Norman Havens

Shinto

By one account, the field of Shinto studies has changed little since 1988 when Joseph M. Kitagawa (1988, p. 227) introduced a special issue of *History of Religions* dedicated to Shinto with the warning that the subject presents "some very difficult and disconcerting questions" for the historian of religions. The trouble starts with our first attempts at defining an object of study. As recently described by Inoue Nobutaka (1988, pp. 245), "Shinto is ordinarily understood as Japan's traditional religion, or indigenous form of religion, but there exists no firm agreement as to what should be included within the rubric of Shinto." He then states that definitions of Shinto run the gamut from those that include "the entirety of the Japanese people's way of life," to others claiming that "Japanese religious behavior (*shinkō* 信仰) is virtually all a collection or adaptation of elements taken from foreign religions, making it impossible to extract any coherent unity deserving the name 'Shinto.'" Most researchers, Inoue

states, lie between these two extremes, feeling that "it is possible to distinguish a form of religion called Shinto possessing a certain degree of particularity (*koyūsei* 固有性)."

The three approaches suggested by Inoue might be called the "air," "onion," and "pearl" strategies of definition, reflecting the views that Shinto is variously the "air we breathe," an onion that, once peeled, leaves nothing behind, or, is rather like a pearl—lots of accretions around a small but distinct core. Even this tripartite categorization, however, remains too simplistic, since elements of the definitions are not always mutually exclusive. At any rate, the paradox in approaching this subject is that, in the context of the other essays in this *Guide*, and depending on one's perspective, Shinto might easily be taken as the sum total of all the other essays here, or, perhaps, no more than part of the chapter on Buddhism.

WHAT IS SHINTO?

Traditional *emic* descriptions of Shinto are those given by modern Shintoists themselves, and by extension, Western observers who rely on predominantly Shintoist sources. They frequently start with a variation on "*Shinto is the indigenous religion of Japan.*" One recent introductory work in English thus states that Shinto is one of "two major faiths" espoused in Japan (the other being Buddhism): "Shinto is indigenous to Japan, and…the religion still permeates almost every aspect of Japanese life" (Littleton 2002, p. 6). The traditional accounts frequently go on to describe Shinto as a natural polytheism that evolved within the specific ecology and communal lifestyle common to the Japanese islands (Sonoda 2000). Rather than individual belief, religious life is focused on seasonal festivals or *matsuri* involving ageless agricultural rites dedicated to tutelary deities (kami) enshrined in *jinja* of each locality. Parishioners and other worshipers visit the shrines at times of major festivals, during initiatory and life-crisis rites, and at other times of extraordinary need. Other conventional details might include the fact that while Shinto was subordinate to Buddhism through most of its history and underwent syncretism with Buddhism from the late ancient period on, it developed an increasing sense of self-identity and awareness from the medieval period, culminating in the early modern nativist program of Motoori Norinaga and Hirata Atsutane, both of whom attempted to purify kami ritual of all specious (primarily Confucian) and vulgarly religious (primarily Buddhist) taint. By throwing off such accretions, the architects of the Meiji Restoration succeeded in restoring Shinto to its "pure" form—yet without the religious content that ironically had made the earlier cult popular (Grapard 1984). Following the Restoration (1868), brief attempts were made to raise Shinto to the equivalent of a national church, but it was then divorced once again from "religion" and defined as a system of patriotic national ethics and civic morality, a non-religious vehicle for the mystical national polity called *kokutai* 国体.

Other features may be enumerated, but *doctrine* is rarely addressed. In fact, Shinto is known for its doctrinal latitude and the minimal level of creedal demands placed on its adherents. These last characteristics are in fact some of what makes Shinto so difficult to grasp as a *religion*. Ueda Kenji, for example, notes that "as a national religion or 'natural religion,' Shinto originally had no need for establishing doctrines," yet that very characteristic has meant, contrarily, that "the development of scholastic theology within Shinto

has always been in response to stimulation from outside" (Ueda 1987). Perhaps even more important, the post-Meiji promulgation of Restoration Shinto as a non-religious system of national rite and vehicle for Japan's *kokutai* led to strict prohibitions on the production of speculative teachings. Following World War II, when Shrine Shinto was disestablished and forced into the status of an independent religion on the same footing with other religions, suggestions were made toward the end of establishing a uniform body of Shinto doctrine, yet with disappointing results. The conclusion of the 1947 document, "Principles for the Treatment of Doctrinal Inquiry," was to recommend that "no specific doctrinal stance be established," and as late as 1965, a survey of "some three-hundred selected priests, scholars and laypersons" could not even provide a basis for deciding whether Shinto was polytheistic or monotheistic (Ueda 1987, pp. 77–81; see also Ueda 1991, pp. 16ff).

Descriptions of this type can be said to use elements of both the "pearl" and "air" strategies. Namely, they claim that Shinto has existed throughout Japanese history, though over time it has become overlain with accretions from other religions and philosophies. The work of the restorationists was to dig down through, and peel off, the accretions in order to reveal the pure essence underneath.

Unfortunately, in the process, the core thus revealed frequently appears so bereft of *substantiality* that it can barely support the weight of a discrete institutional identity, and tends to be defined instead as the mystical spiritual foundation of all Japanese culture, the "national essence" or *kokutai*. For example, while Ueda states that "it is difficult to capture Shinto in a definition..." he then continues by suggesting that Shinto, "in the most comprehensive sense of the term, represents the value orientation of the Japanese people in the various forms it has taken and the developments it has undergone throughout Japanese history—including contacts with foreign cultures." When Ueda says "in the various forms it has taken and the developments it has undergone," he leaves little out, thus implying that whatever is Japanese, is Shinto. Similarly, Asoya Masahiko (1999, p. 55) states, "It is very difficult" to define Shinto, since it is equivalent to the "Japanese way of living" and thus for the Japanese traditionally "needs no explanation in words." Here again, Shinto, once distilled of accretions, is seen through "meta-religious" lenses as the wordless "air we breathe," and thus in one sense, beyond critique. As a result, although recent scholars in the West may assume that the notion of Shinto as an identifiable, perduring institution of indigenous Japanese culture has been thoroughly discredited, the belief continues to strongly color the work of many scholars working *within* the tradition.

Finally, one aspect of the emic account not always emphasized in Western treatments of Shinto as a religion, yet deeply rooted in the status of modern Shinto as a non-religious system of civic ritual is the role of the modern emperor (Breen and Teeuwen 2000, p. 2). The emperor's place within Shinto, and more broadly the role of Shinto in legitimating a particularistic socio-political system of authority, has been a constant issue for modern Shinto theorists. While outlining historical views of the definition of Shinto, Asoya Masahiko first quotes Kōno Seizō as an examplar of prewar "Kokutai Shinto":

> Shinto is the "Way of the Kami." The Way of the Kami is the basic principle of life since the times of the ancestors of the Japanese race. The Japanese race considered the act of glorifying, enhancing, and worshipping the heavenly virtues of Amaterasu Okami the principle of life, and the principle of the Japanese nation. (Asoya 1999, p. 59)

Asoya then continues, "In other words, Shinto is the principle of life for the Japanese people. Put in more concrete terms, it is for the subject to serve the emperor, who is the descendant of the heavenly *kami*" (1999, p. 59). While Asoya brackets these comments in the context of historical (prewar) definitions of Shinto, there is little doubt that many proponents of Shrine Shinto today would agree with their sentiment. The Association of Shinto Shrines (Jinja Honchō), umbrella organization for the 80,000 shrines throughout Japan, has set forth a minimal creed in the form of Principles of a Life of Reverence for the Kami (*Keishin seikatsu no kōryō* 敬神生活の綱領); the third of these states, "Gratefully *accepting the emperor's mind and will*, I shall live in amity and goodwill with my fellows, praying for the prosperity of the nation and the mutual coexistence and welfare of the entire world." When Anzu Motohiko claims that "the Japanese who ... take a rather serious view of this life know *through experience* [and] *through historical fact* ... the existence of the Emperor as the absolute condition of the life of the Japanese race," it seems only natural to respond with Kitagawa that "neither Anzu nor anyone else has the right to superimpose his Shintō belief on non-Shintō Japanese..." (Kitagawa 1988, p. 230). But given the breadth of the definitions involved, can there be such a thing as a "non-Shintō Japanese"? If Shinto is indeed equivalent to the "Japanese way of living" ("the air we breathe"), then by extension all true Japanese are bound to submit to the emperor's will.

In sum, the debate over common claims that Shinto is Japan's "indigenous religion" is not primarily a matter of academic quibbles about the correct parsing of the words *indigenous* or *religion*, what part of Shinto is truly home grown and what part imported, or whether Shinto is *a religion* in the sense of the Buddhism with which it is usually contrasted. These are all legitimate and relevant concerns, but they are secondary to the issue of the political use which such claims serve, specifically as a legitimation of demands for subservience on the part of *all* Japanese to established institutions of authority. Claims for Shinto's ahistorical meta-religious inclusivity thus have implications that may go beyond those of ordinary religions toward fellow members of a religious communion; claiming that "the entire Japanese way of life is Shinto" can be called "conversion by definition," something that sits uneasily with non-Shintoist scholars, and that has made them in turn extremely critical toward issues of bias in the area of historical claims. After noting the early modern nativist origins of restoration Shinto and its offspring, Shrine Shinto, Wilhelmus Creemers stated in 1968 that "in view of the bias underlying many such interpretations and treatises, it is very difficult to decide whether or not they can be accepted as reliable sources of information." He concluded that "to find out what Shinto is, therefore, it seems wise to disregard the writings of most prewar and many postwar Shinto theorists" (Creemers 1968, p. xvi).

A harsh judgment, but one that helps explain why much writing has been directed either toward "softening" (universalizing) Shinto through the use of motifs akin to "perennial philosophy" or Bergsonian theories of subconscious creativity (Mason 1935, Picken 1980, Yamamoto 1987), or subjecting Shinto's claims for indigeneity, inclusivity, and historical continuity to rigorous skepticism (Kuroda 1975, 1981).

"HISTORY BEGINS AT KURODA"

It is here that the "onion" strategy comes in. This definitional approach claims that once relieved of its historical "accretions," little remains of an immutable entity worthy of the name "Shinto," at least not until the creation of Shrine Shinto in the modern period. Needless to say, the person most closely associated with this kind of description is Kuroda Toshio. If Samuel Noah Kramer's cliché is true that "history begins at Sumer," it might be equally said that, particularly for those in the West, "the history of modern Shinto studies begins at Kuroda," a reflection of the immense impact his work has had on the field. With regard to Shinto, Kuroda and his interpreters have argued that the term "Shinto" 神道 (or *jindō* as it was likely pronounced until the medieval period; see TEEUWEN 2002) was not used in ancient times to describe an independent "religion," but primarily the "way (or condition) of being a kami," and its historical usage consistently takes for granted the Buddhist conceptual vocabulary then current (KURODA 1981, TEEUWEN 2002). While we assume that prehistoric rituals were oriented toward non-everyday potencies, their first historical organization as *jingi saishi* 神祇祭祀 took place under the influence of Chinese models and Buddhist theory and practice. In the words of TEEUWEN and SCHEID (2002, p. 205), the *jingi* system was not "Shinto," but rather "the canvas onto which Shinto was to be drawn" centuries later. As a result, the history of Japanese religion should not be considered the story of the relationship between "two major faiths," but rather a tableau, or an ever-shifting kaleidoscopic pattern of forces, constantly within the conceptual limits of the comprehensive theoretical discourse and practical institutional structure that Kuroda called variously *kenmitsu shisō* 顕密思想 ("exo-esoteric discourse"), and *kenmitsu taisei* 顕密体制 ("exo-esoteric regime"). The term *kenmitsu* here refers to the combination of exoteric and esoteric Buddhist thought and practice as it developed within the Tendai and Shingon schools from around the mid-Heian period on, and which formed the basic condition of knowledge throughout Japan's history up to at least the late medieval to early modern periods, until Shrine Shinto was reinvented as a modern national religion in the late nineteenth century. One result of Kuroda's theory is that it has freed scholars from the need to wrestle with the ambiguous nature of essentialist definitions of the Shinto "tradition," viewing it instead through most of Japanese history as "rituals directed toward kami," namely, one vector within a phenomenal "field" ruled by the *kenmitsu* discourse, similar to the way in which anthropologists such as Victor Turner and Stanley Tambiah have utilized the "field" concept in their studies of religion (TURNER 1974; TAMBIAH 1970; see also TEEUWEN and RAMBELLI 2003, p. 2).

Since this new understanding flies in the face of received wisdom regarding Shinto's independence and existence as an independent tradition, it remains controversial—particularly within the Shinto religious establishment itself—but is gaining acceptance among the younger generation of scholars. For example, in a recent work by Itō Satoshi, Endō Jun, and Mori Mizue, the authors state that "we do not think of 'Shinto' as an independent religious tradition. On the contrary, we believe that kami worship was established within a 'field' (*ba* 場) representing the seamless integration of a variety of cults and discourses

which today are viewed as discrete traditions, including Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and the way of Yin-Yang" (ITŌ et al. 2002, p. 2).

As a result, most Western research on Shinto in recent years has at minimum displayed an awareness of the Kuroda thesis, and increasingly concentrated research has been directed toward the thesis itself (TEEUWEN and RAMBELLI 2003; also the special issues of *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 23/3–4 in 1996 and 29/3–4 in 2002). In sum, this—the "onion" definition of Shinto—tends to be the ruling definitional paradigm in use today.

THE HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY OF SHINTO

Based on recent trends in research and the study of religion, how can we "reenvision" the history of "Shinto"?

Religion in Japan's prehistoric epoch was, based on archaeological evidence, probably not dissimilar from that found in hunter-gatherer cultures elsewhere in eastern Asia, namely, the observance of ritualized behavior to placate a variety of natural powers, in Japan called variously *kami*, *mono*, *chi*, *mi*, and *tama* (ITŌ 1998, YOSHIDA 2003). Taken alone, the word kami is not believed to have been used to refer to anthropomorphic beings until the production of a discourse of ritual-political power that began in the late seventh century. Kami attributed with the kind of human personality found in the eighth-century *Kojiki* 古事記 and *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀 were the products of relatively late, sophisticated speculation, and on the whole not characteristic of the earliest usage (HAVENS 1998, pp. 236–7). Kami were believed to "inhabit" specific, particular phenomena of nature—including trees, mountains, and rivers—and this belief in the sacrality of concrete natural phenomena is one of the keys to understanding the way in which Japanese space was later sacralized within Buddhist discourse. At the same time, while associated with such natural phenomena, kami made their appearance only erratically, or in response to specific acts of worship, and were not enshrined in permanent man-made structures until after the coming of Buddhism (MATSUMAE 1993). Traditional interpretations of ancient Japan tend to portray kami in almost exclusively pacific and beneficent terms (REISCHAUER 1980); more recent research, however, has thrown doubts on that sanguine portrayal, and suggest a darker apprehension of kami in the pre-historic and ancient periods. Rather than munificent bestowers of the blessings of nature, the most striking aspect of ancient kami was, in SATŌ Hiroo's words, their "unpredictable nature" (2000, p. 20). Other scholars are even more emphatic. Itō Satoshi states that the ancient association of kami activity with epidemic disease, floods, and drought was so close as to conclude that "the activity of performing worship to kami was for no other reason than placating the kami's ire; it is not excessive to say the essence of kami worship (*jingi saishi*) in Japan can be sought in the avoidance of the kami's violent apparitions (*tatari*). It was only later that kami came to be viewed as beings that had compassion on humans—a concept unknown to those of the ancient period" (ITŌ et al. 2002, p.4; see also NAKAMURA 1994, p. 109). This characteristic is important since it helps in understanding the interpretation of the place of kami within subsequent Buddhist discourse.

The patterns of ritual conduct oriented toward such non-everyday powers no doubt

became more systematized in the first centuries of the common era, together with the advent of widespread hydraulic rice agriculture and the gradual merger of tribes into a confederation centering on the Yamato clan and its "great kings" (*daiō* 大王 or *ōkimi* 大君). Debate remains regarding the nature and incidence of so-called "dual-gender pair" rule (sometimes called the *himehiko* 姫彦 system), wherein a woman and man ruled together with joint control over the sacred (non-everyday) and secular (everyday) realms, although the evidence suggests that women were frequently viewed as being particularly susceptible to sacred induction (PIGGOTT 1997).

As with other preliterate peoples, no conception was made of a "religious" realm strictly divorced from the "secular" or political. Referring to the ritual practices of that period as a "religion" is meaningful only in the same sense that one speaks of "Nuer religion" or "the religion of the Maoris," which is to say that to the degree that government dealt with the control over and wielding of *power*, it inevitably involved "religion." In reflection of this holistic worldview, an early term for government, *matsurigoto* 政 meant literally the "business of ritual worship." In the words of Allan GRAPARD, "ritual was the locus of a discourse of power through which legitimacy was enforced and communicated" (1988, p. 256; see also *idem* 1999, p. 521). Observance of ceremonial worship by the *ōkimi* was, in short, a crucial act legitimizing his status as great king. The ritual practices involved were developed locally as well as imported from China in the form of Taoist and Yin-Yang cults, and later Buddhism (BARRETT 2000; see also TEEUWEN 2002).

As a natural corollary of this holistic worldview, the introduction of Buddhism in the sixth century should not be thought of as representing a clash of *religions* (TAMURA 2000, p. 26), but rather a conflict over which ritual objects and techniques were the more powerful, and thus more efficacious. Attempts to understand the newly arriving buddhas within the local idiom as "visiting kami" or "foreign kami"—and thus not essentially different in nature from the non-everyday powers found locally—were quickly overwhelmed, however, as the Japanese were confronted with the sophisticated cosmology associated with Buddhism's advanced thought. Buddhism brought with it an immense and developed soteriological and philosophical literature, and even to the uneducated eye, it added distinct human personality to its concept of supranormal power in the concrete shape of anthropomorphic sculpture and other arts. Permanent architectural structures (*tera* 寺, *jiin* 寺院) housed these images, hinting that Buddhist powers were accessible to entreaty at all times, and such structures formed the model for the subsequent construction of permanent "shrines" (*jinja* 神社) to house local kami. But as noted above, Buddhism was viewed initially within the same construct of concepts that had governed pre-Buddhist Japan, so while its introduction signaled the replacement, for example, of burial tumuli by Buddhist architecture, the new structures were initially treated as serving a purpose similar to the previous burial mounds, namely, memorials to the powerful dead. Beneath the pagoda of one of the earliest temples, Asukadera, for example, have been found interred not only Buddhist relics, but mirrors, swords, and other articles normally interred with a deceased ruler (BROWN 1993, p. 511).

Politically, the introduction of Buddhism provoked internecine conflict between those clans desiring closer ties to the cosmopolitan culture of the continent and those wishing to

preserve local traditions and estates of power. With the ascendancy of the group favoring the liturgical system of Buddhist objects of worship, the government began systematizing bureaucratic and ritual practice along Chinese and Buddhist lines, leading to the ritual and legal institutions known as the *ritsuryō*, enacted from the late seventh century onward (PIGGOTT 1997, p. 208ff). Within that system, the Jingikan or Department of Kami, while holding a position nominally superior to the Department of State, did not represent an indigenous "religion," but an application of the Chinese model of the "Ministry of Rites" and T'ang ritual protocols that implemented styles for the worship of powers considered crucial to the imperial Yamato clan and its various confederated kinship groups (NAUMANN 2000; GRAPARD 1988, 1999, 2000, 2002; YOSHIDA 2003). The newly named *tennō*, or "heavenly sovereign" of the post–seventh-century period acted, in Joan Piggott's words, as a "ritual coordinator" responsible for fine-tuning the requirements of the two ritual systems, namely, the kami shrines and Buddhist temples (PIGGOTT 1997, p. 208). The establishment of the Grand Shrines of Ise and adoption of a Sun Deity as an imperial ancestral kami are believed to have occurred roughly in this same period, between the late fifth and seventh centuries, although much of the history of the shrines' establishment and the purpose of their location in Ise remain controversial (see TAMURA 1996; OKADA 1985).

In short, the official introduction of Buddhism in the mid-sixth century corresponds to the period in which the Yamato "great king" (*ōkimi*) adopted the new, possibly Taoist, title of Tennō 天皇 (see BARRETT 2000), permanent shrine structures began to appear modeled after Buddhist counterparts, and a systematic body of kami ritual came to be established after Chinese and Buddhist models. Within this fluctuating intellectual and institutional crucible, the very concepts of "kami" and "buddha" were fluid and, contrary to conventional assumptions, not necessarily discriminated in the way we think of today.

As pointed out by SATŌ Hiroo (2000), although the content of concepts like kami and buddha have undergone immense changes through the years, traditional research has basically ignored those changes and continued to assume that a simple dichotomy can continue to be made between the two. This situation is reflected in the expression used to refer to the process, *shinbutsu shūgō* 神仏習合; since it proposes the distinction between two simple entities, *shin* 神 (kami) and *butsu* 仏 (buddhas), which are then "syncretized," thus already assuming part of what the research might want to prove. As a result, Satō states that researchers have "merely attempted to measure the *degree* of amalgamation (*shūgō* 習合) or estrangement between kami and buddhas," rather than questioning the validity of the basic dichotomy itself. Fundamentally, the early Japanese were reacting to, and attempting to make sense of, a wide variety of powers perceived within a holistic world. The conceptual vocabulary they used in that attempt was provided by Chinese thought and Buddhism. As a result, the attempt to understand the relationship between the various kinds of powers, and the "truths" they represented, occupied the Japanese mind and served as a seminal theme through succeeding centuries.

Early hints of the attempt to comprehend the relationship between naturalistic local kami and the potencies introduced by Buddhism are expressed in Japan's early myths and legendary tales. In the mythology of the *Nihongi*, for example, a camphor-wood boat is the vehicle used when an early creative failure, the kami Hiruko no mikoto, is cast away in the

sea. The motif of the camphor-wood "boat" returns later in the account of the transmission of Buddhism as recorded in both *Nihongi* and *Nihon ryōiki* 日本霊異記 (ca. early 9th c.); here, a miraculously glowing camphor log is found arriving on the sea and is subsequently used for carving into Buddhist images (Aston 1972, p. 268; Kanda 1985, p. 10; Nakamura 1973, pp. 111–12; also Grapard 1992b, 151–54). The *Ryōiki* likewise records the story of a tree felled for use in making Buddhist images, and which reveals a sign of supranormal sentience (Nakamura 1973, p. 196). Other records relate the power of Buddhism in pacifying the wrath of kami when shrine trees were exploited for Buddhist purposes. In all these stories, one can sense the attempt to relate trees, a prototypical vehicle or hierophany of local kami, to the new personalized powers of Buddhism (see Teeuwen and Rambelli 2003, pp. 7–12).

Throughout the *Ryōiki*'s tales are revealed the diverse ways in which Japanese of the early centuries of Buddhist contact attempted to formulate a paradigm that could account for the variety of supranormal powers and forces that filled their world, whether kami, Buddhist, Taoist, or other. While nominally a "Buddhist" work, the *Ryōiki* wove its stories from numerous religious traditions in the attempt to understand in a comprehensive way the supranormal. For example, Nakamura Kyōko suggests that the *Ryōiki*'s author Kyōkai understood Buddhist truth or Dharma through the Chinese concept of an ultimate principle or *tao* 道, one that incorporated not only Buddhism but the other "ways" of Yin-Yang and local kami as well (Nakamura 1973, p. 49).

The concept of a universal *tao* points to a feature of Buddhism and Taoism that was likely new to Japan, namely, a clear sense of what might be called a "gnostic" view of two realities or "two truths," what Nakamura Ikuo (1994, p. 102) calls the "Buddhist paradigm of the provisional (*gon* 権) and the real (*jitsu* 実)" (see also Matsunaga 1969, pp. 116ff). That the Japanese were intrigued with the concept, basically that "what you see may not be real," and that a deeper layer of ultimate truth lies behind the apparent surface, is found in many of the *Ryōiki*'s tales. The karmic transformations encountered in the work thus involve kami, human beings, natural objects, Buddho-Taoist sages, and bodhisattvas: what appears to be a natural log turns out to be a sentient buddha image in disguise. An apparent beggar might in fact be a noble or sage. A supranormal human child is revealed to be a reborn thunder-kami, and later goes on to become a Buddhist Dharma master (Lin 2003). While some aspects of the concept of two realities may not be entirely absent in any "animism" (the idea that some kind of invisible life force exists within or behind all phenomena), it is certain that early Japan was influenced by specifically Taoist-related teachings regarding immortals and "wizards" (*shinsen* 神仙), while the *Lotus Sūtra*, in particular, introduced the concept of provisional versus absolute truth. And only those who had developed suprahuman abilities could easily discern the difference:

> We learn that a sage recognizes a sage, whereas an ordinary man cannot recognize a sage. The ordinary man sees nothing but the outer form of a beggar, while the sage has a penetrating eye able to recognize the hidden essence. (Nakamura 1973, p. 110; see also Kuroda 1996a, p. 245).

As suggested above, the overall process whereby the Japanese attempted to construct a

comprehensive understanding of the variety of phenomenal powers around them has traditionally been referred to as the evolution of *shinbutsu shūgō*, or the "amalgamation (or syncretism) of kami and buddhas." Based on the pioneering work of Tsuji Zennosuke 辻善之助, modern *shinbutsu shūgō* theory has been conceptualized as a process passing through several "stages," although recent research emphasizes that the process was not a unilinear progress, but more akin to the activity of bricolage, in which ad hoc theories were assembled from teachings at hand, with the result that succeeding "stages" did not necessarily displace previous theories, and phenomena characteristic of earlier periods continued to coexist in the relationship between kami and buddhas of later times. The number of "steps" proposed in the evolution varies depending on the scholar, but is usually three or four (the best recent treatment of this topic is Teeuwen and Rambelli 2003; see also Teeuwen 2000, p. 95; Nakamura 1994, p. 97ff; Murayama 1974).

In the earliest period of contact, Buddhist powers were assumed to be fundamentally of the same nature as local kami, powerful but unpredictable beings who would produce *tatari* or violent apparitions (plague and disasters) if not placated with worship (Nakamura 1994, p. 110). The conceptual fluidity within which kami and buddha were grasped seems evident, for example, in the aforementioned tales of kami trees being appropriated for the purpose of making Buddhist images or structures. At times, this contact provoked violent apparitions from the kami as Buddhism spread, and its powers encroached upon the existing prerogatives or lands of the local potencies (Teeuwen and Rambelli 2003, p. 8). But while the traditional kami ritualists appear to have possessed little more than a theology of territoriality, Buddhism furnished a new cosmology, ontology, and theoretical rationale that opened new vistas for understanding the relationship. By the eighth century, the Buddhist doctrine of karma was already being used to explain the status of local kami. According to the new view, kami were *sentient beings in need of salvation*. In response, Buddhist temples, called *jingūji* 神宮寺 or "shrine-temples," began to be built on or near the grounds of kami shrines, for the purpose of worshiping the kami according to Buddhist liturgical style, thus "aiding" the kami toward achievement of salvation. The famous Tado shrine oracle of 763 thus related that the kami wished to "shed the *kami*-body, and cling to the Three Treasures [Buddhism]" (Murayama 1974, p. 37). Such early shrine-temples were forerunners of what have been termed the religious "multiplexes" that characterized Japanese religion through the succeeding centuries. In this process, it is important to remember that the conceptual rapproachment was occasioned by access to a Buddhist theory that explained the origin and nature of these powers. The old motif whereby a kami indicated its will through the medium of a violent apparition (*tatari*) was now reinterpreted by Buddhism as an indication of the kami's pain, and its desire for release from its suffering status (Itō et al. 2002, p. 51).

At virtually the same time, a second style of rapprochement appeared, according to which kami were interpreted as being divine tutelaries of Buddhism. Based on its historical origins in India, Buddhism had adopted numerous deva from Hinduism as protectors of the Dharma, and this practice was continued and expanded upon as the religion passed through China and entered Japan (Matsunaga 1969). The most famous early case is undoubtedly that of the Usa Hachiman, which issued an oracle in honor of the completion

of the Great Buddha of Nara's Tōdaiji in 749, relating that it wished to "pay homage to the Great Buddha" (Sonoda 1993, p. 412). The case of Hachiman is additionally striking for the fact that it is believed to be one of the first cases in which a kami was depicted in sculpture (*shinzō* 神像), specifically, in the fashion of a Buddhist monk. Teeuwen and Rambelli note that this practice was "inspired directly by the statues of Buddhist divinities worshiped at temples" (2003, p.14); but the specific mode of the depiction was also likely influenced by the concept of miraculous transformations noted earlier, namely, that a kami could make its appearance in the guise of a Buddhist thaumaturge or other figure.

According to the traditional account, the final way in which local kami and Buddhist figures were accommodated appeared within the development of the doctrine generally known as *honji suijaku* 本地垂迹 ("original ground and manifest traces"). This doctrine proposed the appearance of various phenomenal beings as *avatars*, incarnations or embodiments of the immaterial noumenon or Buddhist truth. In what might be compared to a limited application of Platonic emanationist theories, *honji suijaku* appeared in Japan from the Heian period within the Tendai and Shingon schools of Buddhism as part of the mystical apprehension of the Buddhist theory of "two truths." Central to this discourse was the *Lotus Sūtra*, which had been interpreted in Chinese T'ien-t'ai 天台 as divided into two halves, appropriately called "ground" and "trace" (Matsunaga 1969; Stone 1999). The "ground" represented the Buddha in its immaterial form of ultimate truth, while the "trace" aspect was represented by the ways in which ultimate truth made its phenomenal appearance, the Buddha's "means" (Skt. *upāya*, Jpn. *hōben* 方便) meant to lead suffering sentient beings to ultimate salvation. As this doctrine developed in the late Heian period, it became the *leit motif* of what Kuroda calls the *kenmitsu* discourse.

Throughout this development, it is important to recall that while the specifics of the *honji suijaku* doctrine were apprehended as new, the development itself was part of the same ongoing process that had, from the days of earliest contact, worked to analyze and accommodate conflicting sources of power and experiences of reality. Once again, the conceptual tools for the analysis are provided almost entirely by Buddhism. Further, the impact of this combinatory kind of thought is evident in the fact that it was eventually extended from religious potencies in the narrow sense (kami and buddhas) to other areas of experience, including geography, society, and nature. As a result, not only were local deities given new stature and identity as avatars of buddhas and bodhisattvas, but mountains and other traditional Japanese ritual sites were valorized as physical equivalents of immaterial geographies (pure lands), a process that has been called the "mandalization" of space in Japan (Grapard 1982; Rambelli 1996, p. 395). And while the connection with *honji suijaku* may be less clear, the relationship between secular law (*ōbō* 王法) and Buddhist truth (*buppō* 仏法) was likewise expressed as "heart and mind," or mutually supporting halves of a single whole, another way in which Buddhist cosmology fit into the overall discourse on power (Kuroda 1996b). Eventually the very geography of "Japan" came to be viewed as the locus for a discourse on the notion of *shinkoku* 神国 or "the land of kami," one which coincided with the development of independent Shinto schools and nativist thought (Kuroda 1996b, 1996c; Rambelli 1996). But like the "reverse *honji suijaku*" theory promoted at the Outer Shrine of Ise (see below), the medieval *shinkoku* discourse

did not indicate nascent consciousness of a metahistorical Japanese "nation" or "Shinto" as an indigenous tradition. Rather, it was largely the product of the internecine wars of early medieval Buddhism, used as a tool by the older sects to criticize the new *nenbutsu* and other "single-practice" sects' refusal to show devotion to native kami as Buddhist avatars (Kuroda 1996c; Nakamura 1994).

The identification of the phenomenal entities with their immaterial ground in *honji suijaku* reached its peak with the appearance and spread of Tendai "original enlightenment" (*hongaku* 本覚) thought in the Kamakura period. Based on the key Mayayana doctrine of *śūnyatā* (emptiness of all dharmas, the lack of ultimate self-nature in all phenomena), original enlightenment thought is usually described as the expression of a non-dualistic understanding that identifies the phenomenal world, *as it is*, with the state of ultimate enlightenment (Stone 1999). As Robert Morrell describes the medieval monk Mujū Ichien, the conviction lying behind this kind of syncretistic view was that "truth not only can, but must, assume a variety of forms" (1985, p. 59). Usually considered to imply a thoroughgoing valorization of the physical world, this doctrine furnished a new twist to the use of *honji suijaku* in identifying local Japanese kami with their ultimate Buddhist counterparts. As noted earlier, according to original *honji suijaku* doctrine, Japanese kami were interpreted as the "provisional" (*gon*) revelations of immaterial or "real" (*jitsu*) Buddhist truth. With the flowering of original enlightenment thought, however, it became possible to view the provisional manifestations (*suijaku*) not only as identical in nature to their grounds (*honji*), but even superior to them, due to their greater accessibility and compassion for humans expressed in the act of "dimming their light and mingling with the dust" (*wakō dōjin* 和光同塵). This was expressed as what is conventionally called the "reverse *honji suijaku*" doctrine, which influenced the appearance of both Watarai Shinto, which developed from the thirteenth century among the priests of the Outer Shrine (Gekū) at Ise, and Yoshida Shinto in later centuries.

Another influence on the Watarai School was Ryōbu (dual) Shinto, a current of kami cult promoted by the Shingon and esoteric Tendai schools and applied specifically to the Grand Shrines of Ise (Inner Shrine) in order to rationalize or counteract the traditional taboo of Buddhism at the shrine, and thus allow for pilgrimage by Buddhist clergy. According to this doctrine, the deity of Ise, Amaterasu, was in fact the "spirit" of Mahāvairocana Buddha (Teeuwen and Veere 1998), and thus not opposed to Buddhism. Like *shinkoku* thought, "reverse *honji suijaku*" doctrine in general, and Watarai Shinto in particular, have frequently been interpreted as representing an embryonic "Shinto" revolution against Buddhism, due to the way in which kami were raised to a status superior to the buddhas. In his exhaustive study of this school, however, Mark Teeuwen argues that Watarai Shinto in fact represented one particular shrine cult still operating within the broader conceptual vocabulary and limits of the *kenmitsu* discourse, with the result that the Ise argument that Buddhism was unnecessary at Ise was not intended to "establish the primacy of Shintō over Buddhism, but rather to construe an exclusive link between the Ise shrines and esoteric teaching as the highest form of Buddhism, and thus to further enhance the sanctity of the shrines" (1996, p. 128). These new schools of combinatory kami cult arose against the background of declining economic conditions stemming from the disintegration of

the state-supported religious system of the *ritsuryō*. The process continued into the later medieval period as not only Ise, but most other religious institutions as well were forced to widen their catchments so as to cater to warriors and other commoners.

Much more remains to be understood about the specific ways in which the combinatory religion of this period was understood, however, not only at Ise, where the controversial rationale behind Buddhist taboo words remains unclear, but also more generally to the development within kami cults of concepts like "honesty" (*shōjiki* 正直), "sincerity" (*makoto* 誠, *magokoro* 真心) and "purity" (*shōjō* 清浄).

In any event, Teeuwen's work on Ise, together with that of Fabio Rambelli and Allan Grapard on other aspects of medieval Shinto, has been instrumental in revising our knowledge of Japanese combinatory religion of the period, shaking Western Shinto studies out of the complacent assumption regarding Shinto and Buddhist identities that has plagued so much writing for the past century. Grapard's studies have placed new focus on the close relationship of cult organization to geography, and the way identities of physical and ideal locales acted in a mutually reinforcing way with religious and mundane systems of authority. His institutional study of the Kasuga "multiplex" (1992c) thus serves as a counterpart to Royall Tylers's study of the *Kasuga gongen genki* 春日権現験記 (1990), one of the texts of that combinatory cult that also places heavy emphasis on geographic specificity. Rambelli (2002), in turn, has made striking observations regarding a variety of buddho-kami "initiatiatory rituals" (*kanjō* 灌頂), showing how they served as part of the "cultural hegemony" of the *kenmitsu* regime that coopted potential rivals, each new text or cultural artifact being understood "as a potential esoteric symbol endowed with several levels of secret meanings," thus drawing and preserving all possible knowledge within the limits of the exo-esoteric discourse.

Our knowledge of late medieval developments in combinatory religion through Western sources is not well understood, and few specific studies have been directed to the kami religion of the period, with work on Yoshida Shinto by Grapard (1992a, 1992b) and Scheid (2000), and Morrell on the *Shasekishū* (1985) being important exceptions.

Known best merely as Yoshida Shinto, the "Unique and Singular Shinto" founded by Yoshida Kanetomo (1435–1511) is usually thought to represent a turning point in the development of Shinto "self-awareness." Kanetomo founded his Shinto upon a notion introduced from Sung China, namely that of "the unity of the three lands," according to which (in the Japanese version), the kami cult of Japan was the "root," Confucianism was the branch, and Buddhism was the "flower." The fact that Buddhism was so widely spread in Japan, he said, was because all things "return" to their root (Itō et al. 2002, p. 212ff). Based on that notion, he proclaimed a version of "Shinto" that he insisted existed prior to and was superior to Buddhism. Bernhard Scheid's study of Kanetomo's chief work, *Myōbō yōshū* 名法要集, however, makes it abundantly clear that while Kanetomo's use of the term "Shinto" at times appeared to refer to a "teaching," more often than not it referred instead to "the deeds or activities of the kami" (200, p. 119) in the same way as earlier usages, and Kanetomo's denial of Buddhist influence is belied by, among other things, the thoroughgoing exo-esoteric paradigm running through the work. Kanetomo's success at gaining intimate influence in the court, however, was crucial to the success of Yoshida

Shinto at gaining near-monopolistic privileges to license shrines and priests under the subsequent period of the Tokugawa (Edo), and the school had a strong impact on later Shinto movements and popular religion. Kanetomo's insistence that the kami of Ise had "flown" to his center at Mt. Yoshida in Kyoto, for example, was a model for later *tobi shinmei* 飛び神明 ("flying deities") that formed an important motif of popular religion in the Edo period. Yoshida doctrines were also a primary source for the so-called "Japanese Analects" (*Warongo*), and the school was responsible for the broad popularization of the "Oracles of the Three Shrines" (*Sanja takusen* 三社託宣), both elements of kami-centered popular religion that placed new emphasis on moral virtues (Ooms 1985, p. 96ff; Bocking 2000, 2001).

The Edo period revealed two particularly noteworthy trends in regard to Shinto. First is the continuing spread of knowledge and practice of shrine and kami cults through the populace and the growth of popular movements and groups based on them. The other was the growing rejection of the earlier Buddhist discourse in favor of academic studies of the kami traditions by scholars unaffiliated with specific shrines and their cults, and who tended to draw their intellectual paradigms from various Confucian persuasions. These two trends culminated in the Nativist (Kokugaku) movement, which aimed at "purifying" Shinto (and its deities) of both the "vulgar" religious elements of Buddhist origin found in the popular cults, and simultaneously of the rationalist foreign elements represented by Confucianism.

Bernard Scheid claims that, already in the early part of the period, Yoshida Shinto had managed to establish a typology of Shinto that represented a third, independent, discourse alongside Buddhism and Confucianism, and that suggested a way out of the *kenmitsu* paradigm of *honji suijaku*. This independent, or "kami-only" Shinto implies, for Scheid, that "Shinto had become conceivable as a religion of its own and as an alternative to Buddhism" (2003, p. 205). If so, then it represents an area that demands further close study as we attempt to unpack the various currents leading to the creation of modern "Shrine Shinto."

Overall, however, as the object of growing academic interest through the period, "Shinto" remains somewhat an enigma. On the one hand, due in part to its disassociation from active life at shrines, academic Shinto of the period is usually treated as a minor topic within more general studies of (mostly Confucian) intellectual history (see especially Nosco 1984, 1990; Ooms 1985; de Bary and Bloom 1979; Harootunian 1988; two recent major edited volumes on Shinto studies include no articles devoted to Confucian Shinto—see Breen and Teeuwen 2000, and Teeuwen and Scheid 2002). Needless to say, that fact is not unrelated to the historically tenuous or insecure status of "Shinto" as a tradition at that time. It was precisely in the Edo-period crucible of Confucian and Nativist studies that the contours of modern Shinto took their shape. While figures such as Hayashi Razan, Nakae Tōju, Kumazawa Banzan, and Yamaga Sokō all criticized Buddhism from the standpoint of the newly burgeoning field of Confucian studies, they, like many Buddhist predecessors, searched for a universal Way that would encompass and give prominence to the kami of Japan. Their visions of an orderly Way, however, eschewed otherworldly salvation for the goal of a "secular sagehood" that was firmly grounded in the order of everyday life (de Bary 1979), and their inquiries thus tended to the nature of human ethics, and how to

conform the reality of Japanese patterns of governing to Chinese principles of sagely rule (KITAGAWA 1987, p. 161).

Yamazaki Ansai (1618–1682), by contrast, while likewise a Confucianist originally without shrine affiliation, developed a school of Shinto that combined a strong ethico-political orientation with distinctly religious kami worship. His Suika Shintō, called by Herman OOMS "the most dynamic force in the world of Shinto theology until the second half of the eighteenth century," produced a highly systematized view of Shinto and emphasized the principle of submissive reverence for authority, thus producing an influence far beyond its nominal lifetime as it served as one of the engines behind modern ultranationalist ideology (1985, p. 195).

One of the important features of all intellectual currents in the Edo period was the steady move away from medieval forms of secret transmission within closed family traditions to more open access to and discussion of scholarly materials. As part of this liberalization, the development of large-volume woodblock publishing enterprises provided wider access to texts, making necessary new methodologies that would allow common grounds for communication and study across nominal lines of intellectual affiliation. One principle adopted was the method of text-critical analysis generally called *kōshōgaku* 考証学, or "evidential learning" (INOUE, ed., 1996, p. 185; MCNALLY 2002, p. 360). Proponents of this new form of study engaged in word-by-word analyses of their texts' meanings, eschewing the "forced analogies" they claimed characterized the earlier Buddhist tradition. While the method was adopted by both Confucian and Nativist (Kokugaku) scholars through the period, it became more associated with the latter, as they attempted to leap over one thousand years of history and reclaim the "original meanings" of ancient texts. As a result, scholars such as Kamo no Mabuchi and Motoori Norinaga condemned both Buddhists and Confucianists alike for adding artificed and rationalistic interpretations to the purity of ancient documents, claiming that the job of the Japanese scholar was to eliminate such foreign contrivances as he rendered a purified version of ancient Japanese spirituality, what Peter NOSCO calls the "élan vital with which the age was infused" (1990, p. 128). Motoori's crucial place in the subsequent "restoration" of Shinto is slowly becoming more accessible as the result of a number of translations of his shorter works, including *Uiyamabumi* うひ山ぶみ (NISHIMURA 1987), *Tamakushige* 玉くしげ(匣) (BROWNLEE 1988), and *Naobi no mitama* 直毘霊 (NISHIMURA 1991), as well as the first book of his monumental *Kojikiden* 古事記伝 (MOTOORI 1997), although relatively little of the work of other Nativists has been translated.

In addition to academic studies involving Shinto, the Edo period also saw a continuously growing body of popular religious faith centered on the earlier Buddho-Shinto religious multiplexes and shrines. The same economic incentives that had caused religious multiplexes to appeal to warrior and other non-noble families in the medieval period continued into the Edo, as shrines and temples developed networks and systems of nationwide pilgrimage confraternities (*kō* 講) based on representatives of individual households at the local level (SAKURAI 1962). As part of their work in visiting distant "client" communities and promoting their ties to the distant objects of worship, clerical and quasi-clerical representatives of the shrines distributed thaumaturgic amulets and emblems to confraternity

members; even more emblems were brought back by pilgrims themselves, and together, this influx of powerful religious symbols helped stimulate the near-universal spread of household "Shinto" altars (*kamidana* 神棚), pointing to a new degree of individual control over symbols of religious power that likely helped influence the development of the prophetic religious discourse of the new religions. This potential is hinted at obliquely by the fact that such religious participation was the target of criticism by Confucian theoreticians such as Dazai Shundai, who claimed that popular, home-centered worship of the kami was both vulgar and blasphemous (TEEUWEN 1996, p. 337).

In this way, pilgrimage confraternities and the burgeoning culture of religious travel not only contributed to the spread of knowledge regarding major religious multiplexes and their mythologies, but also represented an important social base and model for new Shinto religious organizations such as Kurozumikyō and Tenrikyō that emerged so vigorously from the late Edo into the modern period (HARDACRE 1986). This side of early modern popular combinatory religion has been covered in Japan most energetically by folklorists such as MIYATA Noboru (1970, 1972) and NISHIGAKI Seiji (1973, 1992), while historians such as FUJITANI Toshio have interpreted spectacular movements like the mass pilgrimages to the Grand Shrines of Ise (*okagemairi*) as budding revolutionary movements (1968).

In the sense of broader analyses of overall religious trends, Helen HARDACRE's model study (2002) of local religion in the nineteenth century limits its focus to the religious activity observed within a circumscribed geographical *field* as revealed through local gazetteers, a strategy that allows Hardacre to uncover the broad scope and kaleidoscopic variety of combinatory popular religion through the period, without sacrificing the phenomena to strict labels such as "Shinto" and "Buddhist."

MODERN SHINTO

The architects of the Meiji Restoration were concerned not only with restoring the imperial institution in place of the feudal institutions represented by the Tokugawa *bakufu*. They were equally intent upon suppressing those features of premodern Japanese religiosity associated with Buddhism and considered "vulgar" or "superstitious," and also with establishing a national ideology that could compete on an equal footing with the known success of Christianity in the West. Adopting the "restoration Shinto" (*fukko Shintō* 復古神道) variety of Nativism espoused by Hirata Atsutane and his followers, the government launched a series of religious policies—frequently inconsistent and disjointed—as it lurched toward the establishment of a modern national consciousness. The place of Shinto in this overall process has been described by MURAKAMI Shigeyoshi (1970, 1980) and Helen HARDACRE (1988, 1989), while individual personalities contributing to the development have been the focus of studies by John BREEN (1996, 2000b), and ISOMAE Jun'ichi (1998, 2000b). Discussion of modern Shinto has naturally been dominated by debate over its status as a national religion ("State Shinto") and its role in fostering xenophobic ultranationalism. The hardline view is often associated with scholars like MURAKAMI (1970, 1980), who tended to view State Shinto as an imperial "theocracy" composed of Shrine Shinto, imperial rites, the 1889 Constitution, and the Imperial Rescript on Education, and

whose ultimate trajectory was virtually inherent in its Meiji origins. This monolithic view has been challenged in recent years, particularly by scholars within the Shinto tradition such as SAKAMOTO Koremaru (1987, 1994, 2000, 2001), INOUE and SAKAMOTO (1987), and NITTA Hitoshi (2000, 2003). Sakamoto argues that the treatment of shrines by the modern government was haphazard and contradictory, and that the nationalistic Shinto of the late 1930s and 1940s should be viewed as an aberration not characterizing the significance of modern Shinto as a whole. Such studies have also been linked to attempts to hammer out a "new Japanese model of church-state relations" (INOUE and SAKAMOTO 1987; ABE 1989) that transcends the spectre of the postwar Shinto Directive which disestablished Shinto from all state support. In this connection, little research has been done on the political involvement of the Association of Shinto Shrines (Jinja Honchō) and lobbying groups such as the Shintō Seiji Renmei (Shinseiren: established in 1969, this group bears the official English title "Shinto Association of Spiritual Leadership" or SAS), which have attempted to influence religious policies and lawmaking within the Diet. Particularly important objectives for such groups are the issues of revision of the postwar "peace" Constitution, changing of the Fundamental Education Law toward "reforming" school textbooks (specifically, the removal of episodes from the World War II period considered "embarrassing" or inimical to the establishment of a proud Japanese citizenry), and changing of the government's official stance toward the imperial house and Yasukuni Shrine. In short, many within the modern Shinto establishment continue to view the role of Shinto through the same normative lenses of prewar Nativist thought and its determinate mission of national integration as described thirty years ago by CREEMERS (1968, xvi).

On the popular front, a number of recent studies have focused on the practice of Shinto and festival traditions within the local community, including analyses of specific shrines and their traditions by Michael ASHKENAZI (1993), John NELSON (1996, 2000), Karen SMYERS (1999), and Scott SCHNELL (1999). These studies frequently point out exactly what establishment Shinto fails to, namely, the highly variegated and non-harmonious side of communal Shinto observances, and their modern tendency to revert to premodern combinatory forms that make little sense within the context of "orthodox" Shrine Shinto.

Recent years have also seen a growing awareness among Shintoists of the need to make Shinto more visible in the area of social and ethical debate. One of Japan's two "Shinto-related" universities, Kōgakkan University in Ise established a Faculty of Social Welfare in 1998. Since then, it has begun exploring the potential for greater Shinto involvement in the kind of social work normally associated with more missionary religions like Christianity and Buddhism (ITAI 2001; KŌGAKKAN 2002; FUJIMOTO 2004; KAWANO 2003, 2004). Also a reflection of new social concern, Shintoists have become more active in discussing the issue of brain death and organ transplants (JINJA HONCHŌ 1991), while other attempts have been made by Shinto organizations to secure a place for Shinto in the debates over ecology and environmental preservation in Japan, including programs to promote the preservation of shrine groves for their environmental function within Japanese ecology (JINJA HONCHŌ 1983, 1985), and participation by representatives of the Association of Shinto Shrines in the 1997 Harvard-hosted conference on "Shinto and Ecology" (BERNARD, forthcoming). Overall, however, such efforts have tended to be derivative, and remain subordinated to

Shrine Shinto's continuing self-understanding as a religion of communal and national integration, with the result that they have not received the degree of attention and concern one might expect.

On the education front, Kokugakuin University in Tokyo introduced a new Faculty of Shinto Studies—the only such university faculty in Japan—in 2002, and the new faculty was instrumental in winning for Kokugakuin a "Center of Excellence" (COE) grant from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) for the purpose of research on and dissemination of information about Shinto and Japanese Culture. As part of that program, the university is planning to soon complete its English translation of the *Shintō jiten* 神道事典 (KOKUGAKUIN 1994; partial English editions IJCC 2001, 2004) and make it available in electronic form.

Finally, a large amount of new research has been stimulated by the International Shinto Foundation through its endowment of a chair in Shinto Studies at the University of California–Santa Barbara, as well as its hosting of numerous conferences and publications; unfortunately, the foundation's work has not been without controversy (ANTONI 2001) due to continuing allegations of a lack of transparency in the relationship of the Foundation to the religious group Worldmate (*aka* Cosmomate).

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