation of the practice, I occasionally talked with the members about what they did, felt, cared about, thought, and how they viewed the *kagura* worlds during informal interviews. Informal interviews with the members were used to investigate the *kagura* on the individual level and analyze whether and/or under which conditions the members in the association relate themselves to the kami. I begin this chapter with a history of the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA group because it is vital to show who the performers are and how the members create and share the group's history in order to understand the kami during performances.

A History of the Washinomiya Saibara Kagura Preservation Association

WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is being preserved and transmitted currently by the Washinomiya Saibara Kagura Preservation Association. Historically, the *kagura* was performed only by the *kagurashi* who were the first sons of the *kagura* families that served the Washinomiya Shrine. The *kagura* performances were strictly transmitted within the *kagurashi* group for generations. However, most *kagurashi* died during and after World War II, and they could not offer the *kagura* any longer. Indeed, no *kagura*

were offered at the shrine for more than ten years, until 1955. Mr. Sekine, an original member of the preservation association, said,

> Two lucky things were critical to reviving the *kagura*. One is that the last real *kagurashi*, Shiraishi Kunizo, survived the war. Second is that Master Shiraishi was capable of playing every role of the *kagura*: dance, flute, drums ... If something bad had happened to him, the *kagura* tradition would have terminated.

In the 1950s and 1960s the revival of the *kagura* was achieved with the sole surviving *kagurashi*, Shiraishi Kunizo (1891-1966), who was the last *kagurashi* of a traditional *kagura* family.

Under this severe situation, many people were involved with resurrecting the *kagura*. One of these people was Hariya Kenji (1897-1975), the first president of the association. He made a huge contribution to the revival. The Hariya family has served as the deputy official of the Washinomiya Shrine, and Kenji was the 75th head of the family. His son, Shigeatsu, currently serves as the second president of the association. According to Shigeatsu,

> My father [Hariya Kenji] and Shiraishi Kunizo talked to Aizawa Masanao [then chief priest of Washinomiya Shrine] and decided to revive the *kagura*…And they recruited young men to join the *kagura* revival through various organizations such as agriculture associations, commerce associations, and local city government in Washimiya Town.

Mr. Yatagaya and Mr. Sekine joined the *kagura* revival project at that time, and still play active roles in the association today. Mr. Sekine told me that recruiting was not easy:

> …few agreed to join, not only because we were too poor to have enough food, but also because there was a rumor that the *kagura* was to bring bad luck.

During this time, NHK Radio broadcasted the flute music of the *ukihashi*, one of the programs of WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA on July 31, 1955. Mr. Sekine said, "Twenty-seven young men gathered to learn the *kagura* after the NHK broadcast." He explained the situation in detail:

> The practice of the *kagura* began sometime in August in 1955. In the very beginning, because Hariya-san [Kenji] offered dinner for us [young learners] at every practice, many gathered and learned the *kagura*. However, when Hariya-san [Kenji] could no longer afford dinner, the learners left one after the other. Finally only seven of us were left for the practice. These young men and I live near the shrine, so we have kept the *kagura* until today.

Mr. Yatagaya also shared how he started the *kagura*:

> At that time [the 1950s], we did not have enough food. Rice porridge is all we had at home. But we joined the practice because we could have good late-night food. Gradually, though, the number of participants decreased, and finally only seven of us were left. These seven made a revival of the *kagura*. I was one of them. Because my father served the shrine, I had no choice but to accept that call. I also helped the shrine with my father since I was a little kid. When I was younger, I always heard the *kagura* music at the shrine and noticed that they were practicing…There used to be a lot of swamps around the shrine. While I was fishing, I heard the *kagura*. Once we heard the Sarutahiko dance; we went to see it.

As of today, five of the seven have died and the other two still play an active role in teaching the *kagura* to the younger generation.

Practices during the process of revival were not easy, however, Mr. Yatagaya told me, and they had a lot of practice:

> We did the practice every day until 10 or 11 p.m.—until the boss said "It's finished today." We often did the practices until midnight, he added.

Mr. Sekine provided more details of the practice:

> During the practices, we [the seven young men] and Shiraishi worked together to recall the details of dance and music because there were no books about the *kagura*…and… because Master Shiraishi forgot some details.

Then Shiraihi and the seven men had a chance to demonstrate their achievements at the Autumn Festival at the shrine on October 10, 1955. They performed two programs, the *sarutahiko mai* and the *ukihashi mai*. After the performance, Hariya Kenji decided to create the Washinomiya Shrine Kagura Revival Committee, and asked for help from the citizens in Washimiya Town (now District).

From that point, the seven members and Shiraishi continued to practice the *kagura*. As their performances improved and they learned all of the 12 performances, they gained more attention from scholars of performing arts and experts of cultural properties. As a result, upon being selected for the Saitama Prefecture Important Intangible Cultural Property on March 1, 1960, the committee changed the name to the Washinomiya Saibara Kagura Preservation Association.[56] And, on the same day, Shiraishi Kunizo was honored by being named a Living Treasure for Important Intangible

[56] This is the name of the cultural property. Usually the association uses the term *Hajiichiryu* instead of Washinomiya.

Cultural Property by Saitama Prefecture. In large part, this award, along with the one described below, contributed to the *kagura*'s gain in national popularity.

Shiraishi died at the age of 74 on April 15, 1966. Because he had no children, the last *kagurashi* family ended, but Shiraishi's knowledge and skills of the *kagura* have been transmitted to his students, and the members who directly learned the *kagura* from him teach young *kagurashi* what they learned from Shiraishi.

WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA was selected for the National Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property (*jyuyomukei minzoku bunkazai*) in 1976. Mr. Yatagaya told me about the process through which the *kagura* was selected for this honor:

> When we joined the national *kagura* meeting in Niigata, we went there one day early. When we did our *kagura* practice, Professor Honda Yasuji of Waseda University came to see our practice.[57] After the meeting, on every *matsuri* day Professor Honda came to watch our *kagura*. Some other university professors also came to see us. With exposure to those professors, our *kagura* was nominated in 1972 and selected for National Important Intangible Cultural Property in 1976 along with Hayashine Kagura in Iwate Prefecture. After that, with prefecture budgets, many meetings were held. We also hosted some meetings, too.

However, Hariya Kenji, who made numerous efforts to revive the *kagura* and had founded the association, died on March 16, 1975, without knowing that their *kagura* was selected for the National Important Intangible Folk Cultural Property. Among some nominees, Hariya Kenji's son Shigeatsu was elected the second president of the

[57] Prof. Yasuji Honda is the founder of the study of Japanese folk performing arts.

association. As of today, 11 *kagurashi* belong to the association and offer the performances on the *matsuri* days.

WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA has gained media attention recently. The *kagura* group is occasionally invited to perform the *kagura* from local community festivals to national and international events. The local government asks the group to perform for the community revitalization. The members of the *kagura* group especially enjoy traveling to many places to perform the *kagura*. A member talked about the fun he has when traveling with the *kagura* group,

> We travel a lot, and go to many places. We also meet many people. There are occasionally *kagura* meetings at which some schools of *kagura* gather and perform. Also, we can go to the places we otherwise could not go to. One time we went into the official residence of the Chief Justice for our *kagura* performance. We also go on some one-day trips by bus. We also performed for some years at the festivals sponsored by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries. There are lots of encounters with new people. We also watched different schools of *kagura* and studied them.

The group has even performed the *kagura* in Pennsylvania, USA in 1985, and China in 1988. In 2005, the group performed the *kagura* for the Emperor and Empress and the Swedish Prince and Princess at the shrine in Kawagoe, Saitama. But, the *kagura* is the most meaningful and fully realized when performed in its own environment, in its own context, where the magical power at Washinomiya Shrine is manifested. The president said,

We are happy to help the publicity of Washimiya Town and let the residents be proud of their city with our *kagura* exposures to TV and newspaper. But our basis of performing the *kagura* is for Washinomiya Shrine and for Washimiya Town.

Kagura Performers (Kagurashi) Today

Performing the *kagura* was not open for all prior to World War II, and only families of the *kagurashi* were directly involved in the *kagura* business. None of the *kagurashi* today descends from the original *kagurashi*, and the association is open to anyone now. However, because lots of practice is required to be *kagurashi*, all the 11 *kagurashi* today live close to the Washinomiya Shrine. Although the criteria for becoming a *kagurashi* are less stringent today, it is still somewhat difficult to belong to the group. The *kagurashi* play sacred representative roles in the *kagura* offering to the kami; those who wish to become *kagurashi* must be accepted by all the current members. Today the *kagurashi* are all volunteers. They are paid when offering the *kagura* at the shrine on the *matsuri* days, but they cannot live on those payments alone; they must have steady jobs. Their jobs are wide in range: some work in local government, and others at private companies. Some older members have retired. There is one thing they have in common, however: they are flexible to take the day off on the *matsuri* days. This is important because the Shinto *matsuri* dates are arranged based on the old lunar calendar rather than on contemporary holidays.

Two current members received *kagura* lessons directly from Master Shiraishi, the last *kagurashi*. Who are the rest of the members? Briefly speaking, there are three generations in the group: the oldest generation (70s and 80s); the middle generation (40s, 50s, and 60s); and the young generation (20s and 30s). Of the 11, three are the older

generation, five in the middle generation, and three are from the young generation (see Table 3). The *kagura* contains many old-person postures such as bending forward and stepping slowly. For this reason, aged members play very active roles in the performances.

	Name	Title	Age	Gender	Roles
1	Mr. Hairya	President	80s	Male	Saibara
2	Mr. Yatagaya	Vice-President	70s	Male	Drums
3	Mr. Sekine		70s	Male	Dance, Drums
4	Mr. Takei		60s	Male	Dance, Drums
5	Mr. Kurita		50s	Male	Dance, Flute, Drums
6	Mr. Makishima		50s	Male	Dance, Drums
7	Mr. Uehara		40s	Male	Dance, Drums
8	Mr. Suzuki		40s	Male	Dance, Drums
9	Miss Nomura		30s	female	Dance, Drums
10	Mr. Kawabata		30s	Male	Dance, Drums
11	Mr. Karato		20s	Male	Dance, Flute, Drums

Table 3: Members of the Association (as of 2010)

Each generation, as well as each individual member, has differing circumstances surrounding their involvement with the *kagura* and how they came to join the association. The oldest generation began the *kagura* when WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA was revived, as explained above; some of these *kagurashi* (Yatagaya and Sekine) were introduced in the previous section. Each member of the middle-aged generation came to the *kagura* group on his/her own. One of them (50s), who currently plays a main role in teaching young *kagurashi* and running the association, shared me with how he got started:

> I took pictures of the *kagura* for six or seven years before I began the *kagura*. Then I was asked by one of the members of the association, "Why don't you learn some *kagura*?" So I began learning the *kagura* and joined the association when we were on the performance trip to China in 1986.

Another *kagurashi* began the *kagura* because he got interested in the *kagura* music and wanted to be capable of playing any *kagura* instrument. He said, "When I began the *kagura*, it was fun to learn, and I was happy becoming capable of playing the *kagura* music."

The young *kagurashi* began the *kagura* when they joined the club of traditional performing arts at Washinomiya Junior High School. The club is known as the *dento geinou* (folk performing arts) club, and provides *kagura* lessons for students, with an aim toward gaining the students' interest in the *kagura*. All the young *kagurashi* are graduates of the club. One of them (30s), who is considered the most skillful of the young performers, shared her story with me:

> I do not recall seeing the *kagura* before I started the *kagura* at a junior high school club. It was a coincidence. My friend's friend was already in the club when I entered the school, and a friend of mine asked me to join the club with her. I did not know about the *kagura* at that time. My mother wanted me to perform the *kagura*, but she thought the *kagura* group was restricted to only Washinomiya natives.[58] I am allowed to be part of the group.

[58] That is, her parents were newcomers to Washimiya District.

No matter how long the members have performed the *kagura*, they still remember how hard it was to master the *kagura* and how memorable it was when they officially performed the *kagura* for the first time. A middle-aged performer said,

> Because I had been watching the *kagura* for more than six years, I thought I knew the *kagura*. But it was difficult for me to perform when I began learning the *kagura*. The *kagura* performance consists of entirely new moves in my life. What I really found confusing is that the *kagura* has so many similar movements. I did one move at this corner, and when I moved to the other corner, I was confused as to what to do next in this corner. When moving in the center of the stage, I got confused with the accompanying moves. I felt I had become capable of doing the *kagura* dance when I followed the moves in my mind: I do this here, and I do that next, and so on. In the image training, I can follow the dances. My first role as an official offering was as a boy who carried the *torimono*. Then I was allowed to perform the *ukihashi mai*.

A young *kagurashi* also told me,

> When I learned the *kagura* at school, there was no video like today. The veteran members came to school regularly and taught us the *kagura* in the way that today's lesson was from this part to this part. We learned one dance for approximately two months. Then we performed it at local community festivals and school festivals. It was hard to master one dance for junior high school students. When I was a junior at the junior high school, I was forced to learn three dances. I got these three mixed up. I still remember I stopped my performance in the middle of the program in front of an audience.

Description of Practice

Five to seven *kagurashi* usually gather at the *kaguraden* on Wednesday around 8:00 pm to practice some dances. In the practice, the young *kagurashi* perform some dances—usually two or three dances—under the direction of the veterans. This practice session takes place every Wednesday during my fieldwork (September 2008 to January 2010). *Kagurashi* who are available join the session get together and decide who will perform which dances almost two weeks before the official performance. So for two weeks, they set up special practice days in addition to Wednesdays. Following is an account of the interaction among members of Washinomiya *kagura* group, providing a detailed description of their ordinary *kagura* practice, the *Okinasanjin* (Three Okina) *mai*.

One night before the 2009 New Year's festival, the association decided to perform the *Okinasanjin mai*, which had not been performed more than ten years.[59] Three young *kagurashi* were selected to perform the dance. It is a relatively long dance, about 30 minutes in length, and the most structurally complicated and detailed dance of all the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA repertoire. In many respects, this dance differs from others; for example, these three kami stand facing the front in a line and the steps and hand movements change frequently and seldom repeat. Especially the dancer who does the Sanbansoo role needs to do different patterns from the other two, and to demonstrate the jumping-stomping on one foot, which is called the *shingi*. One of the three young

[59] The *Okinasanjin* (Three Okina) is a three-person dance. Three kami in this dance are Uwatsutsu-no-mikoto (Okina), Nakatsutsuo-no-mikoto (Senzai), and Sokotsutsuo-no-mikoto (Sanbasoo). They wear Okina, Sanzai, and Sanbasoo masks, and their *torimono* are the fans and bells. These three kami are believed to come from the ocean when Izanagi went to Hyuga (Miyazaki prefecture). Therefore, they are believed to be guardian kami who protect from sea disasters.

kagurashi has never played it, while the other two have never performed it as an official offering.

Under one veteran *kagurashi*'s direction, the practice took place along with watching the video that recorded a performance from more than ten years ago. In the back of the *kaguraden*, the dressing room (*gakuya*) includes the TV and VCR. Once the *kagurashi* met in the *kaguraden*, they went into the dressing room and watched the video for 20 minutes. They recalled the sequences of the dance and particular dancing style. Then they came out to the *kaguraden*, and without music, they began performing the dance together. The dance requires the dancers to do the same *shosa* at every corner, so during the practice, they made sure of their performance, asking "Is this, right?" The conversation was simple, using "this" or "that," showing a certain *shosa*.

A few minutes later, while the three came closer, swinging their *torimono* (fans and bells), one of them asked, "Is this (*torimono*-swing) to be done in the upper or in the bottom [above/below the waist]?" Then the veteran *kagurashi*, watching the dance, answered, "In the upper." When they finished the part of the dance in which the *kagurashi* stand close to each other, the veteran pointed out, "You must finish the part with one fan-shaking." To make sure of the part, they did the same movement with the sound of the flute. With the flute, they made sure that they had to do the ending on the first step of the coming-closer sequence. The reason why they made sure of this part is that most dances repeat this movement two or three times; however, this dance requires it be done only once. Therefore, they needed to make sure of the movement and share the image with the others. This was not only for the dancers, but the flutist also needed to share this image as well.

The *torimono* usage became another concern. One young *kagurashi* asked the veteran, "Should I turn my wrist when swinging the *tsurugi* (short sword)?" The question came because the *tsurugi* contains sharp edges on both the sides, which is different from the *katana* (sword used in different dances). To the question, the veteran answered, "Yes, you should turn it over because if you don't, the sword hits other dancers."

In some other parts of the performance, in order to make their *shosa* harmonized, one of them counted, "One, two, three, four, five, *ton*." The other two also shared the *ton* part, saying "ton." The *ton* means nothing but indicates the timing to make the same *shosa*. This *ton* also has another use—*ton* indicates a particular *shosa* that requires the *kagurashi* to make a big step. So, one dancer asked the other two, "It's easy to do the *ton*, right?" At another point, one *kagurashi* says, "I am confused about how many times to repeat the circling movement." And they stopped dancing and began to talk about the circling-movement part. The unique pattern of this dance seemed to give one *kagurashi* a sense of incongruity. He seemed confused with what pattern goes in which dance. This implies that the *kagurashi* learn the choreography, making sure about the particular *shosa* that are unique to a particular dance. Then the veteran explained, "The three-*kagurashi* dance includes doing the *shosa* three times, just as the two-*kagurashi* dance does it twice. Another three-*kagurashi* dance also conducted the part three times." In response, one young *kagurashi* said, "I'm sure I will forget it." Then they repeated the part again, saying "Do the *pon* at the third time." The term *pon* is also simply an indication of timing used to keep all three dancers moving together.

Furthermore, in this dance the *kagurashi* shake their necks when the three dancers are in a line at the back of the stage. This is one of the most important body movements

in Shinto tradition because it is believed to be a sacred act of the kami. But each of the three conducted this neck shaking in his/her own way, so one *kagurashi* said "We better start this from the left, right?" Then two of the dancers did it from left. This time the neck-shaking part was decided to begin from the left. Shaking the bells and fans also needed to be done all together. So, making sure of the process, they all made sure of the act, shouting, "Twice in the back and once after turning around." Another *kagurashi* asked, "Once or twice after one step forward?" One of them ran back to the dressing room and checked the videotape. Then the other two also ran back to the dressing room to watch.

After checking, the veteran said, "Let's restart with the part of the facing each other." Then one of them began voicing the steps again, "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight." The move forward and backward was also checked, "One, two, three, four, one, two, three, four." Again, when the ending part came, the *kagurashi* remained unsure of the movements. The style placing the opened fans on the top of the bell needed to be done all together. One *kagurashi* asked, "Is this the ending style?" The veteran answered, "Yes, it is." They again ran into the dressing room and made a quick video check. When they came out, they finished the sequence of the dance. Once this sequence of the dance was finished, they had the following dialogue:

Young Kagurashi A: Is it all right to begin the dance with shaking necks, then make a bow, and wave the bells and each *torimono*?

Young Kagurashi B: Right.

Young Kagurashi A: We would jump on the fourth step, right?

Young Kagurashi B: Yes, the fourth one.

Young Kagurashi C: How many rounds do we make in the end?

Young Kagurashi A: Three.

Young Kagurashi C: Do we do this [the *itadaki* posture] from right or left?

Young Kagurashi A: From the right. But I am confused about which corner to go to.

Veteran Kagurashi: Did you make a turn at the corner?

Young Kagurashi A: No, I didn't.

Young Kagurashi C: Do we have to bring the *torimono* up and down when we turn around?

Veteran Kagurashi: Right.

Young Kagurashi B: If we do that part [the *shihougatame*] one more time before leaving off the stage, is it too much? But if we don't, it means that one of us leaves the stage without completing the part, right?

Veteran Kagurashi: Right. You [Dancer B] have to leave the stage without completing the part, but the other two do the parts fully.

Young Kagurashi B: How about going around when entering the stage?

Veteran Kagurashi: The same as the ending part.

This kind of dialogue is typical during *kagura* group practices, the process of sharing the tasks of determining what is right.

One obvious thing in this description is that the *kagura* performance is communicatively shaped in the *kagura* group. The process of making sure about what to do shows how the members collectively create what is right and what is not. They determine what is right or wrong through interaction rather than through written

documents. Although in this case they watched the videotape several times, the communicative process of sharing a good *kagura* is always center in their practices. Through the interaction, a unique form of the performance is being prepared. In so doing, the members reach consensus as to the "correct" *kagura*. While the consensus is shared through their conversations, we need to know how the consensus itself is being made.

What Is a Good Kagura?

Another day I asked some members questions such as: What are the correct forms of *kagura* and what are not? What criteria do you use to make such a decision? One *kagurashi* explained to me,

> I have performed the *kagura* for more than 20 years, but I have not made a perfect dance yet. I still have many mistakes. I think we need to perform the *kagura* strictly in the right ways and right forms. So I do the dance politely because it is an offering to the kami.

Another *kagurashi* told me that the criterion that distinguishes a good from bad *kagura* is "attitude toward the kami." For him, the ideal *kagura* is the one in which he can perform the kami from "the *kagura* point of view." He further explained, "It is a divine state in which I don't about the correct *kagura*."

A flutist also answered,

> It is not a matter of how to play the flute, but I play what I think is right to the kami. I often watch the video recording of the *kagura* performance when it was selected for the National Important Intangible Cultural Property (in 1976). However, such a recorded performance fixes the *kagura* in a certain form. There is much left to imagine about what is right to the kami.

Soon I realized that the question of what is the correct *kagura*, in this sense, is too linear and perspectival to seek a single absolute *kagura* form. To be sure, modern recording devices help the *kagurashi* learn many forms and patterns. In fact, they rely largely on the old recorded performances that were performed by those who directly learned the *kagura* from Master Shiraishi. These *kagurashi* played main roles in the revival of the *kagura* for the selection of the National Important Intangible Cultural Property in 1976. The recorded performance serves as prototype of how to perform the *kagura* today. But this does not mean the performance is the *only* form. An elder *kagurashi* told me how he learned from Master Shiraishi, implying that watching the recorded *kagura* performances is different from the perfect *kagura*:

> The *kagura* has so many things that you cannot understand by just watching it. There is no perfect *kagura*. When we [elder *kagurashi*] teach the young *kagura* students, the students are good at memorizing the patterns. Once they are capable of performing the *kagura* at a certain level, then a further improvement would be entirely up to them. When I learned the *kagura*, our Master was not consistent about his teaching. He even played the drums differently everyday. Today's performance is obviously different from the one yesterday.

A middle-aged *kagurashi* added,

> I attempt to represent the ancient mythological world in the *kagura* performance we are performing. Technically what the association is doing now is to represent the performance done 20 years ago, but this *kagura* is also the representation of what the kami did a long time ago.

Teaching and Learning Constitute One Form of Communication

When new learners perform the *kagura* for the first time, an experienced *kagurashi* dances with the learner together. The *kagurashi* teaches a learner every single part of the dance one by one, and the learner imitates what the *kagurashi* does. It is one-to-one teaching. One veteran *kagurashi* said, "Mimicking is the best way of learning the *kagura*." The president of the *kagura* also often indicates,

> The Japanese word *manabu* (to learn) is derived from the word *maneru* (to mimic). Mimicking the kami is the best form of the *kagura*.

In other words, teaching the *kagura* is not a one-way flow from teachers to learners; learners also play active roles in the process.

The current prevailing model of communication categorizes teaching and learning as a specialized form of communication. This is because the model traces the way in which information goes from a teacher to a learner. This way of tracing information from one place to another appears problematic in the traditional *kagura* teaching because without assuming the information prior to the communication, the tracing does not make sense. As seen in the act of mimicking in the *kagura* teaching, teaching and learning constitute one mode of communicating in which teachers and learners share the same moments. In this sense, the oral traditional way of teaching and learning is deficient and inefficient by modern standards—standards demonstrating the obsession with efficiency to the detriment of depth of understanding. This one-way transfer view is not useful in understanding the *kagura* learning process.

Recording media and written manuals provide a way of teaching and learning, but this method is based on the value of efficiency. Elimination of that which cannot be

written or measured is failure to preserve tradition. The *kagura* group's oral tradition well demonstrates the limitations of thinking that communication acts are "right" and "correct" across situations.

These limitations can be found in teaching *kagura*'s musical instruments. An elder *kagurashi* said,

> One day a music professor from Morioka University (Iwate Prefecture) came to score the *kagura* flute. He worked on it for two years, but he couldn't do it. Our Master's flute was handmade. He made it from bamboos and painted it black on his own. He did not even tune it. The *kagura* music cannot be on a score. His flute is his own style.

Another *kagurashi*, who teaches young learners how to play the *kagura* flute, said:

> When I teach the flute, I face many limitations. The only way to learn the flute is to mimic what I do. I also did so when learning. But the school asked me to score the *kagura* music in a Western style of five lines for students. I don't want to do it. But I have to do so because the school requires a certain accomplishment in a certain period. The music score, however, is not quite adequate; rather, the *kagura* music is beyond the score. The only way to learn the sound is to listen to the real sound. The *kagura* music is not writeable on a musical score (see Appendix B, Figure 33 & 34, for the music score he wrote only for teaching).

These comments and explanations imply that the *kagura* is more that the sum of limited parts such as musical scores or scripts or costumes, etc. The *kagura* is not reduce-able in these ways. Perspectival mentality tends to seek the origin as a particular time in history, to show historical evidence, and to make a conceptual effort to interpret the

kagura. This explains nothing beyond the historical linearity of the *kagura*, i.e., a chronological list of events. We tend to think that WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is valuable because it has a clear historical origin: The current *kagura* performances are directly learned from the last *kagurashi*, Master Shiraishi Kunizo. But more important is that its oral tradition still remains in this *kagura* group. In the extant documents, the list of the dances is accompanied by strange symbols, the meanings of which we can only speculate about. However, there has been an oral tradition accompanying the texts, and it is this oral tradition that preserves the traditions. So, the "correct" *kagura* is not a fixed fact in history; rather it is manifested in the everyday communicative activities called "practice" in this case. That is, how the group understands that tradition is what constitutes "expressing the kami." *Kagurashi* nor the *kami* live in books or videotapes; rather the *kagura* lives in interaction, in communication among the *kagurashi*.

In the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, a middle-aged *kagurashi* often teaches young *kagurashi* in front of an elder veteran *kagurashi* who taught the middle-aged one. Through the teaching, old and young *kagurashi* share the *kagura* even in an indirect communication activity. The *kagura* is a teaching site where any *kagurashi* can get together to share what the *kagura* is. That is, the *kagura* gives the members a time and place to get together. Transmitting the *kagura* performance to another generation is all about getting together for the sake of the *kagura*. The time shared among the members creates a common understanding of their *kagura*. It is, more importantly, this communicative process that shapes their understanding of what is good *kagura* and what is not. The criteria are never fixed; rather, they are continually being formed through the interaction among the members. The *kagurashi* devote themselves to the group, and they

actively preserve traditions. There is no absolute single truth in the tradition; the culture of the *kagura* group is manifested in the communication acts of teaching and learning.

What Are the Kami Like?: An Insight into the Kami

The following advice was often given in the practices I observed: "Your dance is way too detailed. Looks very busy;" "You tend to be too much forward-bended when you make some steps back;" "Keep in mind that all the acts are in one flow;" "Twist your body when swinging the *torimono*;" "Make it look natural;" and "Shake your neck four or five times in one sequence, and gradually make the movement smaller and smaller." This advice is not about right or wrong in the performance, rather it is about whether the dancers are doing the kami's performances or not. More obvious advice about how to act like the kami are also made: "Your *bukkomi* (a bending-forward posture) looks a little huge. Remember you are Uzume, which requires you to make a smaller move;" "Swing your arms more powerfully, Sarutahiko;" "You are Sarutahiko! Dance wild!" and "Keep in mind that you *ARE* the mask (the kami). Don't look down. Look five or six meters out."

When elder *kagurashi* teach young *kagurashi* the so-called subjective qualities of the *kagura* such as beauty, elegance, and divinity, they rely on the kami to exemplify the performative qualities. The teaching process is not limited to showing learners a set of perceptual objects, but also showing their evoking an essential insight into the kami. An elder *kagurashi* explained how he teaches young *kagurashi*:

> I basically allow young learners to perform the *kagura* in their own styles as long as they are okay with the sequence of the dance. Every dancer has different habits. Every dancer has his/her own habit in ways of lifting legs and making steps. But, for example, one learner tends to lift his heel when he has to gild his steps [the

heisoku move]. In that case, I will make a correction because the *heisoku* move is for the kami so it requires a proper move. Dancers make a slow bow because it is for the kami. Young learners tend to do the dance quicker because they are only thinking about the sequence of the dance. So I especially point to the slow dance again and again. It is hard for them to understand this slowness, so I count slowly: one, two, three, bow.

Another *kagurashi* said,

> I make the choreographic moves slowly in intent. In the masked dances, I intend to bow slowly because it is an offering and I am kami. The *kagura* must show our respect for the kami.

The *torimono* usage is no exception because these are offered to the kami. One *kagurashi* explained why performers are required to learn the strict usage of the *torimono*,

> The *torimono* is for the kami. We cannot hold them lower than our eyes. We have to hold them higher than our eyes. They are supposed to make the kami joyful, so it is extremely important to treat them properly.

Every dance uses different combinations of *torimono* so WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA has as many dances as the number of the *torimono* used. Therefore, for the young ones, it seems difficult to learn each of these proper uses. For example, the veteran *kagurashi* point out the following things about using the fan: "The way you opened the fan is awkward;" "When you get the fan straight up, you need to shake it, something like drawing a circle. You do so even when bringing it up;" "It is awkward when you make the first step with fan;" "The way you used the fan does not look good;" "Make the fan

flat when you swing it;" "Swing the fan side to side;" "Make it a beautiful swinging of the fan;" and "It is beautiful to hold it naturally."

As seen the advice above, the words "awkward" and "natural" are often used to describe the proper kami movement, and the meanings are somewhat difficult for young *kagurashi* to grasp. A 60s member said,

> What I mean by 'natural' is doing something without making the manner appear special or altered … It is a feeling of being in harmony with the kami in the performance…It's a sort of the totality in which all of the members are moving and thinking in one direction.

The term "awkward," on the other hand, is used to refer to a move that is unnatural to the kami. Keep in mind, though, that their usage of these terms does not mean anything about right or wrong. The terms do not make any sense outside this communication environment. Rather the terms are a form of sharing what the kami are like and what is a proper offering to the kami. The kami being referred to are not perceptual in the modern rational sense, rather they are available only in the shareable and experienceable communication setting. That is, the kami are not derived from the various objects used to exemplify them, rather, the kami are manifested in the communication the members experience in the process of determining what a good *kagura* performance is. In this sense, expressing the kami is possible not because the members have some inaccessible qualities belonging to the internal, mysterious kami, but because they can have the simultaneous experience of shaping the idea about the kami within a communicative community.

The communicative experience of the kami is one of the conditions for the *kagura* performance. As discussed above, the members are not required to have the perceptional objects of the kami. If the objects were necessary, they would never be able to express the kami without them. Yet in communicational processes, they agree on having expressed the kami. Hence I would argue that what allows the kami to be expressed is a "civilizational" fact of having "insight" (Pilotta & Mickunas, 1991) or a "horizon" (Gadamer, 2004; Gebser, 1985; Kramer, 1997) into the kami as an expression. Without this insight, *kagura* learners would be required to understand all the facts about the kami in advance to in order to understand what is being expressed. But as already noted, even in this case the kami are not objects as such. Even in this case one would require an insight into the kami in order to understand what the other person is saying about the kami. There is nothing about the kami coming from the perceptual qualities. This suggests that communicability assumes an insight into the kami as a condition of mutual understanding of the kami. In this view, one has the kami in experience rather than in one's mind. The kami live in the interaction rather than in a dancer, musician, or *torimono*; in other words, expressing the kami strictly through rules and procedures is not possible. That is, the expressing the kami transcends rules and objects.

Male/Female Deities: Dichotomy Is a Type of Insight into the Kami

Such an insight into the kami is amplified through several qualities of the kami. In the *kagura* practices, for example, the distinction between male and female kami is often strictly made with the following advice: "Make yourself look female. You are Uzume;" and "The female kami cannot have a big step." One day when young *kagurashi* practiced the Izanagi dance, an elder *kagurashi* pointed out,

> You swung your arms way too far back. You should swing your arms right in front of you, not in the back. Since you are acting as a male kami, you may want to swing your arms powerfully in the upper [above the waist].

Male and female deities are manifested with a powerful vs. gentle contrast. Especially in the paired dances, male and female kami contrast in various manners: linear vs. circular moving styles, powerful vs. gentle swinging, big steps vs. small steps, etc. A female *kagurashi* said,

> The gender difference in the kami is for me a big concern. My teacher (one of the original members of the group, now passed away) always told me not to walk in such large steps when portraying a female kami. So, for example, Okina (an old male kami in the *origami mai*) and Izanami (a female kami in the *ukihashi mai*) have the same stepping styles, but one is for the male and the other, female, so it is difficult to distinguish one from the other.

We might find these contrasts dichotomous. On the basis of direct experience of performing the *kagura*, however, such a dichotomy appears problematic because of the degree of abstraction involved in the concept. The dichotomous scale, for example, does not tell *kagura* learners which kami they are presenting. Yet if specifications are introduced, then relevant experiential variations must also be introduced and their limits respected. This is alien thinking in the *kagura* world. The difference in the experiential meaning of the kami is not comparable to the relationship of male-female in the larger social world. The *kagurashi*'s experience of expressing the kami could not be adequately expressed in a mathematical formula, either. Expressing the kami, is radically different from the social or mathematical expressions found outside the context of the *kagura*.

In other words, the simple male-female dichotomy depends heavily on the meaning context that allows them to have an insight into the kami without the characteristics of such a male-female dichotomy. In the *kagura* world, gender characteristics may be disregarded completely and the person may be seen in terms of the kami, without regard for the sex of the dancer. Hence the meaning of gender characteristics may be limited to a specific biological difference that does not enter into the experience of that person in a work situation or in a multitude of other situations. Briefly, the level of insight into the kami requires a complex process of selection, differentiation, exclusion, and judgment on the part of the *kagurashi*. Yet this process implies that the experienced theoretical components are adequate to constitute existence. In brief, the process implies a type of insight into the kami but not the kami themselves. While presenting the kami, the *kagurashi* have their own ways of understanding them. Yet they are not directly aware of the manner in which they construct their insight into the kami, and perhaps of more importance, this process has nothing to do with the outside variable of the gender.

Harmony: Dance with Partners

When the members describe another quality of what they say constitutes a good *kagura*, they point to harmony. The harmony is considered a type of insight into the kami that the *kagura* group members share. Because the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA has many two- and three-person programs, the performers are required to pay attention to the partner(s), and the sharing of the unbounded time and space, the so-called *ma*. Many of the *kagurashi* said that the best *kagura*, their ideal *kagura*, is the harmonized performance with the partners and the kami. For example, one *kagurashi* said,

> We have two-or-more-person dances. So for example, in the two-person dance, at every corner, the two dancers have to make the same moves at the same moment. If we do, I feel it is a good one.

Said other *kagurashi*,

> When the dance is performed by two or more dancers, I pay special attention to the partners. When I move to a corner and ring the bell, I try to listen to the partners' bells at another corner and figure out if our dance becomes one. If not, I make efforts to fit my dance into the partner's, based on the partner's bell sound (*shan*).

So the following advice is often given during the practices of two- or three-person performances: "You guys are getting in harmony;" "You guys are not in harmony;" "At every corner, you two have to be in unison;" "Make your move fit into that of your partner;" "You have to move in a diagonal direction so if you two are not in a line, the dance would not look good;" "Making a performance in unison means not only for dances but also music. All you need is to get in unison;" and "You two need to breathe and make steps all together." More technical advice is also offered about how to make harmony with partners: "Be always careful to watch what your partner is doing;" "Make your turn a diagonal line to your partner;" "When you are waiting for your partner coming up, walk slowly to the corner where you are waiting; don't stop walking. Walking slowly is better than being stopped;" "Make sure of how long your partner takes to go around each other before getting on stage. If not, your dance cannot be in harmony. You two are partners, do the practices a lot. Everyone has his/her own rhythm;" "If you look at your partner too much, your movement would be smaller. Make sure not to watch

the partner too much;" and "Ring the bell louder, and let your partner know that you finished that part."

I have listed this advice commonly made during practice. Although this advice is, on the surface, concerned with techniques and skills to make harmony, the idea of harmony further implies the *kagurashi*'s collective effort to attract the kami. One *kagurashi* explained,

> I will not be aware of the audience. Instead I will be conscious of the partners in the dances. In that sense, a good *kagura* has a good tune with two or more performers. The dance makes a perfect pair. The parts of doing the same choreographic moves and ringing the bell together need a good harmony. When I felt we performed perfectly in tune with each other, I was glad of what we did because it makes us feel sacred. The points for a good *kagura* are to make performances in tune each other and have basic skills. The skills match those of the partners. That would be a good *kagura*.

Another said,

> We become the kami in order to perform the kami's dance. So we have to do our best to make our dance as close to perfect as the kami's dance.

Numbering Steps: Communication Is Not Spatio-Temporally Bound

The *kagura* performance creates its own tempo, as seen in the effort to make harmony in paired dances. Their "time" means that they are in harmony, which literally means that they make one performance. To the *kagura* performers, the *kagura* is meaningful through the other *kagurashi*. They share the sequences and the detailed gestures. And this process is very important to make the *kagura* presentable and is

manifested in their conversations. Time is not given in the *kagura* performance. Dancers themselves have to create the tempo. Numbering the steps is a good example. One day two young *kagurashi* talked about the number of steps to make in one scene of the *chinakujin* dance,

Young Kagurashi B: How many steps should I make backward?

Young Kagurashi A: Three steps backward.

Young Kagurashi B: I want to make it four steps.

Young Kagurashi A: Miss Nomura also always makes the three steps. Make your first step bigger and two gliding steps.

However, when a veteran *kagurashi* got involved in the discussion, numbering the steps becomes problematic. The three of them had the following dialogue after practicing the scene discussed above:

Young Kagurashi A: You had six steps to make a circling dance. So you looked very busy at the corner. You go around when you get into the corner. Six steps are too many. Four steps are enough. Once you get stopped, 1, 2, 3, 4 is enough to make a turn.

Young Kagurashi B: Mr. Suzuki and Mr. Uehara do so.

Young Kagurashi C: But Mr. Sekine told me four steps forward and six steps backward.

Young Kagurashi B: Which is right? Four steps or six steps backward?

Veteran Kagurashi: Don't fix the number of steps. It is important to do the same steps with a partner, but it is more important to feel the moving space than to count steps.

As the veteran above explicitly indicates, the tempo is experienced and expressed in the performance. Within linear time, fixed numbers would be reasonable to create an ideal form of dance. But everyone has different steps, different widths, so fixing the number of steps is not useful. The veteran argues it is not important to fix steps needed to go to a certain distance, but the young want that kind of concrete approach. The veteran says that it is more important to make the steps in unison, in harmony. The distance covered and the pace of the steps in the *kagura* are not given from the outside; they are created by the performers themselves. Steps and movements are not external criteria to be fixed; rather they are expressive phenomena to be experienced. There are some criteria making them look beautiful and sacred, but the criteria are not externally determined in the objective sense. If there an objective beauty here in this discussion, it would be a form that is coincidentally shared, transferred, and experienced in the *kagura* group.

In this subjective *kagura* world, then, the kami are not derived from the perceptual acts or from experiential activity in general; that is, a perceptual act does not project, in some mysterious way, its own objects. In this view, we accept a sense of kami as it is presented through a perceptual act. That is, expressing the kami is only possible in a communicative context. It is these experiential structures within which communication takes place through which the kami are shared in the communicational processes. Expressing the kami is not a reaction to a situation, rather it involves the way a situation is experienced. Although the situation where the kami are experienced is given, what is shared is the view of the situation. When the *kagura* group makes a judgment about proper ways of expressing the kami, the members collectively are communicating meanings that are attached to these distinct situations.

What is clear about communicating about the kami is the experience of the communication among the *kagura* group. The kami are not identical to the *torimono* not only because they are comprised of a set of conceptual frameworks within a specific interactional context, but also because the *kagura* group can communicate about the kami indefinitely through the collective experience as a group. That is, when they communicate about their experiences of the kami, they are communicating about the group. The two cannot be separated. The *kagurashi*'s ways of communicating about the kami are possible despite the fact that they have never experienced the same empirical objects. In this sense, the kami are not shared among the group members through any rational, conceptual communication but rather through experiences.

Norms of behavior, such as ideas about how the kami should behave, are communicatively created in practice. In their interactions, the members shape the kami. They give meaning to what it means to be the kami. Thus, the communication with the kami is most apparent in the communication occurring within the *kagura* group. This might be the point at which we have to differentiate one communication from the other in the modern rational sense, but such a differentiation does not explain the experience of communication the *kagura* members have.

The Washinomiya Saibara Kagura Group

The transmission of the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is no longer based on heredity. Some members think of the *kagura* as part of their lives, instead. During the course of my fieldwork, I found that the *kagura* has been closely related to the members' everyday lives. Some members decide where they work and even change their jobs for the *kagura*. All the members of the *kagura* group agree there must always be the *kagura*

in this shrine. They describe their *kagura* as "our *kagura*," which means that the *kagura* is "how we worship our kami" and "what our kami are all about." The *kagura* serves as a primary ingredient of self-identity for the members. Learning from one another is how they are capable of performing, and the performance is how they can share what they are doing. How they communicate about the *kagura* comes from their pride as members and of their ability to perform. The *kagura* is a part of their identity that they refuse to lose.

In Japan, the religious acts of ancient times were carefully handed down from generation to generation, thus exhibiting a deep respect for ancestors and for the gift of life passed on through them (Averbuch, 1995; Gorai, 1995; Moriarty, 1972). The kami are not specific to single *kagura* villages, however. It is typical of Japanese people in general—they honor traditional customs and religious festivals as part of who they are, as members of a village, members of a community, and what makes them Japanese. Although few members gave religious reasons for participating in the *kagura*, it does not mean that the *kagura* is nonreligious. Rather, it shows why the term "religion" is inadequate to explicate their idea of the kami (might refer reader to the earlier discussion of this deficiency). This is one reason why Japanese folk performing arts and crafts have survived and been revived in such variety and volume. Many scholars find them historically rich and diverse (e.g., Fukushima, 2003; Nishitsunoi, 1990). WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is one of them.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have offered an ethnographic description of the collective contexts of the *kagura*, and argued that having an insight into the kami is required for the communication about the kami. The *kagura* is not a fixed form of expressing, but it is a

by-product of communicative interaction. Shinto is not only a doctrine or a set of behaviors to be taught; rather, it is a communicative phenomenon through which people gain a sense of the kami through expression. We can no longer rely on existing analytical categories when examining Shinto rituals, rather we must consider every communicative action to experience the meanings that we have identified through religious experience. The *kagura* group collectively shares and shapes their kami as well as *kagura* performances. Thus, this chapter stipulates how the members of the *kagura* group share their *kagura* and kami and how they collectively develop the shared expression of the kami. With this in mind, we now turn to a systasic analysis, focusing on a *kagura* program.

CHAPTER 5

Concretization of the *Kagura*: A Systasic Analysis of the *Ukihashi Mai (Dance)*

In the previous chapter we have considered the *kagura* group members and the ways they communicate about the *kagura* and how the group shares the kami, focusing on the interaction during the *kagura* practices. Also, in the same chapter I described the detailed communication process through which the *kagura* group members shape their view of the *kagura* and the experience that is required to make the *kagura* performance sacred. Chapter 4 focused on the nature of the *kagura* group; in this next chapter we turn our attention to a *kagura* performance itself. The *kagura* employs a number of discursive devices to present compelling narratives of the kami. The components of the *kagura* performance express complex symbolical meanings that are refined through practice. Expressive aspects of the *kagura* are ritually oriented toward shamanic and magical efficacy, as well as toward successful stage entertainment. This chapter, hence, offers a detailed description of the expressions, and reveals the specific manifestations of those expressions. The purpose of this chapter is to uncover the various modes of awareness that constitute the meanings in expressing the kami.

To better understand how the *kagura* effectuates its own expressive power entails looking, not only at the choreography of the performances, but also at the modes of expression themselves in which the structures and rituals are manifested. Thus, I offer this systasic analysis with the following goals: (1) to reveal how the various modes of expressing the kami are manifested in the *kagura* performance, and (2) to unveil how various types of temporality are manifested in the aperspectival view of the *kagura*. I

focus on one particular dance, the *ukihashi mai*, one of the representative programs of the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA. Although dances vary in structure, setting, costumes, and the *torimono*, they share basic patterns of organization, movement, arrangement, and gesture. The following detailed analysis of the *kagura* is offered to help unravel the locus of *kagura* power and to illustrate how the modern, dualistic lens is inadequate to explain the, purification and other elements of the *kagura*.

The Ukihashi (Floating Bridge of Heaven): An Overview

The *ukihashi mai* is a primordial purification rite of the two creator-kami, Izanagi (male kami) and Izanami (female kami). In the dance, Izanagi and Izanami express their joys in giving birth to several islands of Japan. The *ukihashi mai* is based on the myth about when Izanagi and Izanami first engaged in the act of creation. They stood on the "floating bridge of heaven," according to the story, spanning fluid chaos below. Izanagi churned the chaos with his spear, and when he picked it up, a drop of the chaotic brine dropped from its tip, hardened, and became an island. Izanagi and Izanami then descended to the new island to begin procreation. They circled around the "heavenly pillar" in the middle of the island, and when they met, they copulated. Their first-born, Hiruko-no-mikoto (the Leech-Child), and their second-born, the Island of Awa, were "failures": Hiruko-no-mikoto was born deformed and was sent away to the sea, while the Island of Awa was not counted as their child. But the children who followed were successful and formed the whole world and everything in it, including mountains and rivers, grasses and trees, and countless kami.

The story presents a fresh beginning and explains the power and process of creation. It is believed to accurately depict the courtship and copulation of the two kami,

the first sexual encounter, and the beginning of all creation circling the heavenly pillar (Honda, 1999). In the dance, these kami first purify the universe, the village and the stage on which the rest of the *kagura* is to be performed. Thus, this dance carries magical blessings for harmony and peace between husband and wife, for fertility, and the eternal continuation of one's descendants (Kurabayashi, 1970).

The following description of the *ukihashi mai* offers a glimpse into the complexity as well as the richness of its expressive features. The dance employs the greatest variety of magical gestures and devices used in the *kagura*, and this rich diversity is representative of the *kagura* in general (see Appendix C for the *ukihashi* pictures).

Structure of the Ukihashi Mai

The dance is relatively long, lasting approximately 25 minutes. Two dancers are clad in identical white, crested *hakama* (trousers-skirts), with the *obi* (belt) tied in a special way. Izanagi wears the mask, holds the bell in his right hand and the sun-shaped wooden board in his left hand. Izanami wears the mask and holds the bell in her right hand and the moon-shaped wooden board in her left hand. The sun (Izanagi) and the moon (Izanami) travel the world in the dance, thereby bringing good fortune to everyone.

This *mai* begins when Izanagi appears on the stage holding the fan in his right hand, the sun-shaped wooden board in his left, and wearing the sheathed sword. Next, Izanami comes onto the stage holding the fan in her right hand and the moon-shaped wooden board in her left hand. At this time, both of the fans are closed. When entering the stage, both the kami conduct the *sando* routine (see pp. 110-111), which includes the following procedure: moving toward the *shinzen* (altar) from south-center stage, stopping in the center of the stage, making three steps forward and two steps backward, holding

the *torimono* up, and making a deep bow toward the *shinzen*. After the *sando*, on the way back to the southeast corner, the dancers snap their fans down, in their right hands, to open the fans. Izanagi goes across to the other side of the stage while Izanami enters and conducts the *sando* routine. The *sando* combines the magical lore of the Shinto and the Esoteric Buddhist traditions. The magical *sando* pacifies evil spirits and summons the vital forces of the earth (Nishitsunoi, 1934).

At this point in the *mai*, Izanami and Izanagi stand in their respective positions: one is at the northwest corner; the other at the southeast corner, and they walk in the *kadomawari* (a walking pattern described on p. 111), moving from corner to corner. The *kadomawari* is an important walking style because the kami purify the four corners (*shihou*) and energize the forces of life and growth during this portion of the dance. When Izanagi comes to the west-center and Izanami to the east-center, they perform the *sashi-oōgi-no-mai*. This *mai* involves swinging their right hands with opened fans from the left and from the back to front in a big flowing movement while making the special steps on the right leg toward the corner. It is a beautiful posture especially as the opened fan draws an arc. Then, making a few steps from the left, they face the center and spin, keeping the fans open horizontally. The spin is a means of purification as well as a characteristic choreographic pattern indicating shamanic possession. These two kami repeat the routine of the *kadomawari* and the *sashi-oōgi-no-mai* to every direction, that is, four times. Throughout this introductory part, Izanagi and Izanami walk on stage diagonally (that is, when one is on the north-west corner, the other on the south-east corner).

Since ancient times, the fan (*oōgi*) has been a main tool to summon the gods. The fan is used in many *kagura* dances, sometimes as a prop to describe particular objects or

actions, as a magical tool of purification, and with skillful manipulation that at times borders on the art of juggling. Etymologically the verb *ōgu* means "to invite," and is an auspicious symbol even today. Therefore, the fan is important as a magical prop to invite the kami, perform purification, and as a visual device to enhance the beauty of the dance. The opening and closing of the fans signify the beginning and ending of the dance.

In the end of the introductory part, Izanagi moves to north-east and Izanami to the north-west. They stand looking forward (toward the main building of the shrine) in a line, and utter their lines:[60]

Izanagi: *sore ogami megami no kotowari wo age* (On an announcement of our marriage)

waza wo kisu futahashira no kami (The two celebrated deities)

yokihi yokitomo wo uraete (On a good time, on a good day)

ameno ukihashi no ueni tatashi (Stand on the Heavenly Floating Bridge)

ameno nuhokowo oroshi (Look down on the Land)

kuniwo sagiri morasu (Speak in the fogged Heaven)

umashi otomeni ainu (I have met the best woman)

Izanami: *umashi otokoni ainu* (I have met the best man)

Izanagi: *yoikana kuni no arikerukoto* (Celebrate for the lands)

kore onozukara narushimakoso (For every island)

yoyonotane hisashii (For their ever-lasting peace)

Here both put their fans on the bridge and pick the bells up. Then the following *saibara* is sung by the reciter:

[60] These lines are uttered in old Japanese, so they do not translate as coherently as is in the written form. I intend to minimize my interpretation in the translation.

imoto wareto irusonoyama no yamaararaki tenatori furezoya kaokaosuganiya kaokaosuganiya

(How good the mountain flower smells, the flower we have found when entering the mountain!)

After the reciter sings the *saibara,* the main part of the *ukihashi mai* begins. Both the kami change their *torimono* from the fans to the bells, and then perform the *suzu-no-mai* (bell dance). In the *suzu-no-mai*, they dance, swinging the bells in graceful arcs on their right sides five times and on their left sides five times. Unlike the *suzufuri*, (bell shaking) the *suzu-no-mai* requires use of both hands (although their left hands hold the wooden boards) to swing and sound the bells loudly. In Shinto tradition, the *suzu* sound (bell) is believed to attract the kami. Although the metal bell-wand is a later addition to the *kagura,* it is widely used in the *kagura* of Shinto shrines. In the hand of the dancer, it also serves as a musical instrument: shaken and rung to the rhythm of the drum, it contributes to the audio-visual effect of the dance. Izanagi and Izanami do this *suzu-no-mai* routine together, facing each other in every direction. Izanagi begins the *mai* in the east and Izanami in the west. They maintain their diagonal positions throughout this *mai,* so when Izanagi walks to the south, Izanami moves to the north, and so on. When they finish the *suzu-no-mai*, Izanagi and Izanami come to the south stage and north stage respectively, facing each other across the bridge.

After the *suzu-no-mai,* Izanami moves to the southwest corner and Izanagi to the southeast corner, they stand in a line on the south, and conduct the *suzu-no-mai* once more. Then they perform the *kagami-awase-no-mai*. In this *mai*, they first face each other on the south side of the stage. And, getting closer to each other and sounding the bells

step-by-step, they cross, holding the sun-shape and moon-shape wooden boards together. This *mai* presents the primordial act of creation, combining the sun and moon together. After this, Izanami moves back to the northwest corner and Izanagi to the southeast. Again, they repeat the *suzu-no-mai* routine one more time around, including all four directions. After they finish the bell routine in all four directions, Izanagi and Izanami face each other again over the bridge, and engage in the final *suzu-no-mai*.

Then, they come out to the corners: Izanagi to the southeast corner and Izanami to the northwest corner, where they make the *sanyo* posture. The *sanyo* is the posture made when moving from the center to a corner. It thus makes a 180° turn to the opposite direction through which a dancer makes a large step on the right leg, while continually ringing the bell over his/her head. When they get to each corner, they come back to the *kadomawari* routine until Izanagi moves to the west and Izanami to the east. They repeat the whole dance they have done so far in the main part one more time.

The ending part begins in a breath after the main part is finished. Lifting the *torimono* above their heads, they walk around the stage from corner to corner with normal steps. Walking around the stage one and a half times, Izanagi first goes to the *shinzen* from south center. In front of the *shinzen*, he lifts up the *torimono* from lower left to upper right and brings it back toward himself, and again lifts it above his eye level with both hands, making a deep bow. And he disappears from the stage. The same routine is then done by Izanami. This ends the dance.

A Systasic Analysis of the *Kagura*: An Attempt to Concretize its Temporality

What Systasic Analysis Reveals

As seen the previous description, this dance is, in some ways, precisely structured. The performance is organized to serve as a rite of Shinto purification; it is composed of the same ritual structure as a complete Shinto ritual (Kurabayashi, 1970). The structure of the performance itself also produces the power. This is because, although the members of the *kagura* group put great emphasis on techniques of stage performance, and expend substantial effort toward looking good on stage, even unskilled performers may appear magically powerful through the sacred elements of the dance. The *kagura* is choreographed to express religious sentiment and execute its practice, and serves as prayer, thanksgiving, offering and magical, shamanic rite (Nishitsunoi, 1934). For these reasons, the previous studies that suppose that the main source of power of the dance can be found in its choreography, which is cleverly structured to provide several climactic points of excitement and energizing movements to hold the interest of the audience. Accordingly, the earlier studies conclude that the *kagura* is choreographed to create an entertaining as well as a spiritual performance, and the artistic quality of the dance plays a central role in generating the *kagura*'s power and affect.

However, these descriptions do not offer clues about how the dance is divine. Rather, the complex performances and meanings require many pages to describe in writing, even though the actual performance appears to the audience in a flash. Thus, the understanding of the *kagura* derived from written form is not adequate to explain what is happening in the *kagura* performance; in other words, the earlier studies focused on texts ignore the full impact of a live performance. The immediate affective impact of the

kagura is dependent on the live performance, on the actual *experience* of the dance. The impact cannot be adequately written because the full immediate and direct power of dance can only be experienced in live performance. Even in descriptions of the choreography, the mental/rational mode of awareness is deficient to capture the *kagura* performance and its meaning. Instead, we would say that the process of expressing the kami has its own conditions and requirements apart from functional behaviorism (i.e., a written, formulaic reduction that is next to worthless in describing the full impact of the performance). Because the kami are given within the context of expressing, it is necessary to investigate this process in its own right.

More specifically, with a systasic analysis, we are allowed to bracket the assumption of a particular mode of space and time and we are free to survey the experience of these domains as they are presented in the natural world. We do not deny that there is a purifying function in the *kagura* performance as functionalists and structuralists would likely argue. However, we simply suspend the assumption of such a reality in order to reveal what assumption is required of the modern dualistic understanding of the *kagura*. Our systasic approach, hence, allows us to uncover aspects and elements of the *kagura* performance appear to be irrational or pre-rational in the mental/rational mode and to reveal such irrational and pre-rational elements as manifested forms in each mode of awareness. More important, finding the *kagura* to be an aperspectival, atemporal phenomenon, we can reveal that the functional and structural dimensions of the *kagura*—that is, mental/rational dimensions—*co-constitute* the previous magic and mythic dimensions. Hence it would be important to reveal the

multidimensional spatial and temporal elements that co-constitute the meanings of the *kagura* performance and expressing the kami.

Multidimensional Forms of Expressing the Kami

Divine power is assumed to be located in the shamanic shape and movement of the dancers, in the gestures and the *torimono*. Thus the current literature would suggest that some divine expressions "represent" the kami, thereby "causing" sacredness to be felt, and in turn brings the sacred power to the audience. Within this causation explanation, however, the *kagura* performance has to be reduced either to a behavior that causes something sacred or an empty carrier that conveys the already-presumed sacredness. The reduction requires a spatial nexus. This nexus allows us to reduce the *kagura* to a space and time behavior in a way that we can weigh them, measure them, and calculate their movements. But such spatiality is not given in the *kagura* performance. Reducing such divine (or spiritual) experience to physical behavior assumes that we already have divinity and its relationships in a latent form and that the components of such a reality are derived from another domain and therefore may only be viewed rather than experienced. Without the sharing of these "extra spatio-temporal" components, the *kagura* performance would, at best, be an immediate action performed for the sole purpose of getting a certain pre-determined, easily anticipated, sometimes automotronic audience reaction.

This spatial reduction, furthermore, seems to support the claim that religious behavior is only a reaction to stimuli. This reductionist thinking goes, if we can decipher the stimuli, we can predict the religious behavior in advance; in our case it would imply that we can deal with the kami scientifically, and/or through analysis texts. The only

avenue left in this scenario, however, is to "infer" the presence of internal sacredness within the process. Yet in the case of the *kagura*, we are importing a function that is not empirical and causal, but a logical function in our mentality/rationality. This suggests that there must be an internal mind that can signify the external world and its objects, and is in turn capable of distinguishing the functions of causal explanation of experience from actual experience. For every expression component, following this thinking, a one-to-one causal relationship either to an external or an internal stimuli is claimed to exist. Yet such a correlation does not exist.

The power of the *ukihashi mai* is immediate and one-dimensional. Izanagi and Izanami are the creator-kami who conduct a rite of regeneration and rejuvenation of the life forces present in the universe of the kami. In the *ukihashi mai*, the performers engage in imitating the process of creation of the universal life forces. In the process, the performers *become* Izanagi and Izanami and gain the *kamigakari*—the kami-possessing shamanic trances described in myth. The *kamigakari* is the essence of the *kagura* as a way of gaining blessing and messages from the kami. Although some scholars claim that the *kagura* today has largely lost its ancient authentic *kamigakari* and today's *kagura* simply mimic the *kamigakari*, the very act of mimicking the *kamigakari* is important to understanding the "making" power of the *kagura*. The magic domain of expression is the power of transformation, the power to "make" events occur and present. The word *magic* contains the Indo-European root *mag(h)*, just as such words as "make," "machine," and "mechanism" do (Gebser, 1985, p. 46).

The *kagura* provides a means for people to get what they hope for—purification, fertility, divine blessings, etc. In enacting the ancient myth of the creation of Japan, the

ukihashi mai serves as a rite of purification and magical blessing (Kurabayashi, 1970). Thus, the *kagura* is a magically efficient expression in that it serves as channel through which people seek to free themselves from the transcendent power of nature. The *ukihashi mai* is thus a magically significant calling out to the kami and bringing the shaman-actor to a state of the *kamigakari* whereby the spirit takes command of his body (Nishitsunoi, 1934). As in the *Kojiki*, the *kagura* dance was articulated as the *asobi*, a term referring to placation as well as entertainment. The *asobi* was believed to be a powerful expression through which a deity manifested itself and through which people could relate to their deities.

We can also extend the magic dimension of the *kagura* to the masks the performers wear. The performer can be identified as whoever the masks are supposed to be; that is, he/she becomes the character (kami) symbolized by the mask. In this way, the mask does not merely represent a kami or a spirit, but is itself the kami, the spiritual manifestation of the kami. The mask he/she wears is not meant to cover or hide the human face, rather it serves as a way of making divinity. The masks serve as the *yorishiro* or channel for the kami to come to earth; the masks are as important in their absence as in their presence. The *torimono* also serves as the *yorishiro*, a direct presence of the kami as part of the *kagura's* magic expressions; the *torimono* become endowed with magical powers to dispel demons and evil spirits and to bring good fortune (Nishitsunoi, 1990). The *torimono* evoke the immediate presence of the kami on stage, thus directly infusing the mythological universe with divine life-force and blessing. For example, the bell dance (swinging the bells side to side) serves a purifying function. The kami manipulate the powerful *torimono*, first by creating the stylized form of waving it

side to side, as an abbreviated form of the purification rite; then, sounding the bell, throwing it in a manner resembling the drawing of a net in the air, which can be seen as an abbreviate form of the entire Shinto purification ritual. Shaken and waved by the kami, the *torimono* becomes a magical expression to energize or revitalize the spirits of the kami, known as *tamafuri* (shaking the spirits) and *tamashizume* (pacifying them).

In this magical manifestation of the *kagura*, the expression itself serves as an incantation known as the *kotodama*.[61] In ancient Japan, there was a belief that the pseudo-celebration becomes the *kotodama* and makes it come true (Nishitsunoi, 1990; Honda, 1969). The *kotodama* is a form of the conventions and beliefs manifested in the incantations that are part of the rituals (e.g., Nishitsunoi, 1934; Origuchi, 2002; Toyoda,

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[61] The term *kotodama* (言霊), when considered simply as a lexical item in the modern language, means "the spirit or soul of the language;" the word *koto* means "language," "speech," or "words," and the word *tama* (*dama*) refers to "spirit," or "soul." However, neither of these English words conveys a fully adequate idea of the meanings and implications of the word *tama*. *Tama* refers to something more "appreciating" and "energetic" than the English words. The *tama* means, according to Miller (1982),

> an active concept, one that embodies elements of creative energy, infusing new, vigorous life and activity into its receptacle or vehicle—and in this case, the vehicle of this marvelously energetic *tama* is of course *koto*, now understood to mean the Japanese language. (p. 130)

The *tama* is also used to express attitudes and beliefs. The *dama* (*tama*) in the phrase *yamatodamashii* or the spirit of the *Yamato* (in old Japan) expresses as a vital, positive source of energy. However, it is sometimes traced to the ideological and national origin. For example, it was the official rallying slogan for the Japanese armed forces in World War II. The kamikaze pilots were forced to demonstrate their *yamatodamashii* in committing suicide missions. Although the meanings of the *tama* are revealed historically, the *tama* is basically "a vital and active entity that plays no part in any usual Western-language imagery or expression" (Miller, 1982, p. 131).

In the modern era after the middle of the Edo period, due to its ideological connotation, the *kotodama* belief has been the main part of the *kokugaku* or the study of ancient Japanese thought and culture. Many *kokugaku* scholars (e.g., Kaito, 1951; Ohkubo, 1954) attempted to find the *kotodama* belief and to build a national/historical identity in which the *kokutai no hongi* (national ideology) was formulated and manifested especially in the Meiji period. Those *kokugaku* scholars found the *kotodama* belief even in the system of the Japanese language, although some scientific approaches to language refuted its ambitious, ideological explanations.

1980).[62] The belief refers to the entire range of core beliefs of the Japanese culture.[63] The *ukihashi mai* is a performance that is offered in the hope that what people are praying for will happen, that the kami's expressions will to be put into practice. Thus, the *kagura* is itself an expression filled with sincerity, and such expression effectuates divinity. In other

[62] Many scholars across disciplines agree that the *kotodama* demonstrates aspects of the Japanese language and literature as well as the *kagura*. Although the *kotodama* belief is beyond the scope of this study, it has gained much academic attention recently. Since Word War II, the *kotodama* has been consciously or subconsciously excluded in Japanese academic fields, being labeled irrational (Nakamura, 1979). However, Nakamura argues that these rationalized approaches toward language that exclude the *kotodama* belief have become a little awkward, especially when the rationalizations are used to offer thoughts toward Japanese thought and culture, or when facts are omitted when explaining Japanese culture and history. Kobayashi Hideo (1977), one of the greatest intellectuals in Japan in the twentieth century, contends that because the Japanese believe that the spirit dwells in the language, we cannot laugh about language as supernatural.

[63] In accordance with *kotodama* expressions, the name of a person or deity could be used for magical purposes. Through the *kotodama*, then, words acquire the same symbolic value as art objects representing deities and other powerful spiritual entities, encompassing or participating in their power. Believers hold there is unity between names and things. The belief is then manifested in incantations and poems. This indicates that language is not simply a medium or sign that conveys information from one to another, as in Aristotelian thinking. Rather language is a living, point-like unity between humans and other language users.

The names of kami and territorial names gave humans the power of their use and possession in the creation of the islands of Japan as well as in their settlement and government (Ueda, 2003). Names were believed to originate not from human sources but from divine power. The deities themselves purportedly revealed their names to give man control over chaos, and the power to subdue it (Ueda, 2003). This acquired divine power then played an important role in the creation of the ordered cosmos. Because names have animating power, as do all natural things in this view. In the same symbolic manner as other Japanese art forms, they were used only when demanded by special, extraordinary occasions (Origuchi, 2002). Speaking a name could release harmful powers, if performed at inappropriate times.

Ancient Japanese society held the belief that a certain amount of magic lurked within names of anything. To know the name of a person, a place, or a thing was equivalent to having a certain amount of power that could be brought to bear toward controlling the entity thus named. Native American societies still maintain this sort of idea (Basso, 1979, 1984; Wieder & Pratt, 1990). Even today in Japan, we have a custom of calling higher status persons by their titles rather than names. Cultural anthropologists call the power names hold "sympathetic magic," a term exemplified by Edward Burnett Tylor. Toyoda (1980) argues that names are the soul of man and things, and for this reason, names had to be kept secret.

words, the belief is the power inherent in an expression, when portrayed in a proper manner and in proper contexts. The *kagura* is a means of controlling an object by expressing the kami in a ritual context. On these occasions, therefore, once anything is verbalized or acted, it must necessarily happen. Sincerity is found in the fundamental principle of the *kagura* that these things are possible (that these prayers will be answered??. A final observation: There is no room for self in sincerity. "All of oneself must be cast aside in speech, for it is in the deed and in the deed alone that sincerity is to be found, and there only that sincerity shines forth" (Miller, 1982, pp. 133-134).

Furthermore, the term *koto* in the *kotodama* usually uses the Chinese character "言." However, the characters 言 (language, speech, word) and 事 (thing) used to be employed interchangeably. Especially these two Chinese characters were employed without differentiating one from another in the oldest Japanese books such as the *Kojiki*, the *Nihonshoki*, and the *Manyoshu* (Toyoda, 1980). According to Origuchi (2002), this implies that the Japanese in ancient times found language equivalent to a thing. Thus, what is literal was hardly different from what is figural in the *kotodama* belief. The soul is not yet inside but rather is strewn in the magic *kotodama*. In this sense, the dialogue between Martin Heidegger (I) and a Japanese philosopher (J) illustrates the essence of the atemporal dimension of symbol, especially in Japanese language (Heidegger, 1971, p. 46):

I: What is the Japanese word for "language"?

J: (after further hesitation) It is "*Koto ba*."

I: And what does that say?

J: *ba* means leaves, including especially the leaves of a blossom—petals. Think of cherry blossoms or plum blossoms.

I: And what does *Koto* say?

J: …*Koto* always also names that which in the events gives delight, itself, that which uniquely in each unrepeatable moment comes to radiance in the fullness of its grace

I: *Koto*, then, would be the appropriating occurrence of the enlightening message of grace.

In the dialogue, Heidegger (1971) gives emphasis to human linguistic action rather than a metaphysical concept of language in his articulation of "house of Being." He contends, "[Language] is the keeper of being present, in that its coming to light remains entrusted to the appropriating show of Saying. Language is THE house of Being because language, as Saying, is the mode of appropriation" (p. 135).

This is the basis for the multitude of souls and the animistic direction of worship in magic structure. The modality of communicating in the vital magic mode of awareness does not matter whether it is verbal or not. In many heads found in cave paintings, the head has no mouth (Gebser, 1985). This signifies that the mouth is irrelevant in that dimension of consciousness. Mickunas (1997) explains that in the magic structure, the immediate effectiveness of any action or event is exchanged with any other. Thus, language and speaking are not different, but constitute one whole *kotodama* action.

In this sense, the forms of expressing the kami, including dancing, singing, and dramatizing that originated from mimicking the kami, serve as a means of summoning the deities to possess the shamans. The attribution of "imitating" shows the extent to

which the magic vital awareness is ascribed to the performance. The *modoki* (mimicry) is a powerful ritual meant to soothe the kami by submitting to their power, which represents human interests. At the same time, the *modoki* not only means "to imitate" but also "to explain" and "to make intelligible" (Gorai, 1995). The *modoki* is a means of engaging the kami in dialogue and creating an understanding between human and kami (Plutschow, 1996). The *modoki*, in this sense, implies its mythic ambivalence such as how imperfectly man imitates and emulates the kami, or how incapable a human is of reaching the perfection of the divine state. Appearing in human forms, the kami are ambivalently transported to the human realm as well.

Furthermore, the *monogatari* (mythological stories) themselves are thus manifested as forms of expressing. According to Origuchi (2002), the ritual purpose of reciting the *monogatari* (*katari*)[64] can be etymologically traced to the word *kataru*, which is derived from the *katsu*, a verb meaning "to appease" or "subdue." Thus, the *monogatari* is a form of appeasing the kami (*mono*) asking them to withhold their wrath. Therefore, reciting the mythological stories about the kami in the *kagura* performance is an act of the kami and in turn composes important parts of the divine *kagura* world. Throughout the dances, the various gestures and manipulations form an imaginary, complexly patterned mythological universe on stage.

As the *utamai* (music and dance), another name for the *kagura*, indicates, the *kagura* refers to dance and music together. The mythical kami are expressed in various music and theatrical performances, and in turn, become articulated through pictorial and imaginary expressions. In their expressions, humans become aware of their souls. Only

[64] The "k" is automatically changed to "g" when in a compound word in Japanese.

when the unspeaking individual communicates the silent message does the spoken word convey the depth and polarity that constitute the tension of real life (Gebser, 1985). As a prototype of Shinto ritual, the *ukihashi mai* offers the conspicuously ambivalent idea of the kami filled with various polar expressions. In the dance, the male and female kami conduct their performances in opposite ways such as lead/follow, powerful/gentle, right/left, upper/lower. Every move of one performer appears opposite of the other. Furthermore, their holding of the *torimono* also signifies polarity: the sun and the moon, for example. One moves opposite to the other. Importantly, these polarities cannot work without sharing the same basic movements. Mythic polarity is present in any kind of psychic life (Gebser, 1985). With the emergent awareness of the internal world of the psyche, the speaking or the announcement emerges. Polarity is, for Gebser, psychically laden and is traced in imagery, specifically an audial one.

The polar character of the mythical mode of awareness is best described with the twofold aspect of myth—silent inner vision and audible myth making (Gebser, 1985). Myth, psyche, mouth, speaking—all are connected but they are connected in a very peculiar way. The *kagura* presents the kami as either effectuated or not effectuated; a third or subsequent possibility does not exist. Thus, these opposing expressions are not dualistically constructed separately. Rather these expressions appear to be meaningful only through the polar contrasts. In mythic polarity, a transcendental third object does not exist. In other words, one of the mythic polarities is not totally differentiated from the other; rather, one cannot exist without the other. Each of them exists through the other. Each contains traces of the other and of becoming the other. Similarly, people and the kami are reflections of each other; one consists of the other.

The *saibara* recited in the *kagura* performance, in the forms of *tanka*, can also be seen as an important part of the mythic mode of expressing the kami.[65] Controlled by the order of rhythm, form, and sound, poetic language produces supernatural powers. Toyoda (1980) states that no human dialogues with the kami could proceed without the orderly means of poetry. Origuchi (2002) explicates the etymological origins of the word *uta* (*saibara*); it is derived from the word *utsu*, which originally meant "to appease" or "placate." Plutschow (1996), further explains the divine natures of the *haiku* and *tanka*:

> The fixed order of syllables in Japanese verse implies a ritual connection. Songs composed in this strict alternation of five and seven allegedly included a power called *kotodama* (word soul) and were sung only when extraordinary occasions demanded…As specially arranged and ordered words, *kotodama* contained the powers of deities who were believed to control the crops and the seasons. By using special references to seasons, for instance, such *kotodama* words, when arranged in songs, had the power to call such deities forth, to create a unity between deity and man and bring forth the best results. (p. 105)

Especially Japanese poetry (*waka*) such as the *haiku* and *tanka* (made up of the combinations of the rhythm of 5 and 7 syllables), consist of "the rhythm of five" (*go-byoushi*) and "the rhythm of seven" (*nana-byoushi*). These combined rhythms are believed to represent the 12 generations of heavenly and earthly kami (Gorai, 1995). Although much speculation exists about the meanings of the five- and seven-rhythms, one thing is clear—they do not refer to the beat of the music in rational terms. Rather

[65] The *tanka* is made up of five lines of 5, 7, 5, 7, and 5 syllables, while the *haiku* consists of three lines of 5, 7, and 5 syllables.

they are derived from the mythical steps, along with the sacred *kagura* songs (*kami uta*) and other elements.

Ki no Tsurayuki, a prominent poet and complier of the *Kokinwakashu* (905) in the tenth century, argued there are powers that, if cultivated and nurtured, will sustain the state and keep it from evil:

> Poetry is that which, all by itself, moves heaven and earth and claims the hearts of the invisible spirits and deities, which ties men and women, and which can comfort the hearts of fierce warriors. (quoted in Plutschow, 1996, p. 93)

The brevity of *haiku* and *tanka* come from the way the kami expressed themselves—always in the shortest forms (Toyoda, 1980).[66] Therefore, the Japanese regard these texts as the direct self-expression of the kami.

The internalization of memory and the externalization of utterance are the constituents of the poetic process (Gebser, 1985). The *ukihashi mai* expresses or symbolizes a rhythmic circularity. The *mai* takes shape as humans become aware of their souls. The dance is an observable sign of an emerging consciousness, which is, of course, also an emergence of the ego. Humans became conscious of themselves in reflection of the kami. The "speculation—'speculum,' Latin for 'mirror'—reveals anew the polar nature of myth" (p. 70). In this sense, in a poetic form, the kami are the latent potential of the people; the Japanese need the kami to demonstrate themselves in their own consciousness. To express the kami is to express the self.

[66] The shortest form of expression is found in the myth of the deity *Hitokotonushi* (Ruler of One Word). In the myth, the Emperor Yuryaku climbed Mt. Katsuragi, where he met a deity who revealed its name as *Hitokotonushi*. This deity is able to bring food or bad fortune by uttering just one word. From this myth, one may assume an underlying belief that the shorter the utterance, the more powerful its effect.

Multidimensional Temporality: Atemporality

In the magic world everything is interchangeable with everything else; individuals express their magic to make the world change (e.g., Gebser, 1985; Kramer, 1997; Mickunas, 2000). The *kagura* is manifested in the magic awareness in that it is a means of making happen what is said and acted in a performance. As seen in the *kagura* performance, the power effectuates the magical effect of the dances, which is manifested in its immediate impact. This suggests that what is expressed in the *kagura* performance is unified, is a space-time event, and that any event can be exchanged for any other.

These magic expressions are spaceless and timeless events. The *ukihashi mai* presents a story about the creation of life offers prayers for life to continue into the future. That is, imitating the future celebration now, it presents the acts of celebration. The temporal structure is such that the *ukihashi* ritual is translatable. That is, the blessing event is so connected that it has no causal links but it has vital interchangeability. In this relationship, expression is an event where truth happens, not in a formal or absolute sense but provisionally relativism. The *kagura* is a timeless event. In the magic, ordinary time is also sacred. The deity is sacred, whether in an orderly or dynamic state. So are people and their land. Plutschow (1996) argues, "Deities seem to reflect human potentialities, fears, and emotions and the human quest for order and security or the release from it" (p. 27). Thus, the *kagura* enacts its underlying cosmology of a "seamless world" in the magic mode of awareness. Humanity and the kami form one whole. In the performance, dancers are in communion with the kami. All people and the kami are sacred and there is no boundary between sacred and profane. That is, "man is deity and deity is man" (Plutschow, 1996, p. 26).

The magic dimension of the *kagura* exists before time, before our consciousness of time. And, the natural time of the magic structure is a precondition for mythical man's coming to awareness of soul. Whereas the distinguishing characteristic of the magic structure is the emergent awareness of nature, the essential characteristic of the mythical structure is the emergent awareness of soul (Gebser, 1985). We could find a mythical structure in the seasonal Shinto agricultural ritual calendar. This means that, prior to the modern rational space and time conceptions, people expressed the kami in audial and visual forms. What mythological interreflectivity reveals is that the kami are not some internal, subjective state, but audially and visually expressive. This was demonstrated in the expressive environment such that it is not possible to reduce the kami to a location in perspectival space and time. The mythical awareness discovers and expresses the *ukihashi* mythology, not in a historical linearity, but rather "in the natural, temporal rhythm of the circle" (Gebser, 1985, p. 66). This mythic temporality discloses that the *ukihashi mai* is *present* rather than being represented. Neither inner kami nor outer expression is identified, but rather the kami are all pervasive and dynamically extant in space and time. This type of temporic portrait reflects a specific need to express and shape the uncontainable, hence the emergence of concrete time. The timeless becomes temporal; there is a gradual transition from remote timelessness in the pre-rational or pre-consciousness to tangible periodicity.

The *ukihashi mai* serves as a purification ritual; in the performance, Izanagi and Izamai purify the *kegare* (polluted) world with their dance. And this is the moment when the people are purified and renewed. In the performances, music, like dance, becomes sacred when it is played in a certain order and tempo. It also creates a special time (the

hare) apart from the ordinary (the *ke*) (Plutschow, 1996). Its regular drum (*taiko*) beats create a temporality that helps transcend ordinary time so that people may meet their kami. The beat unites people with the kami. That is, music itself is considered to be a ritual means of creating and exerting powerful magic, bringing forth and sustaining divine appearance and action of the kami. In this dimension time is not measured from outside (that is, clock time does not make any sense), rather the renewal rite creates time.

The *matsuri* at Washinomiya Shrine takes place every transitional season, and this temporality creates the life cycle. This cyclic time is quite different from the perspectival, linear concept of time that assumes all time past is gone and future will come. On the other hand, in cyclical time, past time comes back again and again in the *kagura* performances during the *matsuri* days. The cyclic time is not given, rather, participating in the *kagura*, the *kagura* allows people to see their actions as repetitions and imitations of the past. The *kagura* makes the present live in the past as well as the past in the present. Gebser (1985) contends, "This ambivalent relation between time and timelessness, which defies our rational understanding, once finds its expression in the polarity of the mythical structure, for both forms simultaneously exist and complement each other" (p. 67).

Furthermore, we should not forget that the *kagura* is performed on the Shinto *matsuri* days. In the *matsuri*, the *kagura* creates an appropriate spatial-temporal relationship with the kami in the *matsuri*. Uno (2002) argues that the *matsuriawase* (maintaining the *ma*) is the essential meaning of the *matsuri*.[67] The *maturi* is *the* time

[67] There are other explanations about the word *matsuri*. Kunio Yanagita (1942), the father of Japanese folklore studies, argues that the term *matsuri* is derived from the phrase "kami wo matsurou," which means "serve the kami in the most honored ways." He continues, stating that the *matsuru* is nothing but the attitude that one diagnoses the state of affairs, certainly comply with whatever request is made, and serves in the way being

when the Japanese ask the kami to come down, become aware of their will, and fraternize with them. Then, in the *kagura* performance, the Japanese are allowed to communicate with the kami. Plutschow (1996) explains that there were two modes of time in Japan: one is in ordinary life and the other is the sacred in the *matsuri*. The *ennichi* (the *matsuri* days) means the fixed dates when men are with deities in the *matsuri*, as seen in the word *en* (tie) that links the members of the community to the kami (Origuchi, 2002). In the *matsuri*, Plutschow (1996) articulates, "People come face-to-face with their gods; natural and supernatural merge into a divine totality" (p. 31).

In the mythic mode of understanding, the *kagura* world is oceanic; more precisely, the *kagura* world is in an ocean-like, rhythmic process that is going nowhere. It has no direction or orientation, no linearity; no past-then-future assumptions. There is a breakthrough of this polarity in mental/rational utterances, however. The result is the principle of noncontradiction or antinomy that no longer allows for the possibility of polarity. In the mental/rational mode of awareness, one statement is accepted to be true while the other denied. That is, only one is true; the abstraction of a concept from an image eliminates the polar possibility—demonstrating there is more than polar opposites in play.

The term "time" can be traced back to the Indo-Germanic root *da*, which meant, in the original language of the Greek "to divide, to take apart, to lay apart, to tear apart, to

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asked. Shinobu Origuchi (2002), a student of Yanagita, offered a different view—that the word *tatematsuru* is the etymological origin of the term *matsuru*. While Shigematsu Mitsuya (1928), another teacher of Origuchi, explains that the term *tatematsuru* means the action making offerings to the kami. Furthermore, the word *matsu* (wait) can be another candidate (Uno, 2000). Since the Japanese word "wait" expresses the state of emotion of waiting for more than one expects, it refers to waiting for the kami's will and keeping the promise with the kami.

lacerate" (Gebser, 1985, p. 173). Time, in this sense, serves as a divider of an abstraction. "Time and day are essentially the same and both are dividers of the night" (Gebser, 1985, p. 176). At the outset, day and night are not opposite; we make them antithetical by our contemporary modern way of thinking. Our linear conception of time is the divider of mythical movement and the partitioner of the circle. When we see the *kagura* performance as a divider, expressing the kami is already seen as a value-laden phenomenon. Gebser (1985) claims, "As long as its dividing is not an end in itself it indirectly yields valid knowledge of the undivided" (p. 292). The dividing deed leads from expression to emptiness. Expression as a divider means that it is described as only the sum of the materials.

The foundation of modern expression is a postulation of self as an "egological" point where any activity is a reflection on itself and its own thinking (Gebser, 1985; Kramer, 1997). And this leads to a fundamental change in religion. Modern religion is identical to the sum of materials. A supernatural phenomenon ceases with material evidence, and myth appears illogical when forced into a different from of logical reasoning. The question of whether magic and myth are empirically true is already perspectivally rationalized (Kramer, 1997). The emerging rational thinking marks the difference between religion (knowledge, order, and light) and non-religion (ignorance, chaos, and darkness). The positing of a purposeless, mechanistic religion is the catalyst for the modern mental/rational mode of awareness. But this suggests that such a mode of awareness does not primarily reflect on itself. As long as we consider religion within the rational-mental mode of awareness, we certainly use a linear, teleological conception of time. In order to demonstrate the kami in a functional view, we would look at the kami as

a succession of contingent events. Yet the concern of religious awareness (and not awareness of religion) does not allow us either an external or internal glance, because in neither case can we escape from dualism. Indeed, such dualistic understanding already presupposes the kami as conceptualized objects articulated by the current obsession with measurement.

The locus of the *kagura* neither takes place in the conceptual and representational spatio-temporal world, in the two-dimensional, nor in the one-dimensional world. Rather it is created in the whole, wherein the multidimensional temporality of the *kagura* becomes presently transparent, concrete, and integral. This capturing of the present does not involve linear time because "the present is ever-originating, an achievement of full integration and continuous renewal" (Gebser, 1985, p. *xxvii*). The aperspectival mode of awareness, unlike other modes, is a state of time-freedom. We can become aware of this time-freedom by achieving each of the previous time mutations. That is, it is a form of time-concretion that is integrated from archaic pre-temporality, through magic timelessness and mythical temporicity, and through mental-conceptual temporality (Gebser, 1985). Thus, the *kagura* achieves the concretion of time revealing its shamanic timelessness, its mythical temporality, and its rationally-accentuated time sequence.

Performers, Audience, and the Kami: Acategroical and Atemporal Kagura

In perspectival categorical thinking, the *kagura* is performed by performers for the audience, and the power is traced back to the performers themselves.[68] Hanna (1983,

[68] The members do not take the audience into consideration. The stage for the *kagura* is not designed for the audience; the audiences watch the *kagura* freely around the stage. Recently, however, the performers are beginning to pay attention to the audience member who take photographs with flash. The flash annoys the performers. Some *kagurashi* told

1987) argues that dance is a particularly effective mode of nonverbal communication that has an emotional impact on its speculators. The power is not solely dependent on the dancer's personal ability, however. Distinctions between *kagura* performers and audience members have emerged relatively recently. To effectuate the power, all members of a community participated in the *kagura*; there was no distinction between performers and audience. The *kagura* was performed by the entire community. Individual human movements often produce collective religious impressions, and the collective sympathy and desire are the very conditions that come about through performing arts (Gorai, 1995). This collectivity and spirituality of the *kagura* are manifested in the magic mode of awareness. Collective "theater," as the performers act and the audiences react, is sometimes quite unpredictable. The totality of the relationship among the Japanese and the kami is the reflection of the magic, one-dimensional world. Man and deity are related not by symbolic reference, but by "direct participation" in the *kagura* (Kitagawa, 1966). Gebser (1985) states, "The egolessness of the individual—who is not yet an individual—demands participation and communication on the basis of the collective and vital intentions" (p. 58).

In other words, both the kami and humans are the audience and the performers of the *kagura*. On stage, a performer and the kami are both simultaneously, because the kami themselves participate in the *kagura* as performers. The *kagura* intends to entertain the kami; at the same time, the kami entertain people during the dance. When the *kagura* performers express the kami who are supposed to dance on the stage, but the kami are also the performers. The kami are invited to descend and manifest themselves on the

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me that especially when they do the masked dance, their sight is limited to two tiny holes in the mask. When the camera flashes, they cannot see.

kagura stage where they appear in disguise but essentially human form. The kami bless the people with their dance. Thus the kami are the audience and performers at the same time. This ambivalent distinction between divine performers and divine audience may be confusing when viewed with a mental/rational, linear time and space oriented lens. The mental/rational mode of awareness is deficient to adequately explain the boundary between the divine and the human. And, we cannot forget that the first performers and audience recorded in the *kiki shinwa* were all kami.

From a one-sided point of view, the dance fulfills its function of blessing human audiences by connecting them with the divine powers that fill them with life. The dance also has a meaning of self-fulfillment, which points to the underlying unity of all existence and to the way of becoming one with the divine and all life. In this connecting, the *kagura* functions as worship and as rejuvenation for the kami, and as a conduit for the divine powers to reach the human realm. The *kagura* works to dissolve the boundaries between the realms and fuse them together, and thus to perpetuate the Shinto worldview of the unity of all reality.

The *kagura* also ambivalently mediates the human and the kami. The dance serves as one of the most efficacious places in which people can perform their rituals. It is the dance that, by its nature, finds conceptual understandings deficient, fuses magic and myth manifested in the realms of the universe and its thought, and supports the aperspectival view of religious expression. It is the dance, then, that embodies and executes, in both function and meaning, the power of the *kagura* and expressing the kami.

The Ever-Present Origin

Kagura reveals itself as a temporal entity, as it includes the past and is unfolded toward the future; that is, it expresses notions of the past and the future as different from the present. By extending and limiting the realms in time and space, a *kagura* performance serves as a temporary maker of a permanent reality, that is, the seamless kami world pervaded and animated by the spirits of the kami during the *kagura*. Acknowledging the existence of separate human and divine realms, the *kagura* places itself as the bridge between them. In integrating temporality, any differentiation between the sacred and the profane, and/or the human and the kami, is illusory. That is, the *kagura* itself is an example of intensified temporality time. Thus *kagura* performance is ever-present, regardless of the linear time of any given performance.

Emphasizing the long history of the *kagura* is an extremely one-sided, perspectival, and materialistic emphasis. Gebser (1985) claims, "The word *history*, which is derived from the Greek *historia*, is based on the Greek verb *historeo*, meaning 'to inquire after something' and thus conveys a clear expression of being directed" (p. 192). Once we assume the origin of the *kagura* is a certain historical point in time and space, that is ,we locate it in a certain temporal spatial location, the eternal ontological kami are allowed to exist only in the abstract. The kami are not in the abstract; rather, the kami is a form of expression. While creating this repetition in time, the *kagura* and the kami transcend time by existing ahistorically. As found in our search for the kami in the expressions, such contrasts as abstract and concrete, sacred and profane, this world and the other are not categorically different. Rather they are different *modes* of being and expressing that exist *with* each other (rather than *instead* of another). Gebser claims,

> Just as the magic structure cannot be represented but only lived, the mythical structure is not represented but only experienced, and the rational structure is neither lived nor experienced but only represented and conceptualized, so the integral structure cannot be represented but only 'awared-in-truth.' (p. 267)

Thus, the *kagura* is manifested in various modes, in our understanding as in the magically identical incantations, the mythical polar ambivalence, and in the perspectivally abstracted existence. More precisely, the *kagura* has an ever-present origin—it is continually created and re-created through experience, (as is so much of the social world).

The ever-present origin, however, is not a starting point that mutates through various modes of awareness to reach some integral state. In our contemporary world, we are commonly dissatisfied with the mere knowledge of a fact or an event; we want to locate events in time and space because without such a location they have no conceptual value for us. As seen in the *kagura* performance, however, time becomes visible in its proper and most unique medium, the kami. It lacks any precise time or space location. Instead of presenting a specific moment, the *kagura* renders an enduring, eternal present.

Chapter Summary

Focusing on the *ukihashi mai*, this systasic analysis shows how the mental/rational mode of awareness and expression, through the manifestations of magic and mythic modes of awareness and expression are required to adequately describe the *kagura* performance. In the analytic, categorical mode of thinking, the functional dimension of the *kagura* is well illustrated, but the explanation misses *why* the *kagura* is being performed and how it becomes spiritual. The *kagura* has unbounded spatiality and temporality; where and when the kami are evoked to appear on stage is open to the

experience of the participants. The *kagura* is an intensified time, where the kami are manifested on stage, embodied in the dancers. The boundary between the kami and humans serves as a condition of modern understanding of the kami. Prior to that understanding, in the pre-rational mode, there are no such boundaries. Expressing the kami reflects how we live with the kami.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion: The Concretion of Expressing the Kami

The goal of this dissertation is to increase understanding of the *kagura* and the act of expressing the kami through observation of and interviews with the *kagurashi* and others involved in the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA. As part of Shinto rituals, the *kagura* continues to play a central role in contemporary Japanese communities. Today *kagura* performances are considered replications of ancient myth—the historical and legendary *kagura* that infused shamans with magical powers through music, dance, and other sacred objects precisely used in precisely arranged sacred places.

This study challenges too prevalent linear explanations of the *kagura* and explicates the essence of expressing the kami. Previous studies have focused on the functional symbols of the *kagura* and have paid substantially less attention to its expressive dimension where the kami are actually manifested (e.g., Averbuch, 1995; Fukushima, 2003). Moving beyond the functional approach, this study has presented two approaches—phenomenological and Gebserian—in examining the expressive nature of the *kagura*. The data and analysis demonstrate that the kami are shared and shaped communicatively in a local speech community and how the rationalized functional approach is deficient in explaining the "expressing the kami" phenomenon.

In this final chapter, I will summarize the findings of the previous chapters, discuss the modern dualistic perspective, and provide a re-cap of the phenomenological and Gebserian analyses, pointing out the richer understanding of the *kagura* that was derived—better understanding than is possible by reducing the *kagura* to a functional set

of activities designed to produce a predictable response in a passive receiver. Different (magic, mythic, mental/rational, and aperspectival) modes of awareness are shown to be highly useful in deciphering the experience of expressing the kami, and will also be briefly summarized here.

First, the act of expressing the kami occurs within a community. WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA is not only a group that offers the *kagura* to the kami, but it is also the site where the kami are manifested and shared among the participants. Chapter 4 offers an explanation of how expressing the kami in the *kagura* performance is communicative in nature; expressing the kami is created, shaped, shared, and maintained communicatively. The shared experience is central to how the *kagura* performance is experienced by the participants in various modes of awareness, as discussed in Chapter 5.

The *kagurashi* discuss distinctions among various ways of expressing the kami through the dance movements, music arrangements, and the *torimono*. As the data presented (see pp. 157-167), the *kagurashi* frequently discuss subtle nuances of the dance, music, and use of the *torimono*. They seek to create the proper form of the *kagura* using essential insight that allows them to make such decisions.

While it is possible to view the *kagura* and the act of expressing the kami in functional terms, of course, it is not possible to understand fully these phenomena, especially if the analysis involves rejecting essential qualities of the collective experience that constitute the *kagura* and expressing the kami. This was shown in the observations and interviews included in Chapter 4. The process of sharing questions and knowledge, making sure which steps and movements are correct is revealed (see pp. 147-167). This activity among the *kagurashi* clearly shows the deficiency in analyses and understandings

that involve reducing the *kagura* to an empty carrier that merely *conveys* the kami to the outside world. The functional view was shown to presuppose the meanings of the *kagura* before it is even performed.

Chapter 5 further revealed that linear, structural views fall far short of capturing the ways expressing the kami is experienced by the participants, both performers and audience members. The kami, although they are believed to belong to a given local community, must first be experienced *as they are given*. In other words, the kami are not simple functional structures—they are not only arrangements of signs to be expressed by certain people in specific sequences and subsequently absorbed by the (mostly passive) participants to produce a predetermined response. Instead, the kami are experienced in the *act* of expressing the kami. The *kagura* performance is not an empty carrier that conveys what the kami are; rather, the *kagura* is the experiential structure to show that function/structure are present along with the other modes of awareness. As explained (see pp. 179-190), expression is not only a matter of *what* is expressed, but also, and more significantly in this case, the *act* of expressing as a mode of awareness and an *experience* that carries substantial meaning.

As mentioned, certain expressions do signify the kami, however the phenomenon of expressing the kami has substantially more significance: Expressing the kami has an expansive horizon; the kami are as diverse as the ways of expressing them. And, it is not signs alone that are the kami, rather the kami are *experientially* created, using special objects in special places as signs of the kami. Thus, while signs, functions, and structures are present in the *kagura* world, but they are not adequate to render meaningful explanations and understandings of the *kagura* and expressing the kami.

In addition to the deficiency discussed in the last paragraph, it should be remembered that in the process of signifying, the signifiers do not necessarily follow the structure (or the same structure) of a given experience. Knowing the sign system, and knowing the relationship among signs, are abstractions that do not necessarily resemble the experienced phenomenon. It is the *kagura* group that determines what the kami are like, and they evaluate the correctness and quality of every movement, as discussed above (see pp. 167-168). Further, the views of the kami held by the *kagurashi* are shaped by others through communication, and this process of evaluating, shaping, and communicating is not a fixed form of experience. Finally, signifying an object does not produce identical or predictable experience for all participants.

This is not to deny the usefulness of functional and structural approach to the *kagura*, however. Rather, it is acknowledged that the functional and structural approaches are only one of the ways of understanding the *kagura*, not the only ones. Functional thinking is predominant in a particular mode of awareness. We must recognize the other modes that draw our attention to the specific situatedness and make us alert to the limited horizons we have when viewing the *kagura* through the functional/structural lens. This recognition is important because spatio-temporality serves as a basis for the functional/structural views of the *kagura*, which dissociates important qualities that create the meaning and significance of the *kagura* and thereby limit our understanding of these phenomena.

The systasic analysis, provided in Chapter 5, explains the reflective mode of awareness that reveals what Gebser (1985) calls "aperspectival" time, a time that can be metaphorically called an "open horizon" (integrating past, present, and future fragments).

The horizon, in our case, involves multiple temporality rather than in a linear time progression that arbitrarily begins at a certain point in space and time. As seen in this study, the *kagura* tradition lives in its expression. The *kagura* performance cannot be repeated from a certain beginning and in a certain sequence, with certain movements, etc. And even if this could be done, it wouldn't mean the same thing to all participants. Rather than having a uniform structure, each *kagura* performance is novel—interpreted anew in different contexts, with different *kagurashi* and producing different experiences.

It is also important to note that the focus on tradition does not orient the *kagurashi* and other participants toward the past, rather it provides a superfluity of understanding that expands awareness in all directions, across space and time. This is substantially different from the modern functional understanding of tradition, such that the present is a function of the past, and wherein the past determines who we are. The *kagura* is not bound to specific time and space. Rather the *kagurashi* can revisit and revise the process and can continually watch how they express the kami. That is, releasing these phenomena from spatio-temporality is a basic requirement for *kagura* performances.

Explanations of the *kagura* and expressing the kami that come from modern rationality and perspectivity are deficient, as argued in Chapter 5. To think the singular story of the *kagura* precludes an introduction of memory that gives us the past along with the present. We must be cognizant that memory arose with the emergence of a purposive subject. Once the limitations of the spatial/temporal metaphor are recognized, thoughts of purposiveness become redundant, and the mechanistic, blind purposeless universe becomes irrelevant (Gebser, 1985). Also of central importance is the idea that the various structures of awareness are neither successive in a mechanical-theoretical view of time

nor in a historical, developmental, or progressive conception of time (Gebser, 1985; Kramer 1997).

The systasic analysis was extended to include a criticism of the rationalized symbolization of the *kagura* (see pp. 194-195). Gebser (1985) contends, "Since symbols do not originate in the mental structure it is wrong to interpret them in mental terms as happens in any attempt to explain the occurrence of the same symbol in various times and places by a process of migration" (p. 221). The *kagura* utterances are magical ways of summoning the kami and prayers for kami blessings. There is no symbolic distance between expression and the purifying function the *kagura* serves. Expression does not *cause* the purification; rather the *kagura* expression is itself an action through which people can be purified.

Expressing the kami with natural phenomena such as the sun and moon, water, and stone, is at least symbolically correct. But until the kami are expressed in a poetic form, the mere utterance is only an indication of the kami's latent possibility. Such symbolism survives today in religious as well as poetic utterances, however with the advent of philosophy, symbolism has become even more markedly mentalized and rationalized, as described above (see pp. 186-189). Thus, as Gebser (1985) claims, "Symbols are not spatio-temporal at all but originary, and as such would be pre-spatial, pre-temporal, and perhaps even pre-archaic" (p. 221).

In Chapter 5, the discovery of the magic mode of timeless expression of the kami is a reflective event that reveals our own cultural mode of awareness that is usually hidden. Shamanic rituals and symbolic actions such as praying for the kami are manifested as serious, even more serious than scientific. Indeed, the notion of integrated

rather than distinct or sequential modes of awareness helps us understand why the *kagura* is still performed everywhere and why it is still believed to bring peace and prosperity. This integrated approach helps us understand how the myths, which have no rational content, are so much more effective in attracting people than are rational, logical explanations.

Expression itself does not have the capacity to connect meanings; rather, it is a human act of interpretation that connects meanings to expressions and to the kami. Hence, expression cannot be reduced to either/or mental exclusions. This multidimensionality is a directionless horizon wherein the present, past, and future have no specific locations. This is useful in explaining the substantial embedded significance of the *kagura* and expressing the kami. The kami are not located in an ego, psyche, or body, nor are they caused by historical events.

In sum, the kami do not exist as abstract concepts apart from expression. As argued herein, the kami have developed not from a set of concepts, but from uniquely performative acts. The Japanese gain access to the kami through performing the *kagura*. The kami are neither a cognitive system nor are they dogma, but the essence of Japanese religion lies in the very local act of expressing what the local group calls the kami. Every detail of their ways of *expressing* the kami serves as a basis of *experiencing* the kami, and the border between the *kagurashi* and the audience is eliminated (see pp. 196-198). The *kagura* is not reducible; it is not a form of divided parts of expression such as dance and language. Rather than being a symbolic expression, the *kagura* is a whole that is transcendent in modes of awareness and their unique expressions; as seen above, the act of expressing the kami lies in its unique mode of expression.

While the dualistic understanding of expression presupposes linear, cause-effect, spatio-temporality, which is primarily occupied with "telos" and "goals," the essence of the *kagura* lies in its aspatiality and atemporality. While modern approaches seek to identify the origin of things and place them in a particular historical moment, "the absence of origin" is the very condition of expressing the kami. The kami are present in the experience, transcending the time and space of any given *kagura* performance.

Finally, this dissertation demonstrates the importance of expressing the kami to Shinto folk religion. Japanese religious culture is unlike the mental/rational "religion" in the Western sense of the term. This is not to say that Japanese religion is irrational, rather, it may be *arational*, what Gebser calls (1985) *praeligio*. Praeligio, according to Gebser, is "a commitment to the emergent transparency of the presence of origin, which as soon as man becomes conscious of it, enables him to perceive as well as to impart the truth of integrality or the whole" (p. 271). The praeligio does not exclude any of the other forms of the "ligio" (the bond to the past); rather it integrates them into the whole (Gebser, 1985, p. 164). The magic *pro-ligio*, the mythic *religio*, and the mental *religion* are co-present. This is perhaps the best example of why linear, sequential views of expressing the kami are inadequate.

Expressing the kami is latent in us, present in conscious and unconscious modes of awareness. The view of the *kagurashi* creating and maintaining the *kagura* in this study allow us to better understand not only the WASHINOMIYA SAIBARA KAGURA, and expressing the kami, but also the broader horizon of Japanese religion as a form of *praeligio*.

Appendix A: The *Hajiichiryu Saibara Kagura Uta Jutsuroku*

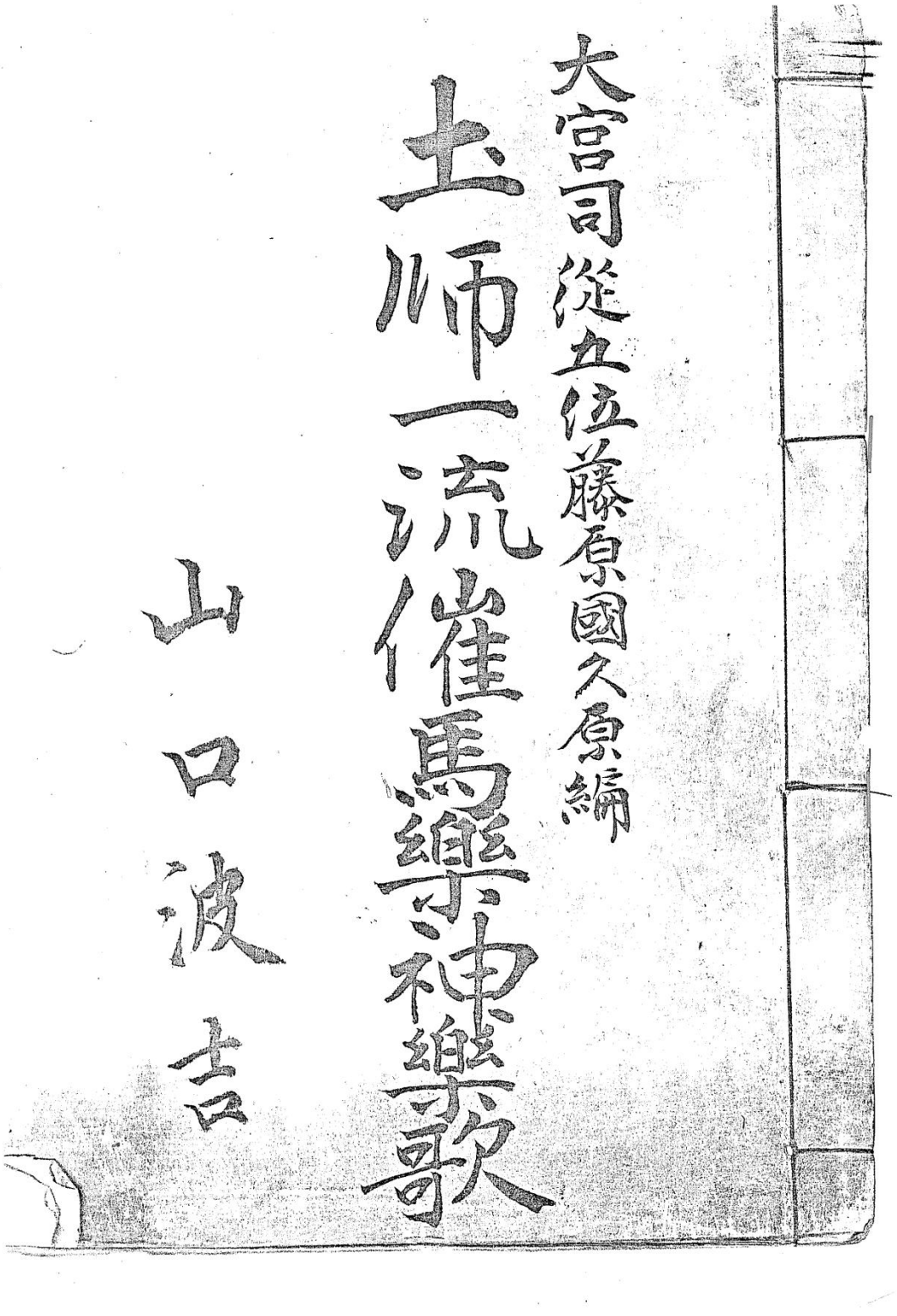
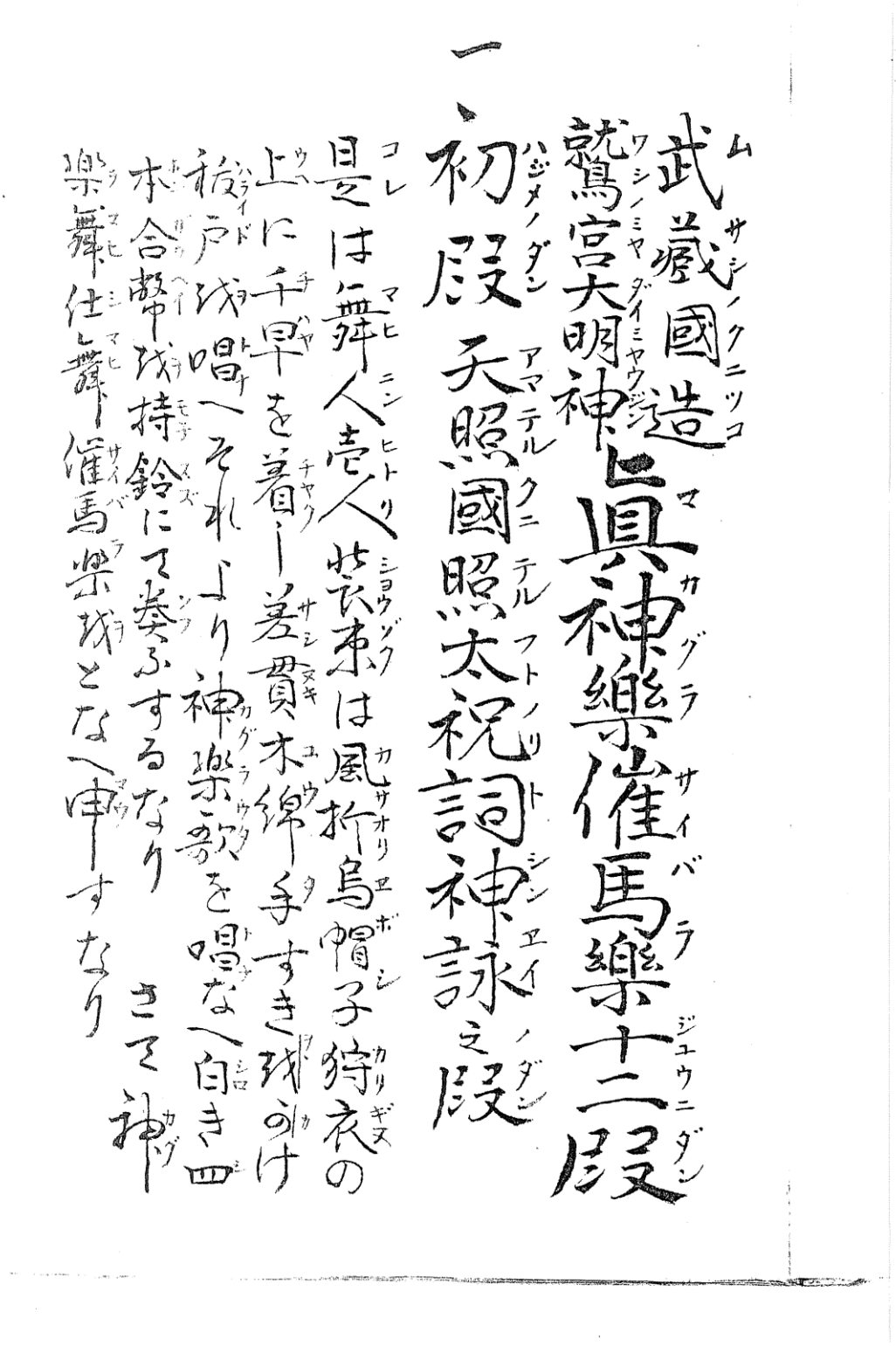


Figure 31: A Replicated Coverpage of the *Hajiichiryu Saibara Kagura Uta Jutsuroku*



一、武蔵國造鷲宮大明神眞神樂催馬樂十二段

初段　天照國照太祝詞神詠之段

是は舞人壱人壮衣冠は風折烏帽子狩衣の上に千早を着一差貫木綿手すき弦のけ抜戸弦唱へそれより神楽歌を唱なへ白き四木合幣弦持鈴にて奏ふするなり　さて神楽舞仕舞催馬楽弦となへ申すなり

Figure 32: A Replicated Main Text of the *Hajiichiryu Saibara Kagura Uta Jutsuroku*

Appendix B: The Music Score for Kagura Music

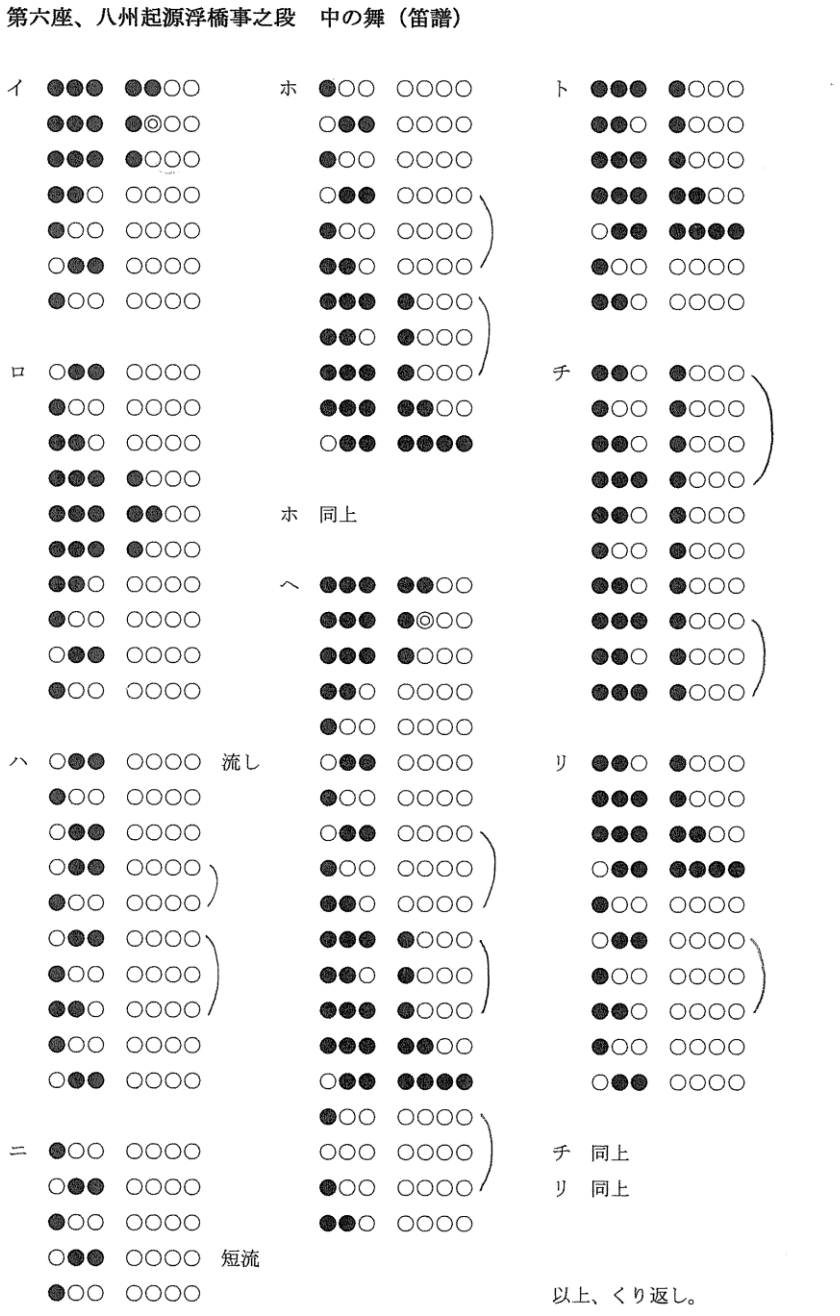


Figure 33: Music Score for Kagura Flute

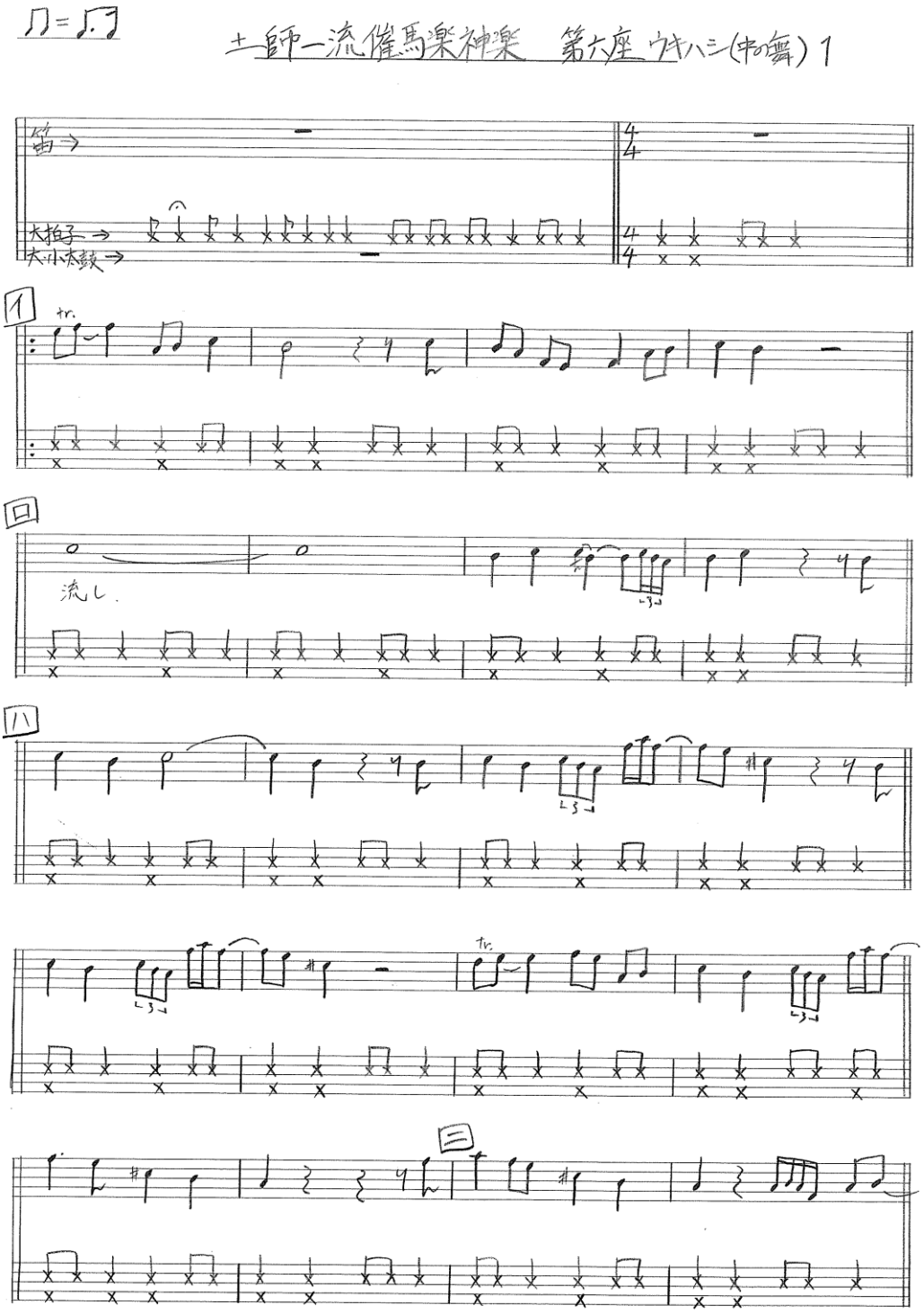


Figure 34: Music Score for Kagura Drums

Appendix C: The Pictures of the *Ukihashi Mai*



Figure 35: The *Ukihashi* (Floating) Bridge (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 36: Izanagi appears on the stage (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 37: Izanami appears on the stage (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 38: The *kadomawari* in the introductory part (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 39: Izanagi is posing in the introductory part (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 40: Izanami is posing in the introductory part (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 41: The *sashi-oōgi-no-mai* in the introductory part (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 42: Izanagi (left) and Izanami are uttering their lines (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 43: Izanagi (left) and Izanami are changing their *torimono* from fans to bells (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 44: The *suzu-no-mai* in the main part (1) (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 45: The *suzu-no-mai* in the main part (2) (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 46: Izanagi (right) and Izanami are coming close each other (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 47: The sun- and moon-board *torimono* are about to be crossed (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 48: The kami are making the *sanyo* posture (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 49: Izanagi's final dance in front of the *shinzen* (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)



Figure 50: Izanami's final dance in front of the *shinzen* (the 2009 New Year's Matsuri)

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