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著者	OHASHI HIDESHI, SAKUMICHI SHINSUKE, HORIKE KAZUYA
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A SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY OF OKINAWAN SHAMANISM (I) —APPROACH AND SOME FINDINGS—

By

HIDESHI OHASHI (大橋英寿)¹, SHINSUKE SAKUMICHI (作道信介)¹

(Tohoku University)

and KAZUYA HORIKE (堀毛一也)²

(Tohoku Welfare University)

In the Okinawan Islands, there are a lot of shaman *yuta*, exerting comprehensive influence on the Okinawan life. Since 1975 we have investigated the shamanistic phenomenon in Okinawa by the field work from the social psychological point of view.

In this paper, we aim to overview the results of our research obtained so far. The three points were focussed on in our research, as follows.

- 1) The *yuta*'s initiation processes (the subjects are thirty *yutas*).
- 2) The actual states of the inhabitants' reliance on *yutas* (the subjects are 203 housewives in the northern part of Okinawa Main Island).
- 3) The dynamics of dual dependence of the mentally handicapped on both doctors and *yutas* (the subjects are 205 patients at three mental hospitals).

As the results, we showed that Okinawan shamanism, the fundamental culture of Okinawa, maintains its versatile influence even now and the *yuta* will keep functioning as "the counselor in the open field" closely adhered to traditional culture, such in the future.

Key words: shaman, shamanism, faith-healing, spirit possession, shamanistic initiation.

INTRODUCTION

In the Okinawan Islands, there are a lot of shaman *yuta*, exerting comprehensive influence on the Okinawan life. We have investigated the shamanistic phenomenon from the social psychological point of view. Our research study was commenced on the intensive observation and recording of the interaction process ("*hanji*" scene), between *yutas* and their clients and then moved, on the one hand, into accumulating case studies on *yuta*'s initiation processes and personality characteristics and, on the other, into investigating actual states of the regional residents' dependence on *yutas*. Based on these investigations, some aspects of the relationship of shamanism as a traditional and fundamental culture and foreign culture have been examined

1. Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts and Letters, Tohoku University, Kawauchi, Sendai, Japan.
2. Department of Social Welfare, Tohoku Welfare University, Kunimi, Sendai, Japan.

We could accumulate the considerable data and findings about some subjects. Then, we shall report the results under the title of "Social psychological study of Okinawan shamanism" in this journal.

At first, in this paper the outline of our field, social psychological subjects and approach, and some findings obtained so far will be dealt. In (II) of this volume, the dynamics of faith-healing system included in Okinawan shamanism and modern western medical system of mental diseases will be referred to. Formerly we reported the Rorschach responses of *yuta* in this journal (Matsui, Horike and Ohashi, 1980).

FIELD AND APPROACH

1. Field

Okinawa is one of Japanese prefectures. As Fig. 1 shows, Okinawa is composed of over sixty islands and located about five hundred kilometers to the south from Kyusyu of Japan, to the east from the Republic of China, and to the north from Taiwan, so that the unique culture has been reared, merging with these various cultural traditions.

Okinawa was ever an independent kingdom called Ryukyu, founded in the 15th century. Its prosperity brought up the highly-developed culture through the trade and communication with Southeast Asia and especially China. But early in the 17th century the Satsuma clan encroached upon Okinawa to be under its indirect control. In 1879, the Japanese Government annexed Okinawa into a prefecture.

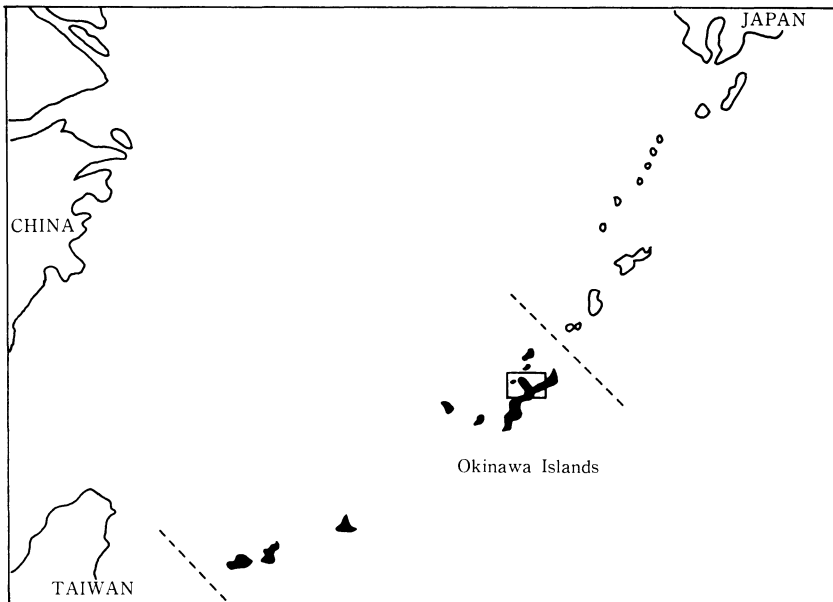


Fig. 1. Okinawa Islands (our field is shown in the square).

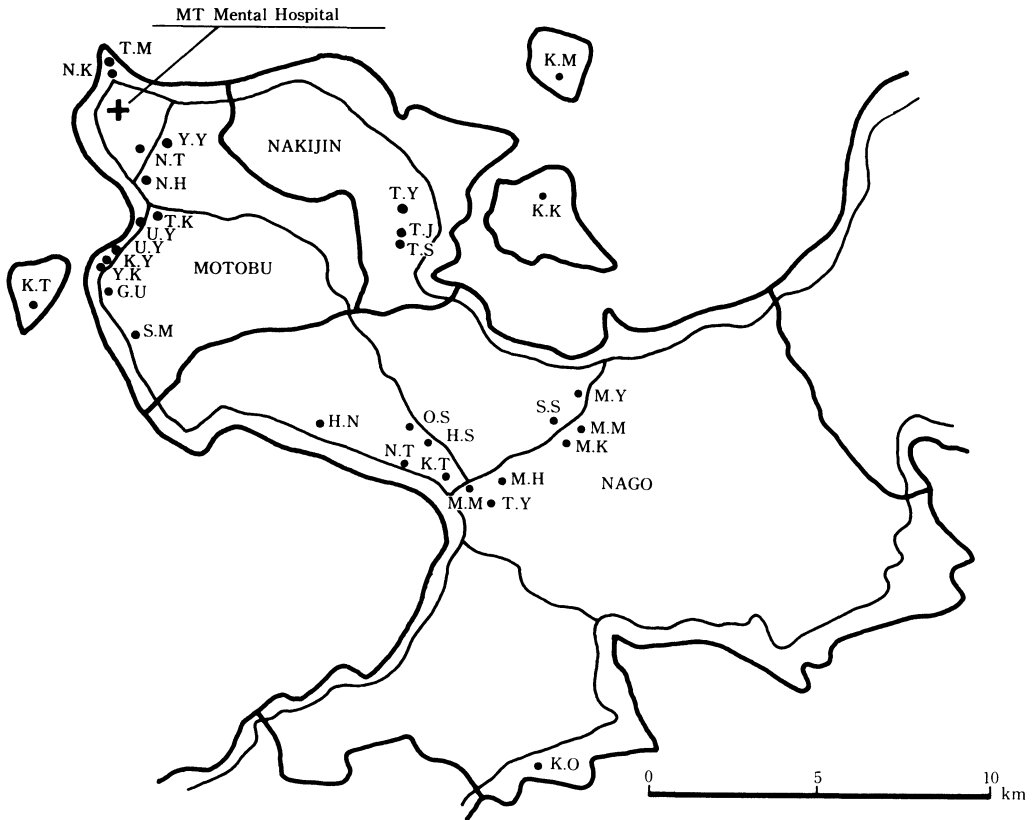


Fig. 2. Distribution of *yutas* in our field.

In the World War II, Okinawa became a scene of battle so that many people came to die. Since 1945, the American Government governed there and then in 1972 Okinawa was returned to Japan. Now the economic and industrial modernization is under way in Okinawa.

The Okinawan population is over one million and composed of ten cities, six towns, and thirty eight villages. Naha City, which is a prefectural seat, has a population of about three hundred thousand. The concentration of population is on the middle southern of Main Island of which center is Naha City. Our fields are three neighbouring municipalities, namely, Nago City, Motobu Town and Nakijin Village. Nago City is at the northern part of Main Island, about sixty kilometers away from Naha. Nago City is a center of the northern part, having a population of fifty seven thousand. It has a large area, of which middle is mountainous. According to the prefectural statistical data, six indexes to evaluate each municipality locate Nago City in an average of Okinawa Prefecture.

At first, we had investigated only Nago City, but as it has dawned on us that the three neighbouring municipalities must be regarded as one sphere in terms of relation-

ship between *yuta* and client as well as economy, culture, and communication, so we decided to choose three municipalities as our field.

Agriculture as a traditional industry still holds an important economic position, although the growth of commerce and the tertiary industry degrades the weight of agriculture recently. Many inhabitants have some fields of sugar canes.

Nago City is composed of 47 *shimas* which mean wards in Okinawa, Motobu Town is of 27 *shimas*, and Nakijin Village is of 19 *shimas*. *Shima* is not only a geographical and administrative unit, but each has held the very closing and exclusive independence historically, socially, and culturally, and the inherent, traditional faith (ancestor worship) within the consanguinity which shared the tomb. In each *shima*, there is an administrative meeting place *kominkan* (a public hall) which functions as a park, where there is a small cottage *ashagi* in which the community's fete rituals are held. In the mountains at the back of *shima*, *utaki*, the place to worship the ancestors' spirits, is found and *shima* is surrounded by many great tombs of the inhabitants' consanguinity. Our field includes about thirty shamans *yuta* at present who are distributed like in Fig. 2. They are all women. At the present condition of our field, the total population is about seventy thousand and about twenty thousand homes are held, so *yutas* are found in a ratio of one to a two thousand and three hundred population or six hundred and sixty homes.

2. Social psychological approach

The investigators were not interested in Okinawan shamanistic phenomenon from the standpoint of "shamanism" till 1950's. From the first, the anthropologists (Lebra 1966, Sasaki 1983) and folklorists (Sakurai 1973, Yamashita 1977) turned their attention to it. Recently, the transcultural psychiatrists (Takaishi 1978, Kuba, 1978) have been concerned with it. As there are comprehensive objects to study in the shamanistic phenomenon, an approach from only one standpoint is not enough to solve them. Shamanism is so unique, so complex phenomenon that it can be made clear only when it is multiple-approached from the science of religion, psychiatry, physiological and clinical psychology, and social psychology as well as anthropology and ethnology. For, the shamanistic phenomenon has been made in the historical context, being affected by both social, cultural factors and psychological, physiological factors. Accordingly, we can locate it as a common topic which enables various investigators to confirm consciously their inherent standpoints and the relationship between each standpoint. The frame of reference peculiar to social psychology is to understand human nature in the dynamic relationship among personality, social relation, and culture, which permits us to classify Okinawan shamanism's topics as three main categories. The social psychological subjects are summarized as follows.

I. The subjects focussed on personality and its relation with social relation and culture :

1) *Yuta*'s initiation process and personality characteristics.

- 2) The process how an individual becomes a client of *yuta* and how she relies on *yuta*.
- 3) The public's attitude to *yuta* and native shamanism.
- II The subjects focussed on social relation and its relation with personality and culture :
 - 4) *Yuta's* status and role in Okinawan society and its historical background.
 - 5) Dynamics of interactional situation between *yuta* and a client.
 - 6) Mutual relation among *yutas* and relation between *yuta* and the other religious specialists.
- III The subjects focussed on culture and its relation with personality and social relations :
 - 7) Rival relation of foreign culture and indigenous shamanism (A): foreign religions vs. indigenous faith.
 - 8) Rival relation of foreign culture and indigenous shamanism (B): new civil law vs. customary succession law.
 - 9) Rival relation of foreign culture and indigenous shamanism (C): modern medicine vs. faith-healing.
 - 10) Okinawan shamanism in different cultures ; the problems of the emigrants.

Here, we would like to summarize the method, frame of reference, and key-concepts, as follows.

1) Medium approach

The medium approach is to start from the middle position between microscopic and macroscopic-approach. This approach is applied to each subject described above. For example, in the case of the dynamics of the interactional situation between *yuta* and a client, we are at first to start with the analysis of the content and order of topics dealt there, after recording the process in V.T.R.. And then we are concerned with their behavior and facial expressions in detail, especially focussing on *yuta's* behavior, altered states of consciousness, and role-taking process. On the other hand, through following up the client by the at-home interview later, we are going to grasp the problems and motives which trigger her to visit *yutas*, the valuation of *hanji* (divination), the coping behavior to the problems, the client's process of reliance on *yutas*, and her position and role in her family and relatives.

2) Socialization as a key-concept

We mean that socialization is the process through which an individual acquires the readiness and attitude toward social situations, internalizing a cultural standard in the core of his personality, so that he can adjust to them, from the social psychological standpoint. The next three points are very important for us to understand the socialization of an individual in certain developmental stage: (1) the subculture, to which the individual refers his ego, in order to take the perspective of his life, (2) the relation of the individual and the subculture (for example, it includes the degree of the direct contact to the subculture, and the specialization of his cultural adjustment-

model) and (3) the quality of his adjustment-readiness acquired.

The key-concept socialization is useful for the most objects described above and especially it is indispensable for studying *yuta*'s initiation processes and the individual "growing up to be a client" processes.

3) Intensive study of a community

It is very important to investigate a community intensively and as a whole, for the social psychological study of shamanism, which permits us to make such points about *yuta* clear as follows: (1) the master and human relation in each epoch of the initiation process, (2) the influence of *yuta*'s residence on the type of business the shaman deals with and the number of clients, (3) the sociometrical relation among *yutas* in the community, and (4) the degree to which *yutas* share the belief-system, cosmology, ritual and terms in common with each other.

4) Relation of indigenous shamanism and foreign cultures

Grasping the phenomena of native shamanism composing the fundamental culture of Okinawan society in the framework of its dynamics with foreign, heterogeneous culture rivalling it will serve to better understanding of its peculiarity and present condition and also to forecasting its future. In this case, as will be stated later the three aspects, i.e. cosmology, succession law and curing technique become important (Fig. 3).

The social psychological approach focussed on how both the shamanism and the foreign cultures function as the channels to solve the problems each other, for an individual or a group in the face of crisis

5) Qualitative data and quantitative data

The approach to each subjects requires both the intensive case-studies and the extensive field researches for grasping the whole tendency, by which we can link "specific" to "general", and link "individual" to "whole".

SOME FINDINGS

1. Present status of Okinawan shamanism

Our research study was, as above mentioned, commenced on intensive observation and recording of the interaction process (divination scene) between *yutas* and their clients and then moved, on the one hand, into accumulating case studies on *yutas*' initiation processes and personality characteristics and, on the other, into investigating actual status of the regional residents' dependence on *yutas*. At the same time, a survey particularly centering on dynamics of dual dependence of the mentally handicapped on both doctors and *yutas* has been carried on. The purpose is studying in what kind of relation and in which phase Okinawan shamanism with *yutas* as its central figure in charge develops with rapidly penetrating foreign, heterogeneous culture of various kind. Based on the outcome obtained so far, let's consider some of theses.

Prior to the above, however, what we have to touch on is the fact of historically repeated suppression charged on the *yuta*, and recent situations surrounding them. Not only in the period of old Ryukyu dynasty when Okinawa was independent, but also in the period of the last year of Meiji era (1868-1911) through Taisho era (1912-1925) when the policy of Japanizing Okinawa was promoted, and further in the War period (1941-1945) when counter-intelligence control was put into practice—particularly during the cataclysms of the respective period—the *yuta* was suppressed as misleading people by respective ruler over and over again. Nago Regional Act codified in 1886 stipulated as follows.

Regarding driving out Yota (= *yuta*), in spite of repeated instructions to regulate them, it has not been observed in practice yet. . . . Anyone who kills cows and pigs (for the ritual, in defiance of the regulation) shall be fined 300 kanmon and the relevant Yota shall be expelled immediately.

Thus, not only *yutas* but their clients were prohibited.

Reflecting the suppression in the past, *yutas* tend to conceal themselves from public society even now, resulting in our taking time for establishment of rapport with them. In addition, the same defensive attitude shown on the side of clients make it difficult to grasp the actual condition of their dependence on the former. It is said that, in spite of the public society's regarding them as taboo, the number of *yutas* has been increasing recently. But how many *yutas* work actually in Okinawa? : even the round number is not yet to be made clear.

It is supposed that in the background of reproduction of *yutas* and maintenance of the shamanism lies the fact that native shamanism with *yutas* as its central figures in charge not only supports the indigenous religion of Okinawa with ancestral-spirit worship as its axis, but also contains the criterion whose value-and-faith system coordinates and unites human relations on the level of families, relatives and consanguinities directly and indirectly, and further holds a sort of community faith-healing system. The above is entirely due to the *yuta*'s function as a kind of counselor to accelerate acknowledged reorganization by giving explanation and direction to a variety of problematic and critical situations which people, particularly wives, of private society encounter all through their lifetime socialization processes.

Native shamanism has still been acting as the nucleus of neither extant culture nor peripheral one but of fundamental culture of Okinawan society. Such recent series of movements in the event of "tootoome (mortuary tablet) issue", arising an object of public concern as the result of a local newspaper's campaign with reaction in unison by women's and lawyer's associations quite recently (1980), as (1) criticism on *yuta* as those who maintain old customary law and suggest it to people, (2) "yuta dispute" being developed later on with psychopathologists and lawyers as its core, and (3) people's strong concern in and widespread sensation on those reports, and further (4) split of views on it, have raised up to the public scene *yutas* who were put under taboo so far and, at the same time, unexpectedly and reversely have made clear that native shamanism has been maintaining deep-rooted influence matching for surface and

foreign culture. Native shamanism and the *yuta* supporting it are pulled out to the surface of Okinawa society and in many cases criticized as irrational chief instigator opposing modernization of Okinawa, and, on the other hand, appreciated as the origin of indigenous Okinawan culture. In any case, Okinawan shamanism does not simply remain as a matter of concern for researchers at home as well as abroad, but is an outstanding and up-to-date issue held internally by Okinawan society itself, and also a dilemma unable to find out any solution because criticism on the *yuta* involves the possibility to be related to denial of indigenous Okinawan culture itself.

2. Functions of *yuta*

Motives and problems making people call on *yutas* are varied. Classifying from the viewpoint of conduct that *yutas* are asked for by clients, their roles may be pigeon-holed as follows.

(1) Judgement on good or ill luck and on timing of one's fortune or a plan: besides the fortune telling on families in general on New Year's Day made into a custom, judgement on construction or reconstruction of a house or a tomb, congeniality in marriage, employment or change of job, open-business, forecasting entrance examination, and also the date of wedding are included herein.

(2) Interpretation of unusual experience: with anxiety or presentiment caused by relating incompleteness of mind and body, accident, dream and weakening of cattles, etc. to message from ancestral spirit on insufficiency or omission of service to them, or other spirit's offence, clients ask for *yutas'* interpretation.

(3) Confirmation of ancestral spirit's intention and effect of services: communication with a blood relatives soon after his or her death, sufficiency or not of services to ancestral spirit, confirmation of effect of service activity to the same, sufficiency or not of succession of a mortuary tablet, retroactive confirmation of lineage for making a pedigree, and further confirmation of life or death of the missing etc. are included herein.

(4) Execution of rituals: this is to ask a *yuta* for execution of a ritual suggested by her divination at the client's. As the representative rituals, "nujifa" (an exorcistic rite for leading a lost spirit to the tomb), "yashiki-ugwan" (a prayer of thanks to house deity), "mabuigumi" (replacing a dropped one's spirit), etc. can be mentioned.

(5) Teaching traditional ritual forms and knowledge thereof: through a *yuta* are learnt succession of mortuary tablets and their classification and arrangements with complicated principles and taboos and also manners and procedures when a wife performs various rituals, and offerings and their meaning.

Here, I would like to touch on the relation among the *yuta* and other servers. The "nuru" (priestess) who governs formal festival rituals of a village community is definitely distinguished from the *yuta* who individually copes with problems or critical situations pertaining to an individual or a family. The "sanjinsou" (fortune teller) is a server resembling the *yuta*. Originally, as a spiritualist the *yuta* is concerned with

the world of the dead whereas the "sanjinsou" handles this world, but, there is a tendency between the two to enlarge own repertoire to other's service area each other, resulting in duplication of respective services in the same area. Responsible for accelerating the above duplication and confusion are the clients who ask for judgement of the same problem without any distinction between them, and, at the same time, both *yutas* and "sanjinsou"s who respond to their clients' requests beyond their respective original function. Especially among young wives there are quite a few who mix up both in answering to our interview. There is a sib priestess named "ukudi" in patri-sib called Munchu, who is a woman of "saadakaumari" (sensitive disposition) among her consanguinity, selected from among those with weak mind and body, or those with experience of "kami-daari" (deity curse; possessedness or shamanistic sickness). There are not a few cases in which a *yuta* concurrently act as the sib priestess "ukudi" in patri-sib. In this case, the course where a woman first becomes a "ukudi" and then takes up the role of a *yuta*, adapting herself to the neighbours' request is taken more often than the reverse one of firstly being recognized as a *yuta* and then holding "ukudi" concurrently. This fact indicates a psycho-social basis for reproducing *yutas*.

The woman named "ugwansaa", mostly of middle or advanced age, are found in most villages. They are the ones who act as "yashiki-ugwan", "mabuigumi" etc. at neighbours' request. There are some among them who become assistants to a certain *yuta* and conduct "ugwan" (prayer) for clients in his place. As a medium between regional residents and the *yuta*, the "ugwansaa" covers the flanks of native shamanism. The most popular *yuta* in Nago City keeps three "ugwansaa" under her.

3. Psycho-social characteristics of *yuta*

There are great individual differences in *yutas*' facial expressions and altered states of consciousness suggested by the observation at the situation of shamanistic ritual. On the one extreme, there is a case where a *yuta* shows dull action and yawn frequently in a phantasmal condition with dimmed consciousness, and at times fall in difficulty for self-control, and, on the other, another case where, without any abnormality in action and facial expression, a *yuta* leads a client at her will and control the "hanji" (divination) situation in harmony with her own tempo, and there exist a lot of variations in between the above two extremities. In the background of this diversity, together with individual difference in relative seriousness of "kamidaari" (deity curse afflicting the individual) condition occurring prior to initiation stage, the experienced-years of shamanism after becoming a shaman are to be taken into consideration, in the first place. There is a tendency that the more experienced a *yuta* is — especially the more highly appreciated by people she is —, the nearer state to normality she shows, whereas the shorter the time a novice *yuta* named "mii-yuta" spend after being recognized as a *yuta*, the greater gap from normality she shows. Both appraisal among *yutas* themselves, and the same among clients deem the fall into state of trance

his immaturity as a *yuta*, inferiority in spiritual capacity or insufficiency in training. It is considered the following points lie behind the tendency of *yutas* approaching normality by sufficient training towards a shaman and also by years of experience in shamanistic services: (1) social sanction being charged against remarkable deviation from normality, self-control for avoiding the above, (2) mastering technique for avoiding consumption of their mind and body energy by repetition of trance state, and (3) supposed in its basis is rivalry for domination of the whole personality between the subjective self and the possessed sub-character.

In other words, it is sensed that a *yuta* realizes and governed by “chiji-gami” (guardian spirit) in the process of her getting rid of “kamidaari”. This gives her the position of possessed sub-character and in the process of possessedness this possessed sub-character and subjective self confront each other for dominating the whole personality. The state like trance means that a subjective self is temporarily governed by a possessed sub-character and controlled unvoluntarily. Accumulated training and stored-up experience make a *yuta* to enable his subjective self to reversely govern, control and operate the possessed sub-character as the former pleases, lest she should fall in a state like trance.

It is thought that Okinawan shamanism holds a sort of community faith-healing in itself, and its structural system is observed most thoroughly in *yutas*' life histories, especially in their initiations. As the case studies are piled up on the initiation processes, it is better understood that the under-mentioned four phases are particularly important for the stability of mind and body.

A) The structural system for preventing a person in question from being socially alienated by being labeled his abnormality of mind and body as “kamidaari”, i.e. when an incompleteness of mind and body comes up to emerge as “caseness”, it is recognized mutually not as “illness” but as so-to-speak “kami-ness” (dietyness).

B) The structural system of a kind of self-analysis treatment method based on projection of mind and body symptom toward the external world or causal reversion which lies in the training called “shiji-tadashi” (retroactive confirmation of ancestral lineage) and “taki-ukushi” (pilgrimage of holy places or ritual sites).

C) “Chiji-awase” where she get the exsiting *yuta* teach about appropriateness of her own projection of a symptom toward the external world, of her own explanation of a hallucination, and of her own interpretation of a dream, etc. The social acceptance of the way of explanation and interpretation of inner experience promotes lessening anxiety and self-acceptance of experienced content. It also means learning the recognition framework owned commonly in the *yuta* world, and, in its turn, the internalization and assimilation process of shamanistic culture.

D) The curing function latent in execution of “yuta-gutuu” (acting out one's belief as *yuta*) itself, i.e. the repetition of spiritual rituals sublimates her extant symptom lawfully under the pretext of “hito-dasuke” (an act of mercy) by projecting it to the client, and promote establishing her identity as well as maintaining stability of her

mind and body. By grasping her own extant symptom as, for example, "due to the spirit who possessed the client", and thus by reducing it to her peculiarity and supremacy as a spiritualist, she keeps stability of her mind and body. The more serious a symptom is, the more she is required to emphasize the framework for the recognition of the external world under the name of "kami" (diety) for its stability.

4. Actual status of clients

Almost all the clients calling on *yuta* are women. Though in rare occasion they are accompanied by their husband or son, even in such a case it is a wife or a mother who communicates directly with a *yuta*. The situation, problem or motive with which people contact and rely on a *yuta* can be better understood when they are grasped in line with the transition of her position or role among her family and relatives during the period of her middle through advanced age and in the context of her socialization process therein. As a part of getting hold of actual status in which regional residents rely on *yutas*, an interview investigation by door-to-door visit upon random sampling of wives (including the unmarried, the divorced and widows), ranging in age from 20 through 69 and residing in Nago City, has been being conducted. Let's pick up several basic outcome from among the result obtained on them numbering 269 who were interviewed in the same way in 13 districts.

1) At least 169 (59.8%) among 269 have experienced contacting *yutas*. The percentage reaches 19% in twenties, 65% in forties and 85% in sixties. During the past one year at least one out of four visits *yutas*.

2) Motives and problems for the reliance are various. Making "fortune telling" holding a wide content the top, "tootoomee" (ancestral tablets), "suukoo" (annual memorial service), and "miigusoo" (communication with the recent dead), being lumped together as "gwansugutuu" (ancestral matter), range next with almost same frequency, which are succeeded by "mabuigumi" (replacing a dropped one's spirit), "illness, injury, and accident" and "dream". Although being small in number, "munchu" (patti-sib) matter and "village matter" are also included in this.

3) The age when people contact a *yuta* for the first time scatters widely from the latter half of teenage through fifties, but its average is 31 years of age. The first visit to a *yuta* is rarely made alone, i.e. accompanied by real mother, mother-in-law, and/or sisters. Motives or problems for the first visit are in order of "fortune", "miigusoo", and "illness". They may be called customary-contact, role-contact and crisis-contact, respectively. Further, in case the initial reliance on *yuta* is done with "illness", i.e. crisis of a person in question or family as the moment, there appears a tendency of reliance after that being rapidly deepened.

4) Based on 25 sentences narrating on the *yuta* as the judging scale, wife's attitude toward and image of *yutas* were searched for. As the result it was made sure that their valuation of and attitude toward them are plural and the amplitude between affinity and repulsion is big, bearing an ambivalent tone. The summary of image and

appraisal of *yuta* comparatively coincided among the people is as follows : (1) A *yuta* is a special person with inspirational power, but is not abnormal one. (2) She is helpful in teaching us traditional custom and telling our fortune, and also can distinguish those of “kami-umari” (high-spirit birth). (3) All that she tells are, however, not necessarily come true, especially about future things there are many cases her tellings fail hitting the truth. (4) She always attributes the cause of misfortune to “ugwanbusuku” (insufficiency of worship) toward ancestors. (5) Unless we observe what a *yuta* tells us, we can not compose ourselves. (6) It is too expensive to rely on a *yuta*.

5. Resistance of indigenous shamanism against invasion of foreign culture

Grasping the phenomena of indigenous shamanism composing the fundamental culture of Okinawan society in the framework of its dynamics with foreign, heterogeneous culture rivalling it will serve to better understanding of its characteristics and present condition and also to forecasting its future. In this case, the three aspects, i.e. (A) cosmology (=indigenous religion), (B) norm (=customary succession law) and (C) curing technique (=community faith-healing), which Okinawan shamanism involves as a cultural complex, become important. And (A') foreign religion, (B') new civil law and (C') modern medical treatment rival the above three aspects, respectively. Hereinafter we shall summarize the relation of both cultures in these three aspects.

1) “Indigenous religion” vs. “foreign religion” : As foreign religions propagating their doctrines, holding their branch organizations presently in Nago City, Buddhism, Tenri-kyo, sectarian Christianity, Shinto, Seicho-no-ie, Soka-Gakkai, and Sekai-Kyusei-Kyo are mentioned. Nevertheless, up to 80% of the whole wives interviewed answers “fwafuji” or “gwansu” indicating ancestor to the question on what religion you believe in at the time of their interview investigation. In line with the advance of age, this tendency becomes strengthened, and in fifties and sixties the percentage reaches nearly 100%. The great majority are in need of the *yuta*'s existence, resultant-ly supporting indigenous shamanism. Among the group of foreign religions only Christianity and Soka-Gakkai (a sect of Japanese Buddhism) get share of 3-4% in number of adherents, respectively. What is interesting to us is that in the process of

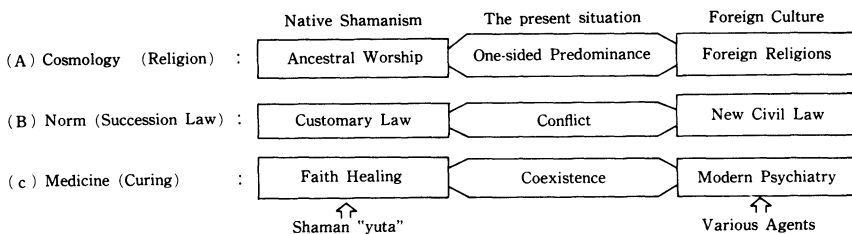


Fig. 3. Resistance of Native Shamanism to Foreign Culture.

enlarging their religious strength any foreign religion is compelled to assimilate to ancestral worship and indigenous shamanism, and that some sects make compromise with and even revise their principles toward the latter. It can be concluded that under the present status indigenous religion holds one-sided predominance over foreign religions.

2) “customary law” vs. “new civil law”: According to indigenous religion with ancestral worship as its essence, “tootoomee” of the dead must get religious services. Its succession law compromises the principle of direct male descendant and complicated taboos, and a *yuta* is deeply concerned with its decision. Particularly important are the following two points. 1st, because of succession of “tootoomee” being duplicated with inheritance of the dead’s property, the succession law substantially forms the customary law of property inheritance. 2nd, succession of “tootoomee” by women is made taboo, and women have no right for property inheritance accordingly.

Because such a customary law causes discord with value-attitude change in line with the enlarging human living space and change in mode of life as well as human relations, and, on the other hand, brings inconsistency with the principles of penetrating new Civil Law, it has created potential tension and troubles among families and relatives. Viewing this point from the interview investigation of wives, one fourth of the whole have experienced troubles within their families and relatives concerning “tootoomee”, and one third of the above troubled cases were entangled with property. Also 80 percent of the same cases about “tootoomee” show visiting *yutas* for their settlement. Making Ryukyu Shimpo’s article in 1980 the moment, tension and trouble having been potentialized before have come out into the open at a stroke, and becomes an object of public interest being called “tootoomee issue”. Particularly women’s organization and lawyer’s association have taken up the customary law, making women’s succession and inheritance taboo, as the question of human right and criticized *yutas* who instruct the law directly or indirectly. Conflict between the new and old norm is anticipated in future, too.

3) “faith-healing” vs. “modern medical treatment”: As the proverb “Doctor half and *yuta* half” indicates pointblankly, in case of disease people seek for the channel of settlement of their anxiety and cure in the new and old duplicated cultures. It is revealed through the interview investigation of wives, too, that the above tendency is especially strong in case of mental disorder. Lagging greatly behind the mainland Japan, psychiatric treatment in Okinawa commenced 1950s, after the War, and it can be said that its general system got ready only after Okinawa’s return to Japan, 1972. It would have been the actual position that until the above return, besides relying on the faith-healing by *yutas* or “kami-gutuu” (diety matter), neither the recognition framework nor the medical treatment method to depend on had been in any reality. According to our research, in about 60 percent of the cases where people came to mental hospitals as patients, the persons in question or the families had called on *yutas* prior or posterior to their reliance on modern medical treatment. The psychiatric treat-

ment in our field of the northern part of Okinawa Main Island further lagged behind, i.e. "MT" hospital which was opened in 1980 at Motobu Town is the only specialized facilities, and the case study on both outpatients and inpatients therein has been worked. Some findings from the case study shall be reported in the part II just after. Contrary to the before mentioned two aspects, it can be said that modern medical treatment and faith-healing are in the relation of coexistence.

DISCUSSION

As was stated above, Okinawan shamanism, the fundamental culture of Okinawa, maintains its versatile influence even now. Through its resistance against invasion of foreign culture, this fact is proven, reversely. While competing with other various agents, the *yuta* will keep functioning as "the counselor in the open field" closely adhered to traditional culture, in the future, too. As the coming course for the *yuta* it is anticipated that, coping with the tendency of diversification of people's knowledge and valuation, the functional division and the variation of their criterion will be promoted within the *yutas* themselves.

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