SOCIAL REPRODUCTION AND TRANSCENDENCE: AN ANALYSIS OF THE SEKAI MAHIKARI BUNMEI KYŌDAN, A HETERODOX RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN

BY

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the Sekai (World) Mahikari (True Light) Bunmei (Civilization) Kyōdan (Religious Association), known to English readers by the acronym SMBK, both in its internal structure which designates a socio-religious system and in its external relationships with the wider society. In particular, the theme of social creation is explored in the possibility of the dialectic between ideology and social organization.

With regard to the external relationships between SMBK and the wider society, the reversal of the norm is the major issue. SMBK reverses the wider society's norm of formal democracy and informal hierarchy by offering formal hierarchy and informal egalitarian engagement. In so doing, SMBK realizes a democratic ideal of equality in its informal organization, although the egalitarianism has to be discarded individually for upward mobility.

In relation to the internal structure, the SMBK model of the religious movement shows that neither ideology nor social organization is the reflection of the other. On the contrary, social organization provides a contradictory pathway to the ideology, in which believers are called to participate in the divine order through spirit possession. In this way, SMBK offers to individual believers a gradual
educational procedure like a stairway for self-cure towards assimilation into the SMBK religious paradigm. In this process, individual believers' negation of the achieved epistemologies constitutes the condition for advancement to the next steps.

A behavioral submission to the context of the purification ritual enables self-cure in SMBK. This process, also being pressed by the recruitment activity, constitutes a dialectic of self and others. However, this dialectic at the individual level does not generate a dialectic at the collective level. Consequently, the dialectic at the individual level is contained in, and is ensured by, the unchangeable framework of the SMBK religious system.
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the Association for the Study of Religion and Social Sciences, Japan, for publishing a summary article in advance of my writing the dissertation and also for feeding me with various criticisms and on-going discussions about the article. This association was truly the source of my inspiration.

I would like to thank my English teachers and editors. I am grateful to Canada and UBC for having given me a chance to develop my interest in dialectics and religious movements. Finally, I thank my husband for his encouragement and support, and my four-year old son for tolerating my involvement in writing and thinking.
Most data in this dissertation were collected between 1979 and 1980, mainly from Koganei Local Centre (Tokyo), the Main Headquarters (Tokyo) and several other local centres. A brief research was added in 1982 in order to fill some gaps in the information.

An in-depth fieldwork study of a religious movement was intended, since my MA paper was written about the Sōka Gakkai movement on the basis of literary surveys. Although the theme of the dialectic between ideology and social organization in the religious movement was implicitly contained in my MA paper, the presentation of this theme in the form of my Ph.D. dissertation required intensive fieldwork to collect the supporting data.

Additionally, in the description of this dissertation, the pronoun "he" is generally used, when the person can be of either sex. The reason is simply to avoid the use of he/she or s/he, until a consensus in English is reached to indicate a person of either sex in a unified way. Although SMBK has twice as many female believers as male believers, I simply followed the common practice in English.
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SOCIAL REPRODUCTION AND TRANSCENDENCE:
an Analysis of the Sekai Mahikari Bunmei Kyōdan,
a Heterodox Religious Movement in Contemporary Japan
CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE FOR THE STUDY
OF RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS
REPRODUCTIVE AND DIALECTICAL CHANGES

The main body of this dissertation is an analysis of the Sekai (World) Mahikari (True Light) Bunmei (Civilization) Kyodan (Religious Association), a heterodox Japanese religious movement known to English readers by the acronym SMBK, one of many that have developed in the modern period. In a broader theoretical perspective, however, the dissertation explores social creativity and transcendence, topics to which an analysis of the SMBK lends itself.

Society is here viewed as the product of the creative efforts of people. These attempts, intentionally or intuitively, fall into two categories: reproductive and transcendental. The social change which corresponds to reproduction may be referred to as inner-paradigmatic, and the change which corresponds to transcendence may be referred to as extra-paradigmatic. Social creativity itself is investigated in the dialectic between ideology and social organization where, in the case of the SMBK, ideology and social organization are related as hierarchy is to egalitarianism. Briefly, the SMBK draws its membership from the wider Japanese society, and exists within but apart from the latter. Newcomers are recruited by the (partially) initiated, go through a process of purification/exorcism which is part of
the initiation ritual, and interact with each other and their teachers on an egalitarian basis. But they also enter a hierarchical system in which particular criteria of appreciation, social understanding, of the social organization, doctrine and cosmo-logy determine relative status within the hierarchy. For individuals, as will be seen, the relationship between social organization and ideology is a continuing and emergent process moving towards at-oneness.

Two reasons may be emphasized for choosing a religious movement for an inquiry into the dialectic between ideology and social organization. First, in religion, ideology is already formed by the believers in their own expressions. Among them, doctrine is the most explicit, and is available also to the researcher. Second, in religion, ritual often provides overt means which facilitate the individual believer's application of the given doctrine to an empirical occasion. In such a case, the position of ritual in relation to doctrine becomes similar to that of a scientific method in relation to theory in sciences. However, in the case of a "secular" movement, such "methods" remain generally unclear; as they are usually un-established or implicit. A political party movement may be mentioned as an example. It has ideology and social organization—the latter in terms of membership—but it is quite unlikely to have an overt ritual
procedure as a method. In modern Japanese society overt involvement in ritual is often considered to be undemocratic, at variance with modernity.

However, for an inquiry into the dialectic between ideology and social organization, it is important that the people in the field produce their "theory" and "method" in their own perspective. This condition provides a basis for the researcher to define these two basic elements concretely and, accordingly, he can avoid speculation. The application of the concrete definitions enables the researcher to show that ideology and social organization are separate entities, and that their relationship is a dialectical one. In principle, a dialectical relationship emerges when two separate entities are interlinked in such a way that one initiates change in the other: both entities grow until they reach a new synthesis. This process may be continuously repeated, and the repetition leads to an on-going and spiral growth of the whole system. The relationship between the entities is primarily inconsistent. However, when the entities are simply juxtaposed or reducible to a reflection of each other, even with an apparent discrepancy, there is no "momentum" for dialectical development. This relationship may be called parallelism. In order to discover if there is any "momentum," the entities should first be investigated separately, and then the
nature of relationships between them should be examined. The division of the investigation into two stages is necessary to avoid any presumption of parallelism between the entities. A precaution is also necessary here to avoid the hasty conclusion that discrepancies always lead to the entities' forming a dialectic relationship. As I have mentioned above, there may be no "momentum" for development. Post-War Japanese society and SMBK fulfill the above conditions. The SMBK religious movement has an elaborate doctrine, a well organized ritual and, since it has a developing social organization, its formation is observable.

Japanese society since the end of World War II displays an interesting discrepancy between ideology and social organization. This discrepancy could provide the needed "momentum" for a dialectical social change. Such a discrepancy was first suggested by Chie Nakane. According to her, Japan's democratic ideology has not been realized in social organization, even though post-War Japanese society is believed to be democratic by most of its members. Nakane argues that the ideology of democracy is equality under the same rules. However, in post-War Japanese society, she insists, formal organizations which are formed according to rules are nominal, and informal organizations function substantially. She emphasizes that the informal organizations are outgrowths of
an indigenous system, and that they are not democratically structured. The informal organizations are hierarchical and operate on person-to-person ties. Consequently, members of the organizations develop tangible but emotional involvement in both their superiors and direct inferiors. However, members are not aware of these patterns. Thus, the informal organizations develop the personal prospects of individual pairs of social members, which do not extend to other pairs. Hence, the informal organizations become a patchwork of individualized and private relationships consisting of numerous pairs.

Under these circumstances, as has been suggested by Max Weber, religion may become an ideology which explicitly or implicitly justifies certain basic social conditions. As he has shown in the example of Christianity, a new ideology formed through a reformation of the existing form of religion. He considers this process to have been a response to wider social changes. In the post-War age in Japan, as society experienced great changes, religious movements emerged and responded to the new social conditions. SMBK was one of these movements, and it presents a complex example of the dialectic between ideology and social organization. It is an example of a religious movement that presents a new social ideal as antithesis to the democratic ideal in terms of doctrine,
while a synthesis between the democratic ideal and doctrine is achieved in informal social organization. (Diagram 1).

The SMBK doctrine is antithetical to the wider society because SMBK is overtly involved in such "irrational" practices as exorcism and magical healing. SMBK also promotes cosmology which consists of a pantheonic order asserting that divinities and spirits of the dead exist and even interact with living people. These practices and the assertion are not acceptable in the wider society where "scientism" functions as the operational morality of democracy. Therefore, the pantheonic order of SMBK cosmology had to be realized inside SMBK, particularly in SMBK formal organization. It is deliberately constructed on the belief that all human relationships are part of the pantheonic and hierarchical order. Thus, in SMBK, cosmology and formal organization are parallel to each other.

The synthesis between the ideology of the wider society and the SMBK pantheonic order is formed in the informal organization of SMBK. It is a friendship network which consists of interpersonal relationships, and is egalitarian. It does not contain the democratic ideal in Nakane's sense, equality under the same rules, but an egalitarian orientation is achieved, whereas in the wider society equality remains an unrealized ideal. (Diagram 2).
DIAGRAM 1: SMBK as an Antithesis

DIAGRAM 2: Synthesis in SMBK
However, informal organization remains independent of either formal organization or cosmology. For this reason, there is no dynamic relationships between informal organization and cosmology or formal organization can exist. This means that, within the SMBK religious system, there is no "momentum" for the spiral growth of a dialectical relationship between these two components of the system. The framework of the system remains static and is not renewable. The paradox is, on the other hand, that the SMBK religious system provides individual believers with an on-going dialectical process of self-change. This situation indicates that SMBK contains an on-going dialectical process at the individual level, but does not do so at the collective level. In other words, individual changes do not lead to the revision of the SMBK hierarchy as a whole. Comprehension of this paradoxical situation is the key to the understanding of SMBK, and accordingly, of a certain type of transcendental attempt. The reasons for the non-occurrence of an expected spiral growth (at the collective level) stemming from the existence of a dialectic between SMBK and the wider society will be shown through the analysis of the basic construction of the SMBK system. For this analysis, the perspectives of Thomas Kuhn, Claude Levi-Strauss, and Clifford Geertz will be critically examined though my own conclusions are not
necessarily in agreement.
SOCIAL CHANGES AND PARADIGMS

The word "paradigm" has been introduced by Thomas Kuhn in order to explain the dialectical development of the natural sciences. According to him, the natural sciences have developed from some paradigms to others by renewing themselves. For Kuhn, paradigm is "the historical integrity of that (a specific field of) science in its own time." According to him, it is this integrity through which scientists of the specific field abstract rules and laws, and also construct theories and models. Referring to Ludwig Wittgenstein, Kuhn says:

What can the phrase 'direct inspection of paradigms' mean? Partial answers to questions like these were developed by the late Ludwig Wittgenstein, though in a very different context. Because that context is both more elementary and more familiar, it will help to consider his form of the argument first. What need we know, Wittgenstein asked, in order that we apply terms like 'chair,' or 'leaf,' or 'game' unequivocally and without provoking argument?

That question is very old and has generally been answered by saying that we must know, consciously or intuitively, what a chair, or leaf, or game is. We must, that is, grasp some set of attributes that all games and that only games have in common. Wittgenstein, however, concluded that, given the way we use language and the sort of world to which we apply it, there need be no such set of characteristics. Though a discussion of some of the attributes shared by a number of games or chairs or leaves often helps us learn how to employ the corresponding term, there
is no set of characteristics that is simultaneously applicable to all members of the class and to them alone. Instead, confronted with a previously unobserved activity, we apply the term 'game' because what we are seeing bears a close "family resemblance" to a number of the activities that we have previously learned to call by that name.6

Although Kuhn does not use the word epistemology, what he indicates in terms of paradigm by referring to Wittgenstein is a social and cultural basis to ensure the epistemology of a scientific community at a certain time of history. Rules, laws, theories and models are the product of the epistemology which specifies the ways of conceiving the observed phenomena. Kuhn claims that paradigm is a property of the natural scientists, but is not of social scientists. They remain in what he calls "the pre-paradigm stage."

However, his concept of paradigm, once it is understood as the basis of epistemology, is applicable to the social sciences. What social scientists have failed to do is to find a consensus on their epistemologies. Thus, they have failed to produce a proper paradigm; they simply have separate epistemologies. Kuhn himself argues that (natural scientists) ...

... can, that is, agree in their identification of a paradigm without agreeing on, or even attempting to produce, a full interpretation or rationalization of it. Lack of a standard interpretation or of an agreed reduction to rules will
not prevent a paradigm from guiding research. Normal science can be determined in part by the direct inspection of paradigms, a process that is often aided by but does not depend upon the formulation of rules and assumptions. Indeed, the existence of a paradigm need not even imply that any full set of rules exists. 

Therefore, the lack of explicit consensus does not indicate the lack of a paradigm. Once this is accepted, it is not difficult to see an affinity among various theories in the social sciences. The social sciences have also evolved through their history.

Furthermore, the concept of paradigm should also apply to the epistemology of the people who are subject to study by social scientists. This is the essential difference between the social and natural sciences. People are not only things. They have their own epistemology which reflects and represents a certain historical and cultural stage. The point, again, is that people do not necessarily form a consensus on their epistemology. Its expressions may vary and also be expressed in different spheres in society. These expressions of the paradigm may be defined as ideology.

The accusation by phenomenologists against those whom they call positivists is concentrated on the point that the positivists neglect to capture the epistemology of the people studied. Or worse, the positivists do not even consider the possibility that a people should have their own
epistemology. As a result, positivists automatically treat people as if they had the same epistemology as the positivists' own, or consider them like a thing which does not have an epistemology. The phenomenological inquiry into society is centered on a search for the epistemology of the people of a culture.

With a particular regard for the understanding of the paradigm of the people of the culture under study, Geertz tries to unfold the implicit mechanism in which social members accept a certain process as inevitable (or natural), and produce social institutions through religious commitment.

Phrasing aside, this much may perhaps be granted. The notion that religion tunes human actions to an envisaged cosmic order and projects images of cosmic order onto the plane of human experience is hardly novel. But it is hardly investigated either, so that we have very little idea of how, in empirical terms, this particular miracle is accomplished. We just know that it is done, annually, weekly, daily, for some people almost hourly; and we have an enormous ethnographic literature to demonstrate it. But the theoretical framework which would enable us to provide an analytic account of it, an account of the sort we can provide for lineage segmentation, political succession, labor exchange, or the socialization of the child, does not exist.

Hildred Geertz, in her *The Javanese Family*, concentrates on themes such as reproduction of ideology and the socialization process: how social values and premises are maintained through the kinship system, and how people grow into such an
ideological system. The analytical perspective in her approach is basically psychological. The social member grows into the existing social paradigm from the state which should be described as non-paradigmatic or pre-paradigmatic if we apply the word "pre-paradigmatic" to a stage of individual growth.

The question which should be asked here is how paradigms are related to social creativity. In a parallel relationship in Durkheimian functionalism, ideology and social organization constitute a closed feed-back system. Social members reproduce their social organization as they accept and commit themselves to the norms, laws and other ideological forms of the social system, as Hildred Geertz has illustrated. Durkheim also verified this point in his study of suicide. Suicide is considered to be an example of social failure. Suicide is a deviant act which occurs when the normal commitment to society is blocked or abandoned. Therefore, the excessive commitment to society causes altruistic suicide, the commitment against society leads to intellectual suicide and the loss of commitment results in anomic suicide. Hence, those who do not "fit" into the given social system eliminate themselves individually by abnormal means. As a result, such a deviant activity as suicide constitutes a social tendency and occurs within the existing paradigm.
Therefore, such a change as the increase of anomic suicide in a modern society, for example, should be named "inner-paradigmatic change", and the paradigm which ensures this type of change may be referred to as the paradigm of reproduction.

In Lévi-Straussian structuralism, the paradigm of reproduction is more clearly defined. It is what he calls structure, and every social component is considered to be an expression of this structure. The concept of structure is ultimately reducible to the unconscious pattern with which the human brain functions.

... The unconscious, on the other hand, is always empty—or, more accurately, it is as alien to mental images as is the stomach to the foods which pass through it. As the organ of a specific function, the unconscious merely imposes structural laws upon inarticulated elements which originate elsewhere—impulses, emotions, representations, and memories. We might say, therefore, that the preconscious is the individual lexicon where each of us accumulates the vocabulary of his personal history, but that this vocabulary becomes significant, for us and for others, only to the extent that the unconscious structures it according to its laws and thus transforms it into language. Since these laws are the same for all individuals and in all instances where the unconscious pursues its activity, the problem which arose in the preceding paragraph can easily be resolved. The vocabulary matters less than the structure. Whether the myth is re-created by the individual or borrowed from tradition, it derives from its sources—individual or collective (between which interpenetrations and exchanges constantly occur)—only the stock of representations with which it operates. But the structure remains the same, and through it the symbolic function is fulfilled.
In other words, social integration is maintained, ultimately, because all the existing paradigms (which Levi-Strauss may call infra-structures) converge into one essential structure. This notion enables Levi-Strauss to assert that society consists of multi-layered expressions of the structure. Consequently, the social components are considered to be all parallel to each other. Thus, society is viewed fundamentally as ideological.

Although the notion of dialectic and transcendency are involved in Levi-Straussian structuralism, they are not directly related to social change. For Durkheim, a social change occurs through the interaction between the social reality and ideals. For him, ideals primarily mean the "ideas in terms of which society sees itself." However, the ideal is also a new synthesis which combines the components of the existing social reality in a different way. Therefore, "the originality of the method of combination produces the originality of synthesis itself." In other words, the ideal "derives from" the social reality "while transcending it". Furthermore, Durkheim says:

... Ideals are not abstractions, cold intellectual concepts lacking efficient power. They are essentially dynamic, for behind them are the powerful forces of the collective. They are collective forces—that is, natural but at the same time moral forces, comparable to the other forces of the universe. ...
With the formation of the ideal, individual change becomes inevitable. Durkheim argues this as follows:

... but the ideal is not simply something which is lacking and desired. It is not simply a future goal to which man aspires; it has its own reality and nature. It is to be thought of rather as looming impersonally above the individual wills that it moves. ... 15

Thus, the whole society "transcends" present social reality and moves towards the newly created ideal. This kind of social change may, in our terms, be referred to as "extra-paradigmatic." The notion of extra-paradigmatic change suggests that there is a point of disintegration when society shifts from one integration to another, as paradigm indicates integration. The SMBK example will show us how extra-paradigmatic change can occur.

The main difference will be found in the relationship between society (collective) and individuals.
RELIGION AS A PARADIGM

The meaning of religion in relation to integration should be clarified here. Religion as a mode of thought or an ideology is not a new idea. On the contrary, it has been popularly accepted not only by researchers in the humanities but also by those in the social sciences. For such people, religion represents a particular aspect of culture, often a superstructure and a false consciousness; religion sometimes even means pathology.

For Karl Marx, religion is a mode of thought produced by a false consciousness. It contains a deception which lures people from social reality, although it should be self-evident to those free from the false consciousness.

The wretchedness of religion is at once an expression of and a protest against real wretchedness. Religion is the sign of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.

The abolition of religion as illusory happiness of the people is a demand for their true happiness. The call to abandon illusions about their condition is the call to abandon a condition which requires illusions. Thus, the critique of religion is the critique in embryo of the value of tears of which religion is the halo.^[15]

Some psychoanalysts are also quite radical in their
denunciation of religion. Anthony Wallace neatly summarizes
their view of religion as follows:

Much of religious behavior is reminiscent of
dream experience, of neurotic ritual, even of
psychotic fantasy, in the sense that the meaning
of the behavior and the satisfaction it brings
to the participant cannot be found in a rational,
realistic, scientific definition or manipulation
of the actual world.

However, Wallace himself does not dismiss religion.
He also says:

This is not to say that religion is neurotic or
psychotic in any clinical or pejorative sense,
but only that analysis of religious behavior as a
symptom—as a compromise among primary inner
promptings and the demands of reality as
rationally perceived by the subject—will yield
understanding of many religious phenomena.

In other words, for Wallace, in religion,

various aspects of belief or ritual can serve as
prime generators, apt expressions, or more or
less expedient symptomatic solutions of emotional
problems.

Wallace's position seems to have gained orthodoxy
in the recent tradition of psychoanalysis. Religion is
considered as "projection of and therapy for emotional
problems." In this context, of course, psychoanalysis as a
scientific method is considered to be superior, because psycho-
analysis deals with therapy and projection separately. The
therapist does not share the fantasy with the patient, and when the patient recovers from his emotional problems, he can dismiss his fantasy, or, it simply disappears. However, in religion, neither "therapist" nor "patient" has any means of abandoning his fantasy. It is inseparable from the cure.

However, the more fundamental difference between psychoanalysis and religion should be found in the meaning of cure. In psychoanalysis, the patient recovers when his emotional block is removed. In religion, he recovers when his problem is integrated into the "wholeness" of the divine order. Only in this "wholeness" does he gain the capacity to integrate himself into a total being. Therefore, in religion, the provision of an all-embracing perspective is indispensable. The perspective may be given in the form of imagery such as cosmology and metaphorical descriptions of divinities and heroes, and/or in the form of the will of the omnipotent divinity who rules the cosmos. Thus, it may be said that psychoanalysis provides a cure by extraction whereas religion does this by addition. Therefore, in psychoanalysis, the diagnosis of the cause of the problem is essential in order to remove it for the purpose of cure. The only exception is the Jungian therapy. It provides a "world view." But, for this reason, the Jungian therapy is treated as unorthodox by other more scientific analysts. However, religion is also
different from the Jungian approach. In religion, a cure is not the goal. The goal is the achievement of "wholeness" itself. Thus, "wholeness" is not a pragmatic tool for achieving a certain state of mind. The achievement of a certain state of mind which will cure a psychological problem is a by-product, considered to derive naturally from the achievement of "wholeness". Therefore, religion must continually refer to this "wholeness." The religious paradigm is a particular paradigm which ensures this "wholeness." In SMBK, this "wholeness" is captured in its cosmology.
SMBK AS A RELIGIOUS SYSTEM

In SMBK, the possibility of the achievement of and participation in the "wholeness" of the divine order motivates the believer individually towards the attempt at transcendental self-change. This individual change is extra-paradigmatic, because the believer shifts from the non-SMBK paradigm of the wider society to the SMBK religious paradigm.

In this process the individual believer has to accomplish two major tasks: disengagement from his old paradigm, which he has assimilated outside of SMBK, and a new engagement with the SMBK paradigm. The point of disengagement and new engagement is apprehended by the believer as the shift of emphasis from the passive role to the active role in the purification ritual. (Diagram 3). The success of the new engagement largely depends on the disengagement from the old paradigm. This condition may explain the reason why painful procedures are often found in initiation rites (though not, in fact, in SMBK); such procedures may help to process disengagement. Various characteristics which Turner lists as the properties of liminality should indicate the necessary conditions for the disengagement process from the old paradigm. 20

The shift of emphasis from the passive role to the
DIAGRAM 3: Shift of Emphasis on the Roles in the Purification Ritual
active role becomes possible through behavioral submission to the context of the purification ritual. Because the ritual is constructed to represent the SMBK paradigm (the divine order), submission to the context of the ritual means the behavioral adoption of the paradigm which has not yet been assimilated mentally. Based on the hints given in initiation, the meaning of the shift of emphasis has to be individually "discovered." Although the paradigm is exposed in the context of the purification ritual, the shift itself is not suggested in the form of the ritual. The purification ritual is basically performed in the same way throughout the hierarchy of SMBK. However, when the shift is accomplished, as is the case for senior believers, the difference in performance between the elementary and advanced levels is obvious. In other words, the difference does not become obvious unless the meaning of the shift is discovered. If the shift is not discovered the difference remains puzzling. The ritual still appears the same to the eyes of those who have not discovered its meaning. They cannot fill the gap between what they see and what senior believers say about the same ritual. Thus, those who have not been able to bridge this gap remain at the elementary level, and those who have discovered the difference gain upward mobility.

Recruitment activity presses the believer to discover
Golden shrine and its setting (Main Headquarters)
the meaning of the shift in emphasis in the purification ritual. In recruitment activity, the believer is an active performer, by definition. The skill and meaning of the performance is subject to question. The people a believer tries to recruit will likely represent the outsider's critical opinion against religion. He is on constant trial. Therefore, recruitment creates confrontation. It is a confrontation with the outside rational world through the potential believers as well as with the spiritual world through the possessing spirit involved in the purification ritual. Furthermore, it is a confrontation with his own self through the simultaneous confrontation with the rational and spiritual worlds. The point is that the organizational upward mobility can be achieved only through self-change, and that the "momentum" for this self-change is provided by the confrontation with others. In this way, the self-transformation process works for upward mobility and membership increase.

Upward mobility in SMBK means that the individual believer achieves a higher status in the hierarchical SMBK religious system; doctrine and formal organization together constitute a hierarchy of power and knowledge which differentiates regular believers into three levels: elementary, intermediate and advanced. (Diagram 4). The standard of
DIAGRAM 4: SMBK Hierarchy

↑

clerics

↓

advanced level

↓

intermediate level

↓

elementary level

"hangers-on"

↑

advanced session

↓

intermediate session

↓

elementary session (initiation)
differentiation is the skill of translating experiences in the purification ritual into the cosmological idioms of SMBK. Individual skills in this process inevitably correspond to the stages of self-transformation; what is to be "discovered" individually is the cosmology which is apprehended through these idioms. Therefore, the continual process of self-change, which involves the dialectical confrontation with others, is designed to converge ultimately into the divine order of SMBK cosmology. There is no room for revising the cosmology or, accordingly, the SMBK religious system. The only person entitled to make revisions, the originator of SMBK, is already deceased. In other words, in SMBK, the individual dialectic is separate from the dialectic between SMBK and the wider society at the collective level. The later sections of this dissertation will analyze how this breakage in the dialectic is possible in the construction of the SMBK religious system.
AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE RELIGIOUS FIELD:
EXPLANATION AND EXPLICATION

Before describing SMBK in more detail, I would like to briefly mention epistemology as used by anthropologists. People often wonder why anthropologists describe endlessly, whereas sociologists appear to be more overtly concerned with proving their theories, although both claim to present a realistic view of society and people. However, even in sociology, there is an exception. Max Weber, among classical sociologists, presents a detailed description of the way some contemporary sociologists might object by saying that his argument does not fully cover the description. Concerning this point, Bendix makes the following suggestion:

Once again, instead of adopting either a holistic or a particularistic (or subjective) approach, Weber hoped to occupy an intermediate position, moving from historical evidence to the formulation of concepts, and from concepts back to historical evidence. ...21

The most exhausting effort for an empirical researcher of society and people is the "move from historical evidence to the formulation of concepts." Burridge elaborates on this issue more precisely as follows:

Anthropologists differ considerably in their conceptions of the subject, in their "theoretical" approaches, and in what the finished product of their researches is supposed to do. But there is a general agreement that data should be obtained systematically, that analysis should be logically
consistent, systematic, and match the data. Most importantly perhaps, anthropology is a "mode of thinking about" both data and analyses. This "thinking about" is not easy to explain in a few words. It becomes explicit in the process of making field investigations—in continually asking who, what, where, when, why, in what circumstances—and speaks largely to the constraints present in total social situations in relation to the ways in which participants in these situations are placed in relation to each other.\(^\text{22}\)

Interpreting Weber in Burridge's terms, the move "from historical evidence to the formulation of concepts" may also be said to be the move "from data to analysis." This move requires the ethnographer to convert what he has seen into what he wants to say about it. The conversion is not easy, because seeing and speaking require different conditions: the ethnographer speaks in order to communicate to his audience, whereas he may be simply attracted from personal interest to a particular happening on the occasion he is attending. This gap between seeing and speaking is inevitable, because seeing is the act of here-and-now and speaking is an attempt to establish universals beyond the moment. Therefore, the shift from seeing to speaking also means a translation of the observed fact from the here-and-now context to a universal one.

The shift from seeing to speaking often appears confusing, because they are constrained by each other. It is obvious that the ethnographer cannot relate more than he
has seen. However, in order to communicate well, he has to see well. Here comes the necessity for preparation before field work. The ethnographer collects information from publications and organizes his thoughts by writing a research proposal. In so doing, what he really does is to put himself in the position of his audience; he speculates on what he, as an audience, would like to hear from himself as a reporter. He prepares himself to see certain things about his field. This means that his effort of seeing in the field becomes highly intentional. For this reason, the act of seeing in the field is called observation.

However, he is extremely lucky, when he finds his field exactly as he has expected. Instead, it is a common experience, at least among anthropologists, that the ethnographer sees more than he has planned to observe. When this happens, the choice is limited; he can either ignore the aspects of the field unexpectedly seen or take them equally into consideration. In the second case, the ethnographer reflects on whether the unexpected aspects are accidental or essential. The difficulty comes next; once they are judged essential, the initial planning for observation should be changed. It has to be expanded to cover the newly adopted aspects into the report. The expansion of the planning, when it is related to the act of seeing, often demands a profound
change in the ethnographer himself, in the territories which he considers to be "personal." They may range from his belief, to the way of thinking, to emotional orientation and even to perception. However, the experience of a necessity for personal change is not unusual among insightful and conscientious fieldworkers. They often confess that the field experience is somewhat psychotherapeutic. The ethnographer is forced to face reality and, therefore, confronts himself.

The change of the framework and personality is often felt by the ethnographer to be a forced process. The "force" comes from his un-readiness for the unexpected phenomenon. In my case, it was the effect of the purification ritual. Before doing my fieldwork, I interpreted it mainly from a regular psychological point of view. But in my fieldwork I also experienced its effects physically. If my experience was induced by a "trick," the way the people construct such a trick should be comprehended. When the construction of the trick is made clear, it is no longer a trick. It means the logic is based on the method by which the people organize their thought and action.

Thus, Burridge insists that the researcher should bridge his own society and his field. This means, more concretely, that the researcher should be able to expand his scope in order to cover both his field experience and his
audience. As we have accepted that both the researcher and the people in his field have their own paradigms, Burridge's point may be paraphrased as follows: fieldwork demands a constant reframing of the researcher's paradigm through confrontation with the paradigm of the people.

Sartre, as a philosopher or an anthropologist of his own society, generalized the meaning of the act of seeing. For Sartre, seeing others becomes possible in the process of self-change. However, the act of seeing is primarily an inner-paradigmatic effort, because one's mode of seeing is based on one's paradigm. One sees what one wants to see. This is the projection of self to the world. This situation is paradoxical. However, Sartre says:

The characteristics of selfness (Selbstheit), in fact, is that man is always separated from what he is by all the breadth of the being which he is not. He makes himself known to himself from the other side of the world and he looks from the horizon toward himself to recover his inner being. 23

Thus, within the world, others appear as the denial of one's attempts at self-projection on them. Through the acceptance of confrontation, one reaches "otherness." This process inevitably requires the renewal of one's paradigm. Therefore, the initial attempt at an inner-paradigmatic act of seeing turns into an extra-paradigmatic act through the confrontation with others.
Because the dialectical process between self and others is continual, the person who is engaged in the act of reaching otherness operates on a developmental paradigm. His act of seeing is an extra-paradigmatic attempt. His engagement with otherness should be referred to in terms of conscience, however it may be "felt" by him as "curiosity" in its appearance here and now. It may not be felt as a moral obligation, because morality is a paradigm, and because a moral attempt is an act of keeping himself within this present paradigm. However, "curiosity" provides the exploration "momentum" for this extra-paradigmatic tendency, and encourages beyond the present paradigm. To put it in another way: When the person is engaged in an extra-paradigmatic attempt at reaching otherness, he feels curious about the world.

Kuhn's criticism of the social sciences, particularly of psychology, is concentrated on the lack of an extra-paradigmatic "momentum." As far as psychology is concerned, he is right, because the psychological approach is heavily constrained by its moral engagement in the reproduction of what is believed to be "normal." Moreover, "normal" has not yet been clearly defined as an epistemology. The present definition (of normality) remains simply the non-manifestation of what are regarded "abnormal" symptoms. The central problem is the lack of dialectic. The moral mission of psychology
makes it difficult to develop a healthy and scientific curiosity. In other words, psychology has not yet formed the consensus necessary for the construction of empirical science. Morality cannot be empirical, by definition. It has to stand beyond experience, although it may be projected on experience.

By the same token, when the anthropologist fails in his attempt at extra-paradigmatic engagement, he may be only projecting his own paradigm onto the people in his field. In this case, he is not "reaching" them. Or, he may simply shift from his own paradigm to that of the people. In this case, he reaches them, but loses his audience. He is no longer an anthropologist, but an immigrant.

Rephrasing in terms of the paradigm of the importance of preparation before fieldwork, the preparation clarifies the epistemology of the anthropologist. It is the starting point, the element of thesis in the dialectical process which he is about to begin. The clear notion of his original epistemology enables him to separate his perception from that of the people in his field. This step is important, because, as his dialectic grows, he often loses access to the original perception. If his goal is to reach the epistemology of the people in the field, his original perception may be forgotten. However, his goal, as he is an anthropologist, is to report
information about the people captured through his own perception. The paradigm of the people has to be clearly distinguished from that of the anthropologist.

For reaching otherness, anthropologists have learned to take advantage of positional differences between themselves and peoples in their fields. In the anthropological field, normally the paradigm of the anthropologist and that of the people are different. When he intends, either consciously or intuitively, to reach otherness, the degree of confrontation is great. Acceptance of the confrontation leads him to the disentanglement of the paradigm of the people. The same conditions should apply to the anthropologist who deals with an "exotic" group in his own society. Although the study of a group in the same society is commonly considered to be the territory of sociologists, the local and exotic group should also be subject to anthropological investigation. The exotic appearance may be an indication of its having its own paradigm. The example may be ethnic communities local to the modern society, and religious cults such as SMBK involved in a mystical practise which is incomprehensible to the main body of the people of the same society. When the anthropologist is alien to the paradigm of the group, there is an obvious gap between himself and the people of the group, a situation which necessitates his extra-paradigmatic engagement. Ethnomethod-
ology in sociology started as an attempt at creating anthropology in the same society. However, it seems to have failed in the clear positioning of the ethnomethodologist in relation to the people. For sociologists, including ethnomethodologists, the people who are subject to a sociological observation may appear too conventional to reflect on the possible differences between the way sociologists see the world and the way they consider it. As a result, some sociologists simply use the people as an example to illustrate the sociologists' own epistemologies. When the anthropologist is trapped in this problem in a traditional anthropological field, he may not be able to report it, because the gap between the two paradigms (his and of his field) is often too wide not to be noticed, although he cannot always clarify the nature of the problem.

Therefore, the fact that I, being a Japanese, studied a Japanese religious movement does not jeopardize my status as an anthropologist. However, because I chose Japan as my field, I selected a religious movement which had an elaborate doctrine. Because this particular religious movement, unlike religions in a village, begins with the construction of doctrine by a specific person, the paradigm is expressed in the doctrine. When the movement has an elaborate doctrine and when the founder, the only constructor of the doctrine, is
dead, the paradigm may be considered to be complete. Where
the paradigm of the movement is expressed in its own way, the
projection of the anthropologist's own paradigm should be
prevented. In the SMBK case, the cosmology which expresses
the paradigm consists of a unique set of vocabulary and
expressions. In my fieldwork, I first tried to master this
SMBK rhetoric. Then, I applied it to my questioning and
discussion with the believers. Because I was thinking in
"standard" Japanese, I was functioning in a context of constant
translation from one to the other. Furthermore, SMBK cosmology
is a body of metaphor expressed in imagery. Therefore, it was
essential to understand the SMBK image of the cosmos. Only
with this image in mind, could communication in the SMBK
rhetoric became possible

Thus, according to the difference in the relationship between the researcher and his field, the presentation
of the observed phenomena may be distinguished into two basic
types: explanation and explication. In general, explanation
is to clarify the relationships among concepts. This process
presupposes that the researcher and the people in his field
share the same set of concepts. However, explication is to
establish concepts in relation to each other. Therefore,
explication contains two processes: conceptualization and
explanation. As Burridge indicates in the previous quotation,
these two processes are inseparable; as the researcher conceptualizes, relationships between the concepts become clear. Also, as the relationships become clear, the nature of concepts become clear. This simultaneous process of conceptualization and explanation of the observed phenomena is confusing and annoying. It is not a clear-cut process, but is a dialectical one. In other words, in the context, explication is a process of constructing a synthesis between the paradigm of the people in the field and that of the researcher.

The problems which have traditionally been criticized as positivist mainly refer to the lack of conceptualization. In this case, the researcher's own concepts are projected to the field. The false assumption is that (his) concepts are universal. This false assumption is easily followed by another assumption that fieldwork could and should be done exactly as it has been planned in his proposal. This condition is justifiable only when there is no element of "otherness" in his field.

Some phenomenologists go to another extreme. They believe that the researcher should not have any presuppositions before he goes into the field. This is not possible, because he is not usually aware whether or not he has any presuppositions. They become clear to him only through the epistemo-
logical confrontation with others. Before the confrontation the "presuppositions" are natural components of his own epistemology. It is his way of seeing the world. Or more precisely, it is the way the world is seen by him. When he objectifies his own way of seeing the world through the confrontation, he becomes aware that his epistemology consists of "presuppositions." In other words, the paradigm of the people of the culture under study is capturable through the epistemology of the anthropologist, but is only accurately communicable through the negation of the latter by the former. In SMBK, as I have mentioned, a similar dialectical process of self and others is offered in the purification ritual. However, in SMBK, the dialectic is possible only on a collective basis, and converges into cosmology, instead of expanding it.

Success or failure in fieldwork depends on three major factors: projectability, (entwurf or projection) projectibility (geworfenheit, or thrownness) and intelligibility. Projectability indicates the researcher's original plan for fieldwork, that is, how his original intention of knowing people is systematized in concrete planning, and his readiness to pursue it. Projectibility indicates how his plan is received by the people in his field. Intelligibility indicates how the field is made intelligible to the researcher. In my fieldwork, my original plan was to attend the three-day
lecture sessions to learn the SMBK doctrine, to experience the ritual through participant observation, and to interview believers to find out the things I could not see.

Before everything else, I visited one of the SMBK local centres, which I had arbitrarily chosen, because I wanted to know the general reaction when believers receive a newcomer. Subsequently, I went to the Main Headquarters, and asked for permission for my research. I was admitted to a particular branch located in Koganei. Later, I learned that this branch was one of the oldest, and its believers were known to be open and friendly. Because of the Main Headquarters' permission, the Head of the Koganei local centre was cooperative. The way I was received at this centre by regular believers for the first time was not noticeably different from the way I was received at the centre which I had been to before my visit to the Main Headquarters. This indicated to me that my presence as a participant observer was not particularly disturbing to regular believers. Later I learned the reason: in SMBK, purity in motivation for joining the movement is not important. Chances given by the divinity vary. One's attending meetings at the local centre counts. Moreover, everyone at the elementary level is considered to be defiled, and his motivation cannot be free from the defilement. Therefore, believers were not disturbed by the reason for my
It is generally accepted among social scientists that the reliability of the collected data depends on how the field has been made intelligible to the researcher. Therefore, a researcher is usually concerned about the projectability of his fieldwork plans, and often elaborates on them. However, the intelligibility of his work depends even more heavily on projectability, the way he is in the field, and the way he is received by the people. Although this condition is absolutely important, strangely enough it is often overlooked. In my experience, the interview was the field method which was most constrained by my appearance. I interviewed about thirty believers at the Koganei local centre at the beginning of my fieldwork. I asked about the things I could not observe in the local centre. They concerned mainly the meaning of various activities, and how believers behaved outside the local centre. Asking questions about them, I realized that the way believers answered was constrained by my age and sex. The believers of my age and sex were open and willing to tell me about their lives, whereas those who were not remained formal, and often answered in standard doctrinal statements which reminded me of lectures in the three-day elementary session. Because the believers I could successfully relate to were apparently biased, I decided to use a statistical survey in order to gain
more general information. However, the questionnaire was not
designed to collect information which went beyond or
refuted the answers given in interviews. Instead, the questions
in the questionnaire were based on the answers given in inter­
views in order to generalize them. Also, the questionnaire
was made after I was exposed to the content of the three-day
lecture sessions at all three levels. The questions were
phrased in the SMBK vocabulary and expressions. The total
number of questionnaires distributed was 2500, and 583 were
returned.

Most of the questionnaires were distributed through
the Main Headquarters, because the local centres were
dispersed all over Japan. The questionnaires were handed to
the Heads of the local centre at the monthly clerical meeting
from one of the Directors with an explanation. However, on
agreement with the Director, I personally dealt with four local
centres in Tokyo, in order to compare differences in response.
I brought the questionnaires to three local centres, and left
them with boxes for collection. I stayed at the Koganei local
centre most of the time, and distributed the questionnaires
directly to the believers. A slight difference was noticed
in response between those which I personally distributed
(therefore, through no authority) and the rest which were
distributed through the Main headquarters (therefore, through
an authority). Those through the Main Headquarters tended to concentrate on multiple-choice type questions, and ignored the questions which requested statement of opinions.

Application of field methods to concrete situations necessitates a constant decision-making process in order to distinguish valid and invalid methods in relation to the information obtained. Through constant evaluation, the field becomes tangible to the researcher, because both projectability (the field methods he has applied) and projectibility (the validity of his methods judged on the basis of the response from the subjects to them) become intelligible to him. This process is dialectical as I have previously mentioned.

The data in the following sections have been collected and explicated based on the epistemology described above. I hope that my description presents to my readers a chance to share an insight into a religious movement in the concrete example taken from SMBK.
NOTES

1 A list of examples of religious movements (M. Shimizu. 1979.)

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<td>Kōmyō Kyōdan</td>
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<td>Seichō no Ie</td>
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<td>Meshia Kyō</td>
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<td>Sukui no Hikari Kyōdan</td>
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<td>Konko Kyō</td>
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<td>Honbushin</td>
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<td>Honmichi</td>
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<td>Tenshō Kōtai Jingū Kyō</td>
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<td>Perfect Liberty Kyōdan</td>
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<td>Jissen Rinri Kōsei Kai</td>
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* SMBK belongs to the group of religious associations which derived from the Sekai Meshia Kyō (the World Messianic Religious Association). This group is known as o-hikari-sama (the light worshippers), and is involved in curing a variety of diseases through concrete ritual means which are ultimately derived from traditional healing practices before modernization (1868). SMBK is a typical example of this group, and is characterized by involvement in spirit possession and the performance of a purification ritual for curing.
C. Nakane, 1970. See the "Conclusion." Although Nakane insists that this social system could not be democratic, what is democratic is controversial. However, her suggestion of the social discrepancy is valid. More discussion on Nakane's theory will be found in Chapter III.

3 Ideology does this because it is an expression of paradigm, and because it enforces a particular epistemology.

4 C. Weizsäcker, 1964.

5 T. Kuhn, 1962, p. 3.

6 Ibid., pp. 44-45.

7 Ibid., p. 45.


9 In the footnote of Suicide, Durkheim adds the fourth category of suicide, called a fatalistic one, without giving further discussion. A possible reason for this addition is that fatalism is a form of submission and does not suit his other categorization by the forms of commitment. It is actively intentional, however, submission may be passive and situational. It is the basic attitude of "ritual man" I will discuss in this dissertation.


11 Emile Durkheim, 1953, p. 93.

12 Ibid., p. 93.

13 Ibid., p. 93.

14 Ibid., p. 93.
15 Ibid., p. 93.


18 Ibid., p. 16.

19 Ibid., p. 13.


24 "Reaching otherness" has been conceptualized by Burridge as the thesis of fieldwork. See his Encountering Aborigines, 1973, pp. 6-37.
CHAPTER II

SMBK AS A RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT
SOCIO-HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It was suggested in Chapter 1 that religious doctrine may form an antithesis to the social situation in the wider society. The question which should follow this proposition is this: What is the novelty of the religious movement in relation to the wider society? The answer requires the positioning of the particular movement in the context of the socio-historical conditions of the wider society, and also the positioning of the movement in relation to other religious movements in the same society. The brief answer for SMBK is this: In Japanese society, throughout the modernization process, religious movements occupied antithetical positions to the national government. Modernization in Japan has been a national project, and has been led by the national government. The major theme of modernization is to form a synthesis between tradition and Westernization. Various groups besides the government have been engaged in this attempt, including both secular and religious movements. SMBK is one of the naturalist-nationalist revivals which took place after World War II. SMBK's basic orientation is typically seen in its practice of the purification ritual.

In the first two-thirds of the modern age, from the
Meiji Restoration (1868) to the end of World War II (1945), State Shinto occupied the position of the national religion of Japan, and other religions were generally considered undesirable. According to Ken Arai, the Japanese government, on the surface, advocated the separation of "church" and State, and freedom of belief was assured in the Meiji Constitution (1889). However, Arai also emphasizes that the Constitution followed various unsuccessful attempts to make Shinto the official State religion, and even after promulgation of the Constitution Shinto was treated in an exceptional manner. It was given the position of the de facto national religion through the Home Ministry's consolidation and administration of the Shinto shrines. That is to say, Shinto was considered to be a non-religion and thus elevated above any religion. Consequently, Shinto doctrine would serve to justify the power of the Emperor through its mythology of Kojiki (The Record of Ancient Ways) and Nihonshoki (The Chronicles of Japan), to moralise the people through the Imperial Rescript on Education (1890), and to unite the nation under kokutai. Thus, the so-called State Shinto regime was established. And since Shinto was adopted as the ruling ideology to integrate the Japanese into a nation-state, other forms of religion came to be considered anti-national, regardless of their doctrinal content.
Concerning their doctrinal content, Tsushima et al. discerned a common orientation of religious movements centered around what they define as a "vitalistic conception of salvation" which:

... regards the cosmos as a living body or the Original Life from which all living things emanate, and advocates the full realization of the growth and efflorescence of man's life through harmony with the Original Life.

It is further characterised by:

... an idea of a primary religious Being which bears and nurtures all things, confidence in the inherent goodness of the world, exhortation to thank the deity for its beneficial bestowal of life force, and an optimistic view of salvation which is easily attainable in this world.

They conclude that the "concept of worldly benefit and salvation were conjoined without contradiction," because the founders derived most of their teachings from folk religions, and were therefore not directly influenced by established religions which uphold other-worldly orientation:

It was in the activities of folk religion led by semi-professional and shamanistic religious practitioners that the founders acquired their religious experiences and deepened their faith. Most of the teachings and the organizational devices of the New Religions can be regarded as the developed form of the loosely-organized symbolism and the associations (ko) of folk religion.
In their doctrine, such religious movements offered little direct opposition to the government. Arai, for example, has written:

... religious resistance against the State was not common at all. It rarely happened that State policy was criticized based on some religious doctrine or idea. (And even in the case where it did happen) such religious activities never gained a basis for a wide social movement.9

Nonetheless, the decade following 1935 was an age of persecution for religious movements. Ōmoto Kyō was suppressed for the second time in 1935, followed by the illegalisation of Hito-no-michi Kyōdan in 1936, Hon-michi in 1938, and Sōka Kyōiku Gakkai (later Sōka Gakkai) in 1943. As Arai indicates, especially the lèse-majesté affair of Hito-no-michi Kyōdan revealed the intention of the government to eliminate religious "heresies," because this religious group had adapted well to the State policy by even using the Imperial Rescript on Education as the central theme of its doctrine.10

However, in 1945, with the end of the War, the situation was to change drastically. On July 26, 1945, the Allied Powers agreed on the Postdam Declaration and on August 14th, the Japanese government submitted to it. The Declaration itself consisted of thirteen items, including a 6th item on eliminating militarism and a 9th item on establishing and solidifying a democracy based on freedom of belief. And
indeed, in the six years of Allied occupation which were to follow, the Allied powers' main objectives were concentrated on de-militarisation and democratisation.\textsuperscript{11}

What did this mean for State Shinto? In the first place, it must be recalled that,

The second World War was not only a total military war but also an ideological war. The Allied Powers, advocating democracy, set as targets the totalitarianism of Japan, Germany and Italy. Therefore, State Shinto was recognised as a leading ideology of totalitarianism parallel to the Naziism of Germany and the Fascism of Italy.\textsuperscript{12}

In conjunction with this, the policy of the abolition of State Shinto was already agreed by the Allied Powers, even before the end of the War. The Inter-Divisional Area Committee on the Far East decided in 1944, one and a half years before the end of the War, that State Shinto should be abolished and that for this purpose it should be carefully distinguished from other forms of Shinto categorized under the term ko-Shinto.\textsuperscript{13} Within a year of the occupation, this policy was energetically applied through various orders including the "Removal of Restrictions on Political, Civil and Religious Liberties" (October 4th, 1945) and the "Abolition of Governmental Sponsorship, Support, Perpetuation, Control and Dissemination of State Shinto" (December 15th, 1945).\textsuperscript{14} Thus, the position of Shinto was reversed from nationwide reverence
to sudden condemnation.

Following the ten years of the post-War confusion, Japanese society entered an age of "high economic growth." Between 1959 and 1974, the Lord-savior Okada, the founder of SMBK, was engaged in his mission. Some statistical surveys done between 1958 and 1973 overlap by a year with the period of Okada's mission. The surveys show that the Japanese generally retained their respect for religion, but resigned from religious activities.

According to the *National Characteristics of the Japanese: No. 3*, between 1958 and 1973, the number of believers in (some) religion kept declining:¹⁵

**TABLE 1: RELIGIONS IN JAPAN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Believe in some religion</th>
<th>1958</th>
<th>1963</th>
<th>1968</th>
<th>1973</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Believe in:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shintoism</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buddhism</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christianity</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A New Religion</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not clear</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not believe in any religion</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The 6% who did not answer the pool are not included.)

*(National Characteristics of the Japanese: No. 3)*¹⁵

The following graph shows the breakdown by age, for 1959 and 1973:
GRAPH 1: Religious Believers According to Age
(National Characteristics of the Japanese: No. 3)

% of believers

Explanation:
This graph shows that the older generation is more religious except for a slight inconsistency between 55 and 59 years of age. But in the 15 years between the two lines on the graph, the older generation lost more believers than the younger generation when the same age groups are compared. Further, in order to indicate the change in 15 years of people born in the same year, they are joined by dotted lines. If a dotted line goes up (towards the right), the people became more religious as they aged; if the line remains horizontal, they did not change. The dotted lines between the two distributions show that there was a slight inclination towards becoming more religious with age, but the increase remained small.
In other words, the decline in religion followed the generational change, and was not simply a temporary change brought about by a sudden increase in the number of non-religious people.\textsuperscript{17}

Additionally, the same survey reported that when the believers were asked to describe the religious activities they were presently engaged in, 13\% of the samples (half of the number of believers), reported no real activities.\textsuperscript{18}

And finally, though it would be easy to conclude from these tendencies that the Japanese are becoming less and less religious, up to 84\% of the same samples were either believers or they respected a "religious mind":

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\small
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & \textbf{Believers} & & \textbf{Non-believers} & \\
 & Religious Mind & & Religious Mind & \\
 & is & Important & Not Important & Other/No Answer & Total \\
\hline
(1958) & 35\% & 47\% & 10\% & 8\% & 100\% \\
(1963) & 31\% & 53\% & 9\% & 7\% & 100\% \\
(1968) & 30\% & 53\% & 10\% & 7\% & 100\% \\
(1973) & 25\% & 52\% & 12\% & 11\% & 100\% \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Importance of Religious Mind}
\end{table}

\textit{(National Characteristics of the Japanese: No. 3)}\textsuperscript{19}

The gap between a religious sentiment and a reluctance to be involved in religious activities in reality or even to identify oneself with a particular group is one
basic condition for religious movements today. If religion adds something to the life of an unfortunate individual, it is good, but if it demands any sacrifice including a contribution in terms of time and/or money, it should be avoided. This attitude is often expressed to the believer engaged in recruitment via the typical cynical remark: "(Unlike you) we are too poor to afford to be involved in religion," in spite of the fact that the general public considers that believers are poor, in both educational and economic senses. Thus, religion has a large reservoir of sympathizers to attract. However, attraction does not easily activate them into a passionate involvement.

To the Japanese who have a sentiment against religious activities, if not against religion itself, religious activities are not desirable, because the movements are generally oriented towards action. The success or failure of the recruiter depends on how convincingly he can present the argument that respect for religion should be expressed in action, and that the action is a segment of interpersonal relationships. In this respect, religious movements involved in healing have an advantage because they can offer not only the theory (doctrine) to explain why action is essential, but also the method (healing ritual) to show how the theory can be and should be practised. Through the healing ritual, movements
could keep potential believers passive as clients for a certain period of time. However, their passive attraction has to be converted to an active engagement. In SMBK, this turning point is present in the purification ritual. The shift from the passive role to the active role in this ritual leads the performer to the change.
EMERGENCE OF SMBK

It was during the age of "high economic growth" that some traditionalist movements emerged and questioned the meaning and reality of democracy. SMBK was one of these traditionalist movements. The social background for their emergence was the internationalization of the Japanese economy. Donald Hellmann explains the socio-economic conditions of this age as follows:

Because Japan's remarkable economic growth has been tied so closely to expanding international trade, the need to maintain positive connections with the global economy provides an important constraint on any autonomous military or economic action. Although Japan's dependence on imports (7-9 percent of GNP) is well below that of almost all West European nations and a successful effort has been made to diversify the sources of imports, the country still relies heavily on outside supplies of basic raw materials such as oil and iron ore. Similarly, Japan is statistically less dependent on exports (8-9 percent of GNP) than any other country except the United States, but to sustain the momentum of economic growth sought by the Japanese government, it will be necessary to expand exports steadily (at roughly 16 percent per annum) and to take a progressively larger proportion of total world trade. These goals can be reached only by carefully nurturing economic and political ties with the United States in particular and all advanced industrial countries generally. 20

Internationalization, this time under a democratic operation, again created the necessity of national identity
for the Japanese. The establishment of national identity had been one of the consistent themes for modernization in order to keep Japan an independent and integrated country. Before the end of World War II, State Shinto served this purpose, and westernization was deliberately controlled to encompass only the adoption of technology. However, after the end of the War, modernization changed its meaning to democratization; tradition was sacrificed. Numerous books were published to discuss who the Japanese actually are (nihon-jin ron). Popular subjects for discussion were the Japanese ethos, national characteristics, typical personality types, social structure, and cultural differences between Japanese and Americans. The centre of attention shifted from Europe to the United States of America, because it led the post-War democratization of Japan.

SMBK's claim against democracy as an imported foreign system was most strongly directed towards such social failures as industrial pollution and the destruction of nature caused by hasty development. SMBK also objected to the overuse of medicines and rapid growth of the medical industry. When Okada first publicized his objections, these issues hardly attracted people's attention. However, by the time of his death, they had become major social problems.
Okada had a doctrinal basis for making his objections: the SMBK doctrine is based on naturalism, which demands a natural life and a natural death. Although on the surface it may appear to promote a cure from diseases in a way similar to that used by the medical sciences, SMBK does not fight against death. It fights against unnatural events. These include an unhealthy state of body and mind, and death from unnatural causes. Because the purification ritual is considered to keep beings (including human beings) in the natural state, the SMBK movement is built on this ritual. Thus, Okada offered not only a theory of explanation but also a method for dealing with problems on an individual basis.

In the SMBK doctrine, the notion of the Japanese as superior to other nations, which had been once lost, was retained. According to the SMBK doctrine, the existing civilizations in the world were originally created by the Japanese. The earliest human beings were born in Japan. They were peoples distinguished in five colours, and were dispersed all over the world at the time of a natural disaster. In order to reorganize these peoples, sixteen princes of Japan went on divine missions. The princes divided the world into sixteen kingdoms. Thus, the SMBK seal today, which is shaped in the form of a chrysanthemum, has sixteen petals. SMBK
claims that the Japanese have been appointed by divinities to lead the world since this mythological time of the sixteen princes.

DIAGRAM 5: Divine Seal of SMBK
The SMBK founder's naturalist-nationalist orientation has been followed by the second leader. Table 3 shows the reaction of SMBK believers (in 1980) to the general social tendency in post-War Japan: only about 17% of the respondents to the questionnaire believed that post-War Japanese society is successful in democracy, but that SMBK doctrine is supportive and would ensure its success. (Category 3). In contrast, about 40% consider that the Post-War Japan has gone against the divine teaching. (Category 1 and 2). However, 17% believe that the SMBK doctrine does not provide an answer for this question, and that they are not in a position to make a personal judgement (Category 6). Moreover, another 40% express difficulty even in deciding whether or not they can say that they do not know the answer. (Category 7). In this case, they seem to need guidance from senior believers.

As Susumu Shimazono suggests, that the founder of a religious movement in Japan is rarely actively glorified, and the personal life history of Okada, the founder of SMBK, is treated with indifference among believers. The following descriptions are adopted from *Dojo* written by Winston Davis:

Okada Yoshikazu (later Kōtama), founder of Sukyo Mahikari, was born into a samurai family. His grandfather had been a tutor to the feudal lords of Nakayama castle. His father continued the family profession until the Meiji restoration
TABLE 3

QUESTION: What do you think about the general social tendency in the post-War (Japanese) society?

ANSWERS:
1. It contradicts the divine teaching, because it produces "selfish and arrogant people."  
2. It contradicts the divine teaching for other reasons.
3. It suits the divine teaching, because society promotes democracy.
4. It suits the divine teaching for other persons.
5. My answer is different from 1-4 listed above.
6. I do not know.
7. (No answer).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of believers*</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>16.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>38.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* number of respondents who answered the questionnaire.
(1868), when he joined the new imperial army and rose to the rank of major general. In his will he directed his son, Yoshikazu, to follow the hereditary occupation of his forebears. The young man accordingly entered a military academy called the Rikugun Shikan Gakko and, after graduation, served in the imperial guards of the Taishō and Showa emperors.

During the Pacific War, Okada fell from his horse while serving in Indochina, seriously injuring his back. When he returned to Japan for medical treatment, physicians found that he had tuberculosis of the spine and predicted that he had only three more years to live. This was Okada's first encounter with the limitations of Western medicine. After his release from the hospital, he resolved that he would devote the short time remaining to him "to the service of God and mankind." To carry out his vow, he invested all his savings in four factories manufacturing military aircraft for the Japanese air force. When these plants were gutted by the firebombing of Tokyo in 1945, the future Savior was plunged into destitution. Like others in similar straits, Okada turned to religion, becoming a staunch member of the Church of World Messianity (Sekai Kyūsei Kyō). Founded by Okada Mokichi (no relation to Mahikari's Savior), Messianity taught that sickness and misfortune are caused by the "dust" that accumulates on the surface of the soul. By purchasing an amulet a person could dispel this dust simply by raising his hand over another's forehead. The amulet, a transmitter of heavenly "spirit rays," was credited with miracles beyond number.

By 1959, Okada Yoshikazu had finally paid off the last of his creditors. On February 22 of that year he developed a high fever and became unconscious. Suddenly he found himself transported to the astral world, where he saw an old man with white hair standing in a white cloud and washing clothes in a golden tub. Later, Okada interpreted this vision as a revelation of Su-god (the Lord God) and of the cleansing mission that was about to be entrusted
to him. Five days after the vision, on his birthday, Okada was awakened at five o'clock in the morning by a divine voice saying, "Get up. Change your name to Kotama (Jewel of Light). Raise your hand. Trials and tribulation are coming!"

Except for his boundless interest in evil spirits, there was little to distinguish Okada's gospel from that of Messianity. The first to be healed by the new Savior was a dog. "At least a dog won't laugh at me when I raise my hand," he thought. Gradually he began to make converts, his earliest disciples being neighborhood bargirls. On August 28, 1960, Okada officially launched his movement, first called the L. H. (Lucky and Healthy) Sunshine Children and later changed to the Church of the World True-Light Civilization (Sekai Mahikari Bunmei Kyōdan). For the next ten years he vigorously preached his gospel to all sorts of people, until Mahikari had become a nationwide movement. His following increased dramatically after a successful demonstration of his "purification" method on the television program "Afternoon Show" in November 1968. So successful did he become that he was forced to turn over the instruction and initiation of neophytes to his disciples and confine himself to the preparation of amulets (omitama) and high-level evangelism.

As the movement expanded, Okada's messianic consciousness grew deeper. Although he never claimed to be the equal of Su-god, he regarded himself as the physical embodiment of the god Yonimasu-ō-amatsu and as God's earthly "Proxy, Carbon Copy, and Robot." To the titles of Spiritual Leader or Master (Oshienushisama) and Savior (Sukuinushi-sama) were added the names Messiah Number One and Sacred Phoenix. Throughout this period, revelations continuously came to Okada during the night that he jotted down in "automatic writing" with incredible speed. These were later collected in a 486-page volume called the Goseigenshu, the scriptures of Mahikari. Members regard all of the Savior's words, even those that have appeared in the Mahikari magazine, as part of his Holy Teachings, or Mioshie.
On February 17, 1972, Okada Kotama's career came to a climax when he was presented with the medallion of the Knight Commander of St. Denis by the American Academy of Arts. The year after, he went to Europe and was granted a private audience with Pope Paul VI. I am told by Mahikari stalwarts that as a result of their meeting, the Pope instructed all Roman Catholic priests to study the Mahikari Treatment.

Davis collected the above information from a religious movement called Sūkyō Mahikari. It used to be an SMBK faction, but later became independent from SMBK. Its leader is the Lord-savior Okada's adopted daughter named Keiju. Because she was the only person who had a close personal relationship with the Lord-Savior, stories about him are circulated more in her movement than in SMBK. Also, she is relatively more active in the attempt to glorify her adopted father. This attitude is typically shown in the photographed portrait of the Lord-savior posted on the wall of the shrine beside the divine scroll in the local centre. In contrast, in SMBK, his portrait is not used on regular ritual occasions.
SECOND START OF SMBK

The death of the founder of SMBK, the Lord-savior Okada, and the succeeding schism of the movement were the major crises in SMBK history. Because his wife and two children were not involved in the SMBK movement, the common succession in religious movements in Japan by a child through the blood of the founder did not occur in SMBK. Following the informal funeral ceremony for the Lord-savior, Keiju told the top twenty-seven believers that her father had appointed Sakae Sekiguchi to be the second leader of SMBK. Sekiguchi was one of the earliest followers and also a financial backer of the movement. He had no kinship relation with the Lord-savior. Keiju emphasized that the special talisman for the second and later leaders was left to her to transfer to Sekiguchi. The next day, in front of the main shrine, Keiju handed to Sekiguchi the talisman which certifies the SMBK leadership. In the formal funeral ceremony which was performed about one month later, Sekiguchi acted as the second leader in the presence of the body of SMBK believers, which filled one of the largest gymnasiums in Tokyo (Budō Kan).

However, several days before this funeral ceremony, Keiju secretly registered herself with the government as the representative of SMBK. This means that she officially
became the leader of SMBK and Sekiguchi lost his legal status. The doctrinal justification Keiju gave was that the Lord-savior's own talisman kept by Keiju was the real one which authorizes the position of the SMBK leader, and that both Sekiguchi's talisman and his position were meant to be temporary. Because Keiju was the only "relative" left in SMBK by the Lord-savior, her succession appealed as "natural" to most administrative members including the Heads of the local centre. They were convinced that Keiju should be the second leader, and a few months later, she began to function as the SMBK leader.

The dispute between Sekiguchi and Keiju was taken to the court in 1974. In 1977, Tokyo's High Court ruled that Sekiguchi should officially represent SMBK. In 1978, Keiju registered her faction with the government under the name of Sūkyō Mahikari, and became completely independent from SMBK. In other words, Keiju became the founder of her own religious movement.

Such a schism as is seen in SMBK is not uncommon among religious movements in Japan. The reason is organizational. As Nakane suggests, groups which are formed on the basis of person-to-person ties tend to be mutually exclusive and become localized. Therefore, the leader of the movement is the only person who has access to all of the top figures
Lord-teacher Sekiguchi

(Mahikari Magazine, 1982, January)
of the localized groups. When he dies, these figures compete for succession. Because they are almost equal to each other under the deceased leader, after his death, no one can mediate their dispute. Thus, the common solution is schism. In the SMBK case, Sekiguchi was the formal successor. However, the informal relationships are so important in SMBK that Keiju, who was informally closest to the deceased leader, appealed to the majority as equally eligible for succession.

The change in membership in SMBK on Sekiguchi's side between 1973 (the year of founder's death) and 1982 was as follows: in 1973, at the time of the schism, most believers followed Keiju, and Sekiguchi was left with about forty believers. With the Court's judgement in favour of Sekiguchi in 1977, his recruitment activities became vividly active; he encouraged the followers of Keiju, especially her Heads, to "return" (moto gaeri) to him. This appeal was even more energetically made since Keiju became independent from SMBK in 1978. The number of Sekiguchi's local centres increased from forty in 1978 to one hundred in 1982. Since the oversea local centres in Europe and South America stayed with Keiju, Sekiguchi has been trying to build new local centres in South East Asia. In March 1982, the first elementary session was held in Singapore.

The general composition of SMBK in 1982 is as
follows: Due to the big turnover in membership, and also because the Main Headquarters is not interested in keeping records of regular believers, their number is not definite. However, my estimate is about 20,000. The number of local centres is about 100, and the number of regular believers of one centre ranges from 100 to 300. The approximate proportion between men and women is 1:2. Although the membership equally covers all generations, about one-third consists of those who are relatively free from public responsibility. They are housewives, students, unemployed and retired people. Except for students, these people likely suffer from personal problems because they are less involved with public responsibilities, and are consequently frustrated.

The stratification by income shows that SMBK is similar to other religious movements in Japan: the membership contains fewer middle-income people. More percentages in the lower and upper ranges are shown in the SMBK membership than those in the general survey made by the government. The reason may be this: the lower-income group wants some organizational backup, but cannot achieve it through employment. Japanese companies are well-known for the provision of personal accommodations (such as housing, insurance, recreational opportunities, and other privileges) for permanent employees, who constitute the middle-income group in Japan. The religious
movements also attract the higher-income group which has recently achieved its position, and who are not yet accepted in the more established high-income group. These rich but un-established people were previously not respected even by the middle-income-group in the wider society. Thus they often find a comfortable position in religious movements by making financial contributions.
PRACTICE OF THE PURIFICATION RITUAL IN SMBK

SMBK, as a religious movement, is antithetical to the wider society, mainly because of its active and serious involvement with spirit possession. In the wider society, spirit possession is disdained as irrational, and is often considered to be a cheap trick to distract public attention from democracy. However, in SMBK, acceptance of spirit possession as a fact is the gateway to the divine order. SMBK offers concrete ritual means to communicate with possessing spirits through the purification ritual. Thus, the repetitive and continuous performance of the purification ritual becomes the central issue in the SMBK religious system.

The purification ritual is a pair performance in which the two performers exchange their roles which are determined according to the requirements of transmitting the divine light from one to the other. In its performance, each performer adopts two roles: one is an active role as a purifier or transmitter of the divine light, and the other is a passive role as a receiver of this light. Because the active performer controls the ritual performance, his role is superior to the role of the passive performer. However, a complete performance of the purification ritual means that one person more or less successively takes both roles.
Therefore, with the completion of one round performance, the performers become equal. The partner may be the same person or may be different in each part of the ritual.

The active performer is responsible for keeping the ritual under control, and the passive performer should follow the directions given by the active performer. The ritual begins with a prayer to the SMBK supreme divinity. The passive performer sits behind the active performer, both of them facing the shrine which is located on one wall of the room. Then, when they bow, clap their hands and make wishes, the passive performer has to time his actions to synchronize as precisely as possible with those of the active performer. Subsequently, the active performer turns around, and with the authority and power of the supreme divinity behind him, recites the Prayer of Heaven (Amatsu Norigoto) while the passive performer listens, remaining in a restricted physical posture with his eyes closed and his hands in the praying position.

The active performer holds up his palm above various parts of the body of the passive performer called kyū-sho ("vital points"). The divine light radiates from the palm of the active performer and penetrates the body of the passive performer through his vital points. In this way, the divine light is believed to induce the discharge of the polluting
element called daku-doku ("dirt-poison"). Before the transmission of the divine light, except for the forehead, the active performer uses his finger tips to locate any coagulations, un-relaxed muscles, and body sores to identify the exact location of the accumulated dirt-poison, because such places are believed to be its nest. During the performance (including the search for nests), the passive performer relaxes himself. Often the passive performer is permitted, or even asked, to lie down. The performers are permitted to exchange their knowledge of the SMBK doctrine; in fact, most performers talk, but their conversation often diverges from the doctrine and goes into private subjects.

### DIAGRAM 6: The Role Exchange

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>active performer</th>
<th>passive performer</th>
<th>audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st half</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd half</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1st half</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd half</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The first ten minutes of the purification ritual are normally spent on purifying the forehead (the vital point No. 8: Diagram 7) and is considered special.

The forehead purification is believed to induce the possessing spirit to appear from its regular hiding place, that is, various parts of the body of the possessed (the passive performer in this context). It is believed in SMBK that a person has two spirits of his own: the major spirit about ten centimeters inside his forehead and the subordinate spirit several centimeters below his navel. The subordinate spirit controls his desire and the major spirit relates to divine order. Good combination of these two should be achieved, but neither a conflict between them nor the takeover of one by the other is desirable. Since the possessing spirit is basically treated as a defilement, when the divine light penetrates vital point No. 8 one's whole body is purified, and the possessing spirit suffers like a fish experiencing oxygen shortage. Under the forehead purification, the possessing spirit rises to the surface of the body of the passive performer and, responding to the request of the active performer, becomes, either willingly or unwillingly, involved in communication through the passive performer with the active. Thus:
ACTIVE PERFORMER : I am speaking to Mr. spirit (honorific) who is occupying the body of Miss (full name). If you agree with what I am going to say, please incline your head vertically, and if you do not, please shake it horizontally.

SPIRIT OF PASSIVE PERFORMER : (Writes some large letters on the tatami floor mats on which they are sitting, using flat pillows.)

ACTIVE PERFORMER : (Concentrates on reading the letters, but is not successful, and then looks at the passive performer's facial expression very carefully.) Guessing from your expression, I'd say you are angry. You are not asking for salvation.

(short silence)

Are you the spirit (honorific form is used) of an animal?

(long silence)

Are you a human being?

SPIRIT : (Moves her head slightly, as if nodding).

ACTIVE PERFORMER : (Being very much encouraged) You really wish to be saved, don't you?

SPIRIT : (Shakes her head, meaning "No").

ACTIVE PERFORMER : (Disappointedly) Am I wrong? Then, what do you ....

(As the passive performer begins to write more letters, the active performer stops talking and watches the passive performer's hand. But the active performer cannot read them. The passive performer stops writing).
DIAGRAM 7: Vital Points

1. kidney
2. stomach & spleen
3. heart
4. shoulder blade
5. shoulder
6. cervical vertebra
7. hindbrain
8. forehead
9. lachrymal
10. collar bone
11. around ear
12. stomach
13. navel
14. pylorus
15. ureter
16. esophageal
17. groin
18. bladder
19. groin
20. inner thigh
21. ...
22. ...
23. anal area
24. under jaw
25. temple
26. temple
27. under ear
28. parotoid
29. ...
30. ...
31. esophageal
32. stomach
33. stomach
34. stomach
This person is ...?

SPIRIT: (Interrupts the active performer's words by busily waving her hand, meaning "No").

ACTIVE PERFORMER: An ancestor of your family?

SPIRIT: (Nods, meaning "yes").

ACTIVE PERFORMER: Counting from you as the first generation, how many generations ago?

SPIRIT: (Writes "+" on the tatami mat.)

ACTIVE PERFORMER: (Since + means ten in Japanese) Ten generations ago?

SPIRIT: (Shakes her head several times, and then says,) No.

ACTIVE PERFORMER: (In a hard, dignified tone) How many generations ago?

SPIRIT: (Again writes "+" on the tatami mat.)

ACTIVE PERFORMER: (Ignoring it this time) Kami-sama (The divinity in an honorific form) will save you.

It took about three minutes up to this point, and then continued for about ten more minutes, mostly repeating similar questions and answers. (Often the forehead purification goes on for over ten minutes, if the spirit is responding strongly.)

The transition from the forehead purification to other vital points is usually smooth, and there is continuity.
In this scene, the person speaking to the possessing spirit was a Mrs. A, an active member who used to be a live-in teacher before her marriage, and at this time was the mother of a one-year old boy. Mrs. A asked such questions as:

Can you speak?
Try to say it, try to speak!
You are moving your lips, but in the human world you have to say it in a voice (in order to communicate).
You know it is wrong to possess her like this.
How did you leave your own astral world?
After your death you must train yourself not to be attached to this world like this.
But, if you leave her body and return to the astral world, the divinity will forgive you. There is a divine amnesty.

The passive performer, a high school girl, kept nodding. Because she nodded so deeply, it seemed that she swayed the top half of her body. Mrs. A's voice stayed soft and tender. When the girl was permitted to open her eyes, she looked at me and smiled shyly, which made me realize that my being there as an audience, that is, as a witness from her point of view, confirmed the fact that the ritual act was a public occasion.

Mrs. A began to purify the girl's back, and relaxed, they conversed casually. The girl said to Mrs. A that she had experienced neurosis. Mrs. A answered decisively that this disturbance was caused by an evil spirit, adding that the girl's backbone hernia was certainly attributable to the same cause. The girl resisted this interpretation by
saying that her hernia was the result of strenuous basketball practice. Mrs. A immediately refuted this, pointing out that only few people would be herniated though very many people play basketball equally as hard as she did. Mrs. A. emphasized that there had to be a particular reason why a certain person should suffer from a specific condition, and that it must be the spirit which caused the trouble. Fundamentally, this discussion was an extension of the previous admonition. Their manners were also similar: Mrs. A spoke in the same soft and tender voice as before, and the girl kept nodding in the same way although her body was no longer swaying.
SMBK THEORY OF PURIFICATION

The purification ritual is a special form of ritual. It presupposes an object to be purified or removed in order to recover proper participation in the "wholeness of the divine order." The lack of "wholeness" is believed to cause two kinds of defilement: accumulation of dirt-poison and spirit possession. Thus, in SMBK, the purification ritual consists of two parts:

1. The first ten minutes: Purifying one's major spirit (vital point No. 8) vitalizes one's whole body. As the body movements, which are assumed to be caused by the possessing spirit, occur on this occasion, this part of the purification ritual may be described as "exorcism."

2. The succeeding forty minutes: Intensive purification of the vital points and the defiled area. Diagram 7 shows the location of the vital points. This part of the purification ritual may be described as "healing."

In SMBK, causes of diseases are explained in terms of accumulation of dirt-poison and/or spirit possession. Moist pleurisy is caused by accumulated urine, consequently its cure is to induce urine through the kidneys (1),
ureter (17) and bladder (18) as indicated above. Tuberculosis is identified as a sign that the dirt-poison is rotting. Possession by an extra-resentful spirit mainly causes heart trouble. Problems about the head are often identified as the result of an improper treatment of the family altar or shrine. Neurosis is considered to be an ancestral warning. Ear troubles are sometimes identified as a possession by a minor divinity called Mokuryū Jin (Plant Dragon). The latter divinity is believed to live in a tree or well and possesses a human being when his residence is destroyed.

Some diseases and symptoms of disease in the sense given by modern medical science are treated in SMBK as a process of healing. They are assumed to be the discharge of dirt-poison. Diarrhea, runny nose, bloody nose, skin problems, skin infections are representative discharges which are all assumed to be healing processes in SMBK. Ringing in the ear is the noise of dirt poison running in the brain. Taken as a sign of excessive dirt-poison, defilement is still accumulating. But if the dirt-poison is thought to be running down toward the kidneys, it is regarded as a healing process. In any case, the purification of vital points 27 and 23, as is indicated in Diagram 13, should induce the dirt-poison down from the head. Hemorrhoids are identified mainly as the discharge of dirt-poison from the head and
other internal organs. Skin disease is an ideal way to discharge especially toxic dirt-poison because it saves the kidneys from possible damage when the discharge is intensive. Water eczema is a miraculous way—according to SMBK—to discharge dirt-poison from the head (the centre of the body) through a foot (the most minor part of the body). Because SMBK considers that medicines provided by modern medical science block the discharge of dirt-poison, the cure by medicines only accelerates the accumulation of dirt-poison.

Additionally, the purification proceeds from the forehead through the defiled area toward the kidneys, based on the theory that most dirt-poison is discharged from the kidneys. However, the discharge from other areas such as the nose, ears and in the form of diarrhea may be simultaneously induced by the purification ritual. How the effort and intention of the active performer is fulfilled is said to depend on the will of the divinity and on the state of mind of the passive performer. In other words, the result varies greatly in each case.

The SMBK doctrine explains the meaning of purification from the structure of the three "bodies" that man is supposed to have: a human being is made of three bodies congruent in one person, namely, the spiritual body, the astral body, and the physical body. (See Diagram 18). These
three bodies are subordinate to one another in the following order: the physical body is under the control of the astral body, and the astral body is under the spiritual body. This order, considered according to essential-ness, corresponds to the way in which the SMBK cosmos is viewed. (See Diagram 17.) Furthermore, the astral body is also considered as the body of mind, that is, consciousness. Therefore, the SMBK doctrine says that, as the spiritual body is purified through the purification ritual, the astral body is induced to reflect on the self and spiritual phenomena.

Mrs. Endo's case will illustrate the linkage between the physical and mental aspects. In her case, disease is first accepted as a sign that the body is starting discharge of dirt-poison, and this new definition of disease brought her delight. However, as the symptoms became intensified, she became resentful. Then, by learning to accept them as a trial given by the divinity, she achieved a solid thankful state of mind. Her first step toward considering the disease as a sign of purification is one step towards "wholeness" and her accepting it as a trial is another step. Thus, Mrs. Endō, the mother of two daughters in kindergarten, says:

In September of 1978, I happened to find a book titled seiyu (Divine Healing) in a bookstore while doing my daily shopping. Being pulled by an irresistible force, I
opened that book and found that kami (divinity) really exists and that he has provided the means of purification. This was the knowledge I have always wanted to have, and I was struck by it ...

In October, I took the elementary lecture session (and became a believer).

After the session, I had to have purification almost every day ... including for a runny nose, wet cough and itchy rashes all over my body. My body was discharging dirty things in my urine.

In three months, I lost eight kilograms, but I was perfectly fine. Some pressure behind my eyes disappeared.

I thought that the 'principle of cleansing' [the SMBK theory of purification] was a fantastic tiding in the world.

At the same time, I realized my own mistake in having defiled my physical body, which was originally a divine gift.

Then, in the second stage, when she thought she had achieved real state of thankfulness, a "trial" began:

On one of those days, I happened to think that I had been very arrogant when I gave prayers to the divinity. I often prayed for any kind of trial, though the divinity provided it in the best way to match my condition. I noticed that I was not as sunao (obedient) as I thought but instead I was arrogantly invading the territory of divine judgment. I felt ashamed and almost cried.

On that night, at home, I had acute diarrhoea. Every time I went to the bathroom I had a tremendous amount of waste.

After two days of watery diarrhoea, I began to have blood mixed in the waste. I had to have it five or six times a day, and every time I had almost one small glassful of blood.

Though I had been informed that this kind of phenomenon follows after a "reversal of thought,"29 at the moment I just could not think, with my body completely weakened. I was like a somnambulist.
While I was having the watery diarrhoea I still could honestly thank the divinity (for cleansing me), but after it progressed to the bloody waste I felt too much suffering not to be resentful.

Although I will avoid quoting her long and complicated process of self-change, Mrs. Endō believes that her faith was strengthened as she tended to regard her problems as a trial. While she suffered from blood in her waste for two months, she apparently progressed to the stage in which she believed she could be thankful for whatever was given by the divinity as a trial. In other words, she learned to tolerate or even accept a disease as a precious chance to achieve a step towards "wholeness", not simply as an automatic discharge of defilement through ritual as a mechanical procedure. Thus, repetitive and continuous performance of the purification ritual creates a long and educational process towards participation in the "wholeness" of the divine order. This process in SMBK brings one into the hierarchical order in spite of the egalitarian nature of the purification ritual in one complete performance.
RITUAL PERFORMANCE AT SMBK LOCAL CENTRES

In ritual, the performer "experiences" temporary one-ness with the divine order. In the beginning stage, his experience is only formal and behavioral; he imitates the ritual behaviour "as if" he had already reached the final stage of spontaneous action based on the SMBK paradigm. By doing this, he is brought to an awareness of the difference between his own "as if behaviour" and the spontaneous behaviour of more advanced performers. In other words, what is symbolically and temporarily realised in his own body in ritual conveys a message about spontaneity but it does not supply spontaneity. This ambivalent situation urges him to know a "real ritual performance" in contrast to his own "as if behaviour."

Submission to the ritual behavior constrains the performer in a particular way; he is made to assimilate the form first and then the content: the form is the ritual behaviour conditioned for a specific purpose and the content is the state of mind which designates the ritual behaviour as a spontaneous moral action. This is exactly the reason that the ritual learners believe that a proper understanding of self and world comes only through experiencing them not by reading about them. Experience here means a total
submission to the occasion, which is more than simply being present there. This is the reason why SMBK believers reject intellectuals and intellectual approaches to their doctrine.

Visiting a local centre for performing the purification ritual consists of a series of standardized behaviours, which itself may be referred to as ritual. The following list of activities at the local centre shows the normal procedure in one visit:

1. Entering the room

1.1 preparatory acts

1.1.1 signing an attendance notebook

1.1.2 writing a wish or words of thanks for the fulfillment of previous wishes on a small (about 10 x 20 cm.) slip of paper

1.1.3 picking up an envelope (about 15 x 25 cm.) which has the individual's name on it, and putting some donation (money) and the slip into it

1.2 prayer on arrival

1.2.1 putting the envelope on a long table in front of the shrine

1.2.2 prayer to the supreme divinity
   a) bowing twice
   b) clapping the hands three times
   c) making a wish from a bowing position
   d) clapping four times
   e) bowing once
f) bowing once very lightly

1.2.3 prayer to the creator of Japan
   a) bowing twice
   b) clapping three times
   c) making a wish from a bowing position
   d) bowing once very lightly

1.2.4 bowing once very lightly for Su no kami

1.3 Greeting other believers

   1.3.1 bowing, saying the standardized words for greeting (to which the other attendants respond)

2. Interval activities (free time)

3. Purification ritual

   3.1 Opening

      3.1.1 prayer to the supreme divinity (both performers together)
         a) bowing twice
         b) clapping the hands three times
         c) making a wish from the bowing position

      3.1.2 greeting one another, using the standardized words

   3.2 forehead purification (about ten minutes or longer)

      3.2.1 The passive performer - putting his hands in the prayer position and closing his eyes

      3.2.2 The active performer
a) clapping three times

b) chanting the Prayer of Heaven

c) putting his hand over the forehead of the passive performer, about a foot away, to transmit the divine light from its palm to the location of the central spirit of the passive performer. (The active performer may use either right or left hand, but is generally encouraged to use the right hand.31)

3.2.3 Ending

a) The active performer – announcing the ending of the forehead purification by pronouncing "calm down" three times, and telling the passive performer to open his eyes

b) The passive performer opening his eyes

c) The active performer – asking if the sight of the passive performer is clear

d) The passive performer – usually answering "yes" (If "No," the active performer pronounces "calm down" a few more times.)

3.3 "Healing" (about 40 minutes)

3.3.1 The passive performer – relaxes and tells his problems (disease, aching spots on the body, psychological or family problems)

3.3.2 The active performer – putting his hand over the vital points

3.4 Closing

3.4.1 (same as "opening" 3.1.1)
3.4.2 Thanking one another, using the standardized words

4. Interval activities (free time)

5. Leaving the room

5.1 prayer (same as the "prayer of arrival" given to the supreme divinity and the creator of the Japanese nation, 1.2.2, and 1.2.3)

5.2 Departure greeting to other believers – bowing and saying the standardized words for leaving

The interior of the local centre is organized to meet the requirements of SMBK standards. It has a shrine, a ritual room called dojo and a toilet. Usually it also has a kitchen, bathroom and a private room for a live-in teacher(s). In the Koganei local centre, for example, the interior of the apartment rented by SMBK is remodeled to fulfil the requirements: the screen-door partition between two bedrooms has been removed to combine the functions of a ritual room. The entire floor of the ritual room is covered with tatami mats, including the corridor (which is not a common arrangement for a regular Japanese residence.) The shrine covers one side of the wall. Although the shrine often looks like a wall decoration of the ritual room, the SMBK believers strictly distinguish the shrine from the rest of the room and treat it as another room. In fact, when the apartment is large and its ceilings are high, the shrine is made into a small room with an elevated floor. The size of the shrine varies a great
DIAGRAM 8: Koganei Local Centre

scroll statue

private room

kitchen facility
table
desk
pillar

ritual room

sink
bathroom
toilet

desk

superior

in inferior
deal, from centre to centre, but sometimes it is deeper than two metres and its floor is elevated about two-thirds of a metre above floor level. In the Koganei centre the shrine is about 3 metres high, 4 metres wide, half a metre deep, and is elevated about a half metre above the floor. The back wall of the shrine is covered with a golden wall-paper which brightly reflects the fluorescent light from the inside top of the shrine. During the night the shrine is hidden behind bamboo curtains. It is normally prohibited to step into this area. The interior arrangement of the shrine in the local centre is much simpler than that in the Main Headquarters. In the local centre, in the centre of the shrine there hangs a scroll on which some words are written in black ink by the leader of SMBK. The divine symbol is above the words. The scroll has two formats: when it is located on the top floor of the house with a regular roof, the full name of the supreme divinity is indicated. When it is located on the floor which has another floor(s) above it, or the building has a roof on which people can walk, the scroll simply indicates the words "divine light." The reason is that no one should walk over the name of the supreme divinity. A carved image of the divine creator of the Japanese nation is placed as a side figure beside the scroll. In front of the shrine is a low bench-like table to hold donations. These
are usually given in cash, but sometimes food or necessary materials to facilitate the centre are given.

Sections in the local centre are ranked according to their spiritual importance. The shrine is the superior section and the entrance the inferior. The statue of the creator of the Japanese nation is placed on the side of the scroll farthest away from the entrance. That is, if the entrance is on the left side of the shrine (and so is the scroll), the statue is located on the right side of the scroll - as it is in the Koganei local centre - and vice versa.

The positions of the ritual performers are defined by the shrine. At the beginning and end of the purification ritual both performers face the shrine and offer prayers. During purification, the active performer should show his back to the shrine so that the divine light, which is first received by the divine scroll, is then absorbed through the back of the active performer (not through the talisman). It radiates from his palm and penetrates the vital points of the passive performer. Crossing the invisible line of the divine light between the divine scroll and the back of the active performer is strictly prohibited. The teachers and believers are quite concerned about this prohibition, and give a warning everytime it is violated.

In the Koganei centre, there was a space which may
Performing the Purification Ritual outside the Local Centre

SMBK Shrine at the Koganei Local Centre
be called a side room. The facilities for the preparatory acts are kept on the desk in this room. The newly-arrived believers reported their attendance by placing their names in a notebook prepared for this purpose. From this notebook I later learned that the average daily attendance was about twenty persons. During the two and half years of my field-work at this centre, the number increased to approximately thirty-five a day. After registering their attendance, believers pick out their own envelope about 20 by 13 centimetres in size. These envelopes have the name of the believers written on them and they are kept in boxes according to the Japanese alphabetical order. Believers slipped a donation into the envelopes and a sheet of paper on which they wrote a wish or words of thanks for the fulfilment of their previous wishes. The words are standardized and some examples are shown on the desk (Diagram 8). The believers then proceeded to the shrine and placed their envelopes on a square, wooden container called sambō (typically used in Shinto) on a long low table. After an opening prayer they walked backward, still facing the shrine, to the other side of the ritual room and said the words of greeting, which are also highly standardized. Some started the purification ritual immediately, while others went back to the side room. They often sat around a table near the
DIAGRAM 9: Statement of Donation (before filled out)

statement of donation

Koganei local centre
name
Year, month, date
amount of money
DIAGRAM 10: Examples of the Statement of Donation Taken from Koganei Local Centre

STATEMENT OF A DONATION—for the protection of business

Great Su no Kami and Lord-teacher,

in spite of the economic depression, this month I have been able to serve many people through my business. With your support I am coming to a new month without any worry. Next month also, I will do my best as being an SMBK believer. Here, I would like to express my thankfulness for the past month.

STATEMENT OF A DONATION—for purification

Great Su no Kami and Lord-teacher,

I have received purification through diarrhea with acute pains for three days from (date). I understand it was divine clean-up of my body and my heart was filled with the feeling of blessing. I would like to serve even better to the divine prophecy. Here, I would like to express my true thankfulness.
desk, chatting and drinking tea. In the Koganei local centre, this space was so small (and also served as a hall leading to another section of the apartment) that it was always crowded with people, so creating an atmosphere of success and business.
INDIVIDUAL BELIEVER'S CONTACT WITH SMBK

In comparison with religious communes or village situations in which believers' daily life is contained within the religious settings, SMBK believers' exposure to SMBK is much more limited. For regular believers in SMBK, local centres offer most occasions for their formal activities. Table 4 shows the frequency of visits to the local centre. The table indicates that most respondents visit the local centre at least once a week. Half of them, (categories 2 + 3) do so more than once a week, and among these, 21% (category 3) visit more frequently than once every two days.

From my observations, the local centre attracts believers of different social categories according to the day of the week and the time of the day. On week days between ten a.m. and four p.m., the main category of those who also come are housewives, retired people and those temporarily off work due to some physical (or mental) problem. In contrast, starting from around six p.m. and finishing at nine p.m., when the local centre closes, the main attendants change to those on their way home from their regular jobs. Saturday afternoon is also the time for regular workers to visit the local centre, because companies commonly close at noon. As
most Sundays are taken up with monthly prayer sessions (first and second Sundays of the month) and other occasional gatherings (third and/or fourth Sunday(s) of the month), the local centre is almost deserted when it does not have such sessions or gatherings. Although the fourth (and sometimes fifth) Sundays can be used for the performance of the purification ritual at the local centre, believers apparently use them for other private purposes. This suggests that believers operate on a monthly, and probably weekly, schedule for their visits. According to Table 5, more than half of the respondents spent from 2 to 3 hours at the local centre per visit. There is a good reason for this: during a visit the believer expects to complete the purification ritual (1 hour and 40 minutes) and other pre- and post-ritual acts such as registering attendance, writing wishes and thanks, giving opening and closing prayers to the divinity, and greetings to others. Altogether, these take more than two hours. In addition, most believers like to converse with their friends, and often have a personal consultation on their own private problems with the head of the centre or the live-in teacher.

Believers who spend less than two hours at the centre (category 1) often participate in only a part of the purification ritual. However, this does not necessarily mean that they neglect the purification ritual, because this
ritual is commonly practised among friends outside the local centre. When believers prefer to perform the purification ritual with their friends, they visit the local centre for other purposes: (apart from the regular monthly prayer sessions) giving donations, attending study sessions, daily prayers in the morning for opening the centre and in the evening for its closing, etc. (The closing prayer is held at seven p.m. but the centre is still informally open until nine p.m. Some believers visit the centre regularly in order to attend this daily evening prayer.)

Some believers, presently suffering from intensive physical or mental problems, visit the centre almost every day and stay for six to ten hours. The divine light radiating from the shrine of the centre is said to be a good "cure" along with the daily performance of the purification ritual. The high percentage of respondents in category 3—those who spend more than three hours at the centre—can partly be attributed to the way in which this questionnaire was distributed; that is, through the local centre to its attendants. Although distribution occurred over a period of one month, those who were always around during this time would have had a better chance to answer the questionnaire, whereas some "busier" attendants likely overlooked or ignored it.
### TABLE 4: Frequency of Visiting the Local Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. about once a week</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>48.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. between category 1 and category 2</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>30.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. more often than every other day</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>21.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 5: The Average Length of Time Spent at the Local Centre for One Visit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Spent</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. less than 2 hours</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>14.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. 2 - 3 hours</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>55.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. more than 3 hours</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>29.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
sessions) giving donations, attending study sessions, daily prayers in the morning for opening the centre and in the evening for its closing, etc. (The closing prayer is held at seven p.m. but the centre is still informally open until nine p.m. Some believers visit the centre regularly in order to attend this daily evening prayer.)

Some believers, presently suffering from intensive physical or mental problems, visit the centre almost every day and stay for six to ten hours. The divine light radiating from the shrine of the centre is said to be a good "cure" along with the daily performance of the purification ritual. The high percentage of respondents in category 3--those who spend more than three hours at the centre--can partly be attributed to the way in which this questionnaire was distributed; that is, through the local centre to its attendants. Although distribution occurred over a period of one month, those who were always around during this time would have had a better chance to answer the questionnaire, whereas some "busier" attendants likely overlooked or ignored it.
NOTES

1. K. Arai, 1973, p. 231 (The quotations were translated from Japanese to English by K. Miyanaga.)

2. Kokutai was never clearly defined, but essentially it means "the national spirit," which was viewed collectively.


4. Tsushima, et. al., p. 83.

5. Ibid., p. 83.


7. See note 3 above.

8. Tsushima, p. 83.


10. Ibid., p. 231.


12. Ibid., p. 286.

14 Abe, p. 278.

15 Hayashi, et al., 1977, p. 67. (The quotations were translated by K. Miyanaga and S. Parr.)

16 Ibid., p. 68.

17 This aspect has been discussed as the process of secularisation under modernization by various people including Bryan Wilson, but it still remains controversial.


19 Ibid., p. 70.

20 D. Hellman, 1972, p. 146.

21 SMBK Intermediate Textbook.


23 This is an SMBK term indicating an apostate from the divine power.


25 The only exception is the Lord-savior's funeral anniversaries. His image is used for his commemoration.

26 Okada's wife left him when he started his movement, and his two children were raised by her.
27 Divinities do not usually possess human beings, except in rare cases like this one.

28 Y. Endō, 1978, pp. 42-45. (The quotation was translated by K. Miyanaga.)

29 This principle emphasizes the importance that in SMBK common-sense reasoning of the wider society should be reversed.

30 Endō, p. 45.

31 The reason for using the right hand for the transmission of the divine light is not clear. Since the left side of the body is considered to be more spiritual, some believers wonder why it is not the left side, for which no answer is provided. Teachers say that the reason has not been revealed.
CHAPTER III: SMBK SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

HIERARCHY

AND

EGALITARIANISM
The two-fold definition of the purification ritual described in Chapter II is also expressed in SMBK social organization. The purification ritual is egalitarian in each performance, but the continuous repetition of its performance creates upward mobility towards forming a hierarchy. In the SMBK membership organization, formal organization is a hierarchy of status, whereas informal organization is a friendship network and is egalitarian. Egalitarian orientation in informal organization is attained through role reversal in the purification ritual, and equal chance for achieving a higher status in competition. However, the degree of mastery in the same ritual differentiates the status in the formal organization. Upward mobility attained on the basis of the shift of emphasis in the purification ritual from the passive role to the active role corresponds to the shift in membership from informal organization to formal organization. Therefore, upward mobility means more commitment to the hierarchical order in the SMBK religious system. This process also means assimilation of the SMBK paradigm, because the formal organization is an expression of the paradigm, whereas the informal organization may not be.

For a full understanding of social organization,
DIAGRAM 11: Formal and Informal Organizations Based on the Difference in the Type of Membership

the wider society

SMBK

formal organization

= SMBK paradigm

(upward mobility)

informal organization
both formal and informal dimensions should be investigated. With regard to Japanese society, this suggestion was first made by Chie Nakane. In her daring attempt to present an overall generalization of Japanese society, she says as follows:

It is in informal systems rather than in overt cultural elements that persistent factors are to be found. The informal system, the driving force of Japanese activities, is a native Japanese brew, steeped in a unique characteristic of Japanese culture. In the course of modernization Japan imported many western cultural elements, but these were and are always partial and segmentary and are never in the form of an operating system. It is like a language with its basic indigenous structure or grammar which has accumulated a heavy overlay of borrowed vocabulary; while the outlook of Japanese society has suffered drastic changes over the past hundred years, the basic social grammar has hardly been affected. Here is an example of industrialization and the importation of western culture not affecting changes in the basic cultural structure.

The above paragraph, taken from Nakane, represents an opinion shared by some Japanese intellectuals concerning democratization after the end of World War II in 1945. That is, democracy, primarily viewed as a Western property, had been imported and merely superimposed over the Japanese indigenous social and cultural system. Above all, the latter persistently remained as the informal but operational structure of the society, whereas the former became only its formal and "fashionable" aspect. Therefore, whenever the
indigenous structure appeared dominant in a particular social organization—although it was argued to be the regular case—it was asserted as evidence of a failure in democratization and criticized as anti-democratic. Among those condemned as anti-democratic, religious movements have been particularly subject to this criticism.

In order to strengthen her argument, Nakane developed a unique structural analysis which became quite influential in Japan soon after it was published in 1976. According to her:

An organization which has its basis on the function of the "vertical" line is different from the organization which has its function in the "horizontal" line, or in both "horizontal" and "vertical" lines.

First, we explain this by positing two groups with different structures, X (vertical) and Y (horizontal). Suppose that both consist of the same number of members, a, b, and c. Y makes a triangle, and X a triangle without a bottom (see Diagram I).

Diagram I

```
 X     Y
   a
  b\  c
  a
 b--c
```
When they develop their organization, they become as in Diagram II, and their difference is now more distinctive. The differences between these two are that the members of X are related to each other only through a, but the members of Y are related directly to each other, and that X is open to the outside, whereas Y is closed.

Diagram II

![Diagram II](image)

Her point is this: in the horizontal organization (Y) each member is equal under the same rule, whereas in the vertical organization (X) a hierarchy is formed as the sum of each superior-inferior human relationship. Therefore, in the latter the rule can be no more than an arbitrary (even temporary) agreement between the two persons involved in a direct relationship, so it fails to stand universally above all the members. In other words, the members of the same organization
do not share the same rule. As a result, human relationships in the vertical organization (X) become emotional, whereas in the horizontal organization (Y) they are rational.

However, a few aspects in her analysis remains confusing. One of them is its objective. It has not been made completely clear if her analysis is directed to extract a general pattern for Japanese social organization or if she is trying to build a model of vertical social organization using Japanese society as an example. Although the model could be built through the extraction of the Japanese patterns, the distinction remains essential. In the case of the Japanese patterns the major problem is the applicability of the extracted pattern to Japanese society, whereas in the case of the model of the vertical social organization the priority should be given to the theoretical consistency as a model.

Assuming that her objective is the extraction of the Japanese patterns, Nobuhiro Nagashima summarizes the counter-arguments given by other Japanese scholars as follows:

> Relationships based on personal submission such as oyabun-kobun [a superior-inferior human relationship maintained by a quasi-parent child relationship involving a sense of intimacy and close care] apply only to the relatively newly developed villages in Northeast Japan (which were taken as the model for the vertical social group). In the villages in Southwest Japan, voluntary groups based on individual commitment, such as kō [a religious organization traditionally formed for the purpose of pilgrimage to sacred rites] have developed.
Nagashima's point against Nakane is that the vertical organization is historically new and limited to particular areas in Japan. Therefore, he argues, it cannot be a general and a historical pattern applicable to all Japan.

If we assume that Nakane's objective is an attempt to build a model of vertical social organization, the above criticism does not invalidate her argument. For, whatever the variety and distribution of social organizations, if the vertical organization blocks democracy, the essential problem should be found in the fact that the nature of vertical organization is irrational. This point requires a re-examination of rationality, and inevitably goes beyond simply extracting a general pattern for Japanese social organization.

A more theoretical problem in Nakane's analysis is that the distinction between formal and informal structures or systems is not clearly made. In her own examples, some Japanese social organizations apparently show the syndrome of vertical organization in her sense in their formal aspects, although Nakane claims that she has extracted this from their informal aspects. This theoretical inconsistency in her analysis is not accidental, for, as I said before, she identifies the democratic system of Japanese society and its formal organizations as the same phenomenon which together are
simply superimposed over the informal structure. This assertion inevitably made her ignore the active and functional relationship between the formal and informal aspect of the social organization. This chapter will show how formal and informal organizations in SMBK are braided into one another.

Nakane's theory overlooks the possibility that existing informal organizations may be the product of synthesis after modernization. The pre-modern literature provides us with some evidence that pre-modern Japanese society was built on **on** and **giri** which indicate ascriptive social rules of reciprocal human relationships. With modernization, Japanese society became regulated by more abstract rules such as laws of State. Ruth Benedict reports how reciprocity was incorporated into the laws by the modern Japanese Government before the end of World War II. After the War, the consensus of the rules of reciprocity was lost. However, reciprocal human relationships remained as a personal custom. The following example should illustrate the need for operational morality to regulate human relationships in daily life. An SMBK believer, female and eighteen years old, answered my question concerning whether she had changed since she had joined SMBK:

Before I joined SMBK, I was only copying my
mother. I gave gifts to my friends on their birthdays and other occasions, because she said it (x=keeping friendship by gift giving) was proper. But, since I joined SMBK, I realized the meaning of friendship, and noticed that my (previous) acts had been only formal and had no heart. I no longer give gifts because occasions require them.

The answer above indicates that the believer still maintains the same gift-giving custom, but that she believes that SMBK gives her moral support. The same situation should apply to a number of people who join religious movements based on moral campaigns such as JRKK (see p. 177) and Itto En.

Therefore, what Nakane sees as emotional or irrational is the lack of operational morality which should combine the democratic ideal, social organization and human relationships in daily life. However, Nakane presents an in-depth analysis of the post-War general situation of Japanese society, although this analysis may not have been her original intention. To this general situation, the SMBK social organization responded in the following aspects: formal organization is overtly hierarchical and is substantiated with power and knowledge; informal organization is egalitarian; the formal and informal organizations are functionally combined to each other. This chapter will describe the differences and the relationship between the formal and informal organizations of SMBK,
FORMAL HIERARCHY OF POWER AND KNOWLEDGE

In SMBK, formal organization is not merely nominal; it has specific functions. Among clerics, it is the hierarchy of power and knowledge. The clerics are differentiated according to the distribution of power for decision making and execution of the decision. The differentiation is organized to form a parallel to the SMBK cosmology. Consequently, the formal organization becomes part of SMBK divine order, and is an expression of the SMBK paradigm. However, among regular believers the differentiation is not directly associated with power. In this sense, the formal organization for them is more ideological than substantial. Because it is assumed as a part of divine order, both for the clerics and for the regular believers, the status gaps are legitimized by the degree of exposure to the divine knowledge.

Diagram 12 was drawn by one of the Directors, and represents the SMBK believers' general recognition of their organization.

Diagram 12

Lord-teacher

--- Directors (at Head Quarters) ---

local centre    local centre    local centre
Although Diagram 12 gives the impression that the local centres are under the direct control of the Lord-teacher, and that the Directors occupy an advisory position, the formal organization, in reality, functions differently. We may be able to abstract its hierarchy as follows:

**Diagram 13**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lord-teacher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Directors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heads of local centres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clerics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students-in-practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate-students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular believers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at the advanced intermediate elementary levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>administration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Lord-teacher

The present leader of the SMBK organization is Lord-teacher Sekiguchi. Although he is doctrinally identified as a regular human being, as is clearly said in the elementary lecture session, regular believers treat him like a (non-human) divinity. They call him by the title "Lord-teacher" not by his name. This is a common way in Japan to show extreme respect for a superior, which primarily applies to the Emperor who used to be treated as a divinity and still is in SMBK. Also, Sekiguchi as the Lord-teacher of SMBK is shielded from outsiders. Even the regular SMBK believers have only a limited access to him. They see him regularly in the ceremonial gatherings but have almost no chance to speak to him personally. Sometimes, when he is invited to a celebration at a local centre, they may be able to sit close and greet him rather casually but a long personal conversation does not spontaneously develop. In order to be personally close to him, the regular believers have to gain special attention based on an excellent contribution to SMBK.

2. Clerics

Under the Lord-teacher, there exists a wide status gap between the body of clerics and the regular believers. The body of clerics consists of the Directors, the Heads of local centres and the teaching staff. For example, some
paragraphs of divine words recited during a special ritual to purify a defiled divine object, such as a talisman, are known only among the clerics. Furthermore, the Directors and most Heads are long-standing members of SMBK who were taught directly by their deceased first leader, Lord-savior Okada (now considered to have been elevated to a divinity). They are generally believed to have been personally recognized by him as masters of the doctrine. Also, the regular believers register their membership only at the local centres. This means that their recognition in the organization is obscure. In contrast, the clerical members register their names at the Main Headquarters and are given much closer attention.

The above categories contain further categorization within themselves: the body of clerics is separated into two groups: administration and the teaching staff. The difference between these two is not only doctrinal, but whereas the former monopolizes the power of decision making, the teaching staff is generally excluded from it.

3. Administration

Administration consists of the Directors as senior executives, and the Heads of local centres as junior executives. The major decisions are normally made by Directors with the Lord-teacher's approval. Heads are
permitted to make minor decisions to execute order given by the Directors. When the Board of Clerics meets once a month, the Directors and Heads give reports on their own centres and receive new orders from the Lord-teacher. The teaching staff may attend, and are permitted to ask questions, but do not participate in decisions. Status among the Directors is differentiated from spiritual to secular. The status differentiation among the administrative members is typically shown in the seating order at the meeting of the Board of Clerics and also in prayer sessions. In 1980, the positions of Area Directors were considered to be informal, and the seven seats of formal directorship were distributed to only two persons. This was a temporary arrangement following the split of the SMBK movement in 1978 - "until proper persons grow". These two directors were also appointed to be the Heads of the local centre. Some Heads were appointed for more than one centre. The criterion for the plural appointment seemed to be based on personal recognition rather than a clear-cut principle.

In 1982, the positions of directorship were reorganized, and thirteen positions including Area Directors which were now formal were distributed to twelve people. Above these regular Directors, two positions of Division Directors were occupied by Mr. Tanaka, one of few oldest followers of the founder of SMBK, and Mr. K. Sekiguchi, a son
of the present leader of SMBK.

Thus, the positions of directorship were organized as follows in 1982:

Sūkyō Kyokuchō (常務局長) - Division Director of Religious Affairs

Shinji Buchō (神事部長) - Director of the Divine Matter

responsibility: general planning of prayer occasions

Fukyō Buchō (布教部長) - Director of Mission

responsibility: mission activity

Kōhō Buchō (広報部長) - Director of Publicity

responsibility: publicity

Kunren Kyōgaku Buchō (教育培養部長) - Director of Education and Training

responsibility: training of the teaching staff

Jimu Kyokuchō (事務局長) - Division Director of Secular Affairs

Keiri Buchō (經理部長) - Director of Management

responsibility: finance and accounting

Sōmu Buchō (総務部長) - Director of General Affairs

responsibility: miscellaneous work

Shōgai Buchō (外交部長) - Director of External Affairs

responsibility: interaction with the government and other groups outside SMBK
Area Directors (six Directors)

responsibility: close supervision of local centres within the area

The status differentiation among Heads depends on the sizes of the local centres to which they are assigned—because the sizes of the local centres vary greatly: some have a number of branches whereas others do not. Therefore, Heads compete with one another to expand their own centres.

4. Teaching staff

The teaching staff does not participate in the process of making new decisions, but executes the given decisions over regular believers. The staff is highly respected by the regular believers for its profound knowledge of SMBK doctrine and skills in the purification ritual. Also, it is a Japanese social custom to respect a person in any teaching position, which is also effective in SMBK. Through the live-in style of service at the local centre, the staff is always available for close and frequent contact with the regular believers. They are directed by the teaching staff to accept the given decisions as part of the divine order.

The teaching staff is differentiated into four status levels: teachers (dōshi), assistant teachers (dōshi hō), students-in-practice (jisshu sei), and candidate-
students of the SMBK school (kunren sei). Of these, candidate-students do not have status differentiation among themselves. The other three categories of the teaching staff become differentiated according to the size and importance of the local centre to which they are assigned. The distribution of the teaching staff to a local centre is made in such a way that no more than one person occupies the same status or position at one time.

5. Regular believers

The SMBK regular believers form a three-leveled hierarchy based on the degree of exposure to the doctrine. (See Diagram 4). The status differentiation is not directly associated with power. Each level begins with a three-day intensive lecture session on the doctrine given by the clerical members. The status of the lecturer differs according to the level of the session, so the hierarchy based on knowledge becomes visualized: the elementary lecture is given by the teaching staff who have been trained at the SMBK school. The intermediate and advanced sessions are given by the Directors.

The content of the teaching focuses on a different aspect of the doctrine at each level, although it gives quite a scattered impression to the initial attendants. The central focus of the elementary session is on moral stories built on
the idea of spirit possession, in which possessing spirits and ancestral spirits appear as the moral enforcers. The intermediate session presents the image of the cosmos as a product of creation by the supreme divinity called Su no Kami, and explains how, within this universe, the orientation given by him determines the way all living and non-living beings should go. And the most advanced session focusses on the Japanese as the chosen nation to realize a new divine civilization, a heaven on earth, after the eschatological end of the present world. In brief, the elementary session concentrates on operational morality, the intermediate session on cosmology, and the advanced session on prophecy. These three sessions are functionally related for the believer to become a "real" SMBK faithful, the cosmology, which is the core of the SMBK doctrine given at the intermediate level, provides the believer with an identity by locating him at a specific position in the divine cosmos viewed as a pantheon. Within this pantheon he is one of the lowest-ranking divinities. This level of teaching is highly integrated. However, it is also highly abstract because it is remote from the empirical phenomenon of his life. For this reason, the elementary session provides an operational morality, that is, a bundle of moral principles contained in the moral stories in the form of fragmented images. The believer, when he is first exposed
to the SMBK doctrine, learns to apply such fragments to his daily life activities and human relationships. This works in two ways. It ensures him of a flexibility in his choice of action, because it permits a wide range of interpretation. Also, it stimulates his natural curiosity. Here, let me present an analogy: assembling fragmented images in an attempt to find a consistent picture is like solving a jigsaw puzzle. The advanced session re-assures the individual's attention towards collective action as a religious movement, though he has already been a part of it ever since he first become involved in the SMBK organization.

The mastering of each session is considered highly honourable. The status difference is expressed by the size of the talisman and pin given at the end of each session. At the end of the elementary session each believer is given these as proof that he has been initiated. Both are exchanged for larger ones each time the believer progresses to the next level.

Obtaining permission to attend a higher level session becomes increasingly difficult. An elementary session can be held at any local centre when it has gathered more than ten new attendants, and several centres regularly provide monthly sessions. Attending the three days of this session is identified as an initiation to SMBK, so it is completely
open to anyone, whether or not he has already been involved in some ritual occasion. In contrast, both intermediate and advanced sessions are held only at the Main Headquarters in front of the Central Shrine. The intermediate session is given only once or twice a year, and the advanced session only every one or two years. An application to attend these two sessions must be approved by the head of the respective local centre, and the common interval between attending the first session and applying for the second is about two years, depending on the progress of each applicant. Often, for a while after attending the intermediate session, the believer becomes discouraged and skips applying to the advanced level once or twice, until finally he pushes himself to do it. Equally often, or even more commonly, the believer is discouraged and gives up trying to go on to the higher levels, so that the achievement of access to the advanced level, or even of the intermediate level, is quite an accomplishment.

In SMBK, the assimilation of doctrine is always related to ritual actions; the aforementioned three sessions correspond to three sets of rituals and ceremonies: the purification ritual, the group prayers, and the family rituals. The way they are organized is rather complicated. First of all, the purification ritual constitutes the core. It is most directly related to all three levels of the educational
procedure: at the elementary level (between the elementary and intermediate sessions) the basic requirement may be limited to the mastery of a formal performance. But above this level the believer should be able to actively communicate with the possessing spirit. Beyond this level, the ultimate goal of the ritual is for the believer to become a master of his own spirit. Therefore, the mastery of this ritual technique is considered to a personal realization of the doctrine, and the extent of the mastery of the doctrine is considered to be reflected in the mastery of the ritual. In other words, the mastery of performance are identified as an indication of present spiritual state and his progress in the assimilation of the doctrine.

The second set of rituals includes the group prayer sessions. They consist of various kinds of annual conventions and two monthly prayer sessions, one at the Main Headquarters, and the other at the local centres. These ritual occasions are dedicated to expressing submission to the divine order of the supreme divinity and his cosmos at a public occasion. They are in sharp contrast with the purification ritual. Whereas the purification ritual is reciprocally-oriented, and therefore more egalitarian in nature. In contrast, group prayer sessions reflect the status and positional differences of the believers and are therefore more hierarchical. This
means that the prayer sessions are the realization of the divine order on earth, here and now, by the divine agency SMBK. They offer a chance for the believers to visualize the SMBK cosmology and the beauty and dignity it contains. Therefore, the group prayer sessions are almost exclusively related to the intermediate level in which the cosmology is taught. In spite of this, however, all the believers are required to attend these prayer sessions from the very beginning of their joining SMBK, or sometimes even before they join. But for those still remaining at the elementary level, before the exposure to the cosmology, the whole prayer session may likely appear puzzling. This is another reason why believers' curiosity for higher knowledge is aroused.

The third set includes the family rituals. They are mainly of two kinds: one is the daily performance of a memorial rite to show respect to the family ancestors, and the other a daily prayer given to the supreme divinity and other divinities. Although they also take place in the family setting, I will exclude funerals, weddings, and private performances of the purification ritual, for the first two are too unpredictable to be woven into the educational curriculum, while the purification ritual should be categorized in the first set, regardless of the site where it is performed. The performance of the ancestral rite requires learning the
routine SMBK way of doing it and also the preparation of a specifically equipped family altar. Every new believer, usually after but sometimes even before the first elementary initiation session, is strongly pressured to prepare the SMBK altar. Since giving much respect to the ancestral spirits in the required way is considered as practising the elementary level of the doctrine, a consistent performance of the rite is considered a good basis on which to judge whether the believer is ready to go on to the next level. Permission to advance to the intermediate level without installation of the SMBK altar is exceptional.
INFORMAL FRIENDSHIP NETWORK

In SMBK, informal membership organization is a friendship network and functions to maintain group cohesion among regular believers. The network expands on the basis of formation of person-to-person ties, which is a common phenomenon in Japanese society. The ties are formed through frequent and direct contact which creates an intimate atmosphere. Through the close relationship, regular believers satisfy not only their psychological needs but also their practical needs (such as finding jobs). They meet regularly on public occasions mainly at the local centre and also at the Main Headquarters. However, they also meet privately on any excuse, mainly to perform the purification ritual. They meet because they intend to perform this ritual, but also they perform it whenever they meet. The egalitarian orientation of the SMBK informal organization depends largely on the nature of the purification ritual. It is structured to achieve equality by exchanging unequal roles and so making the performers equivalent to each other.

Membership among the regular believers is maintained through the informal organization. In point of fact, the regular believer can maintain his membership solely on
informal human relationships without fulfilling formal obligations that require him to appear regularly at the local centre. As long as he maintains his informal relationships, he will never be forgotten in the SMBK organization.

The formal registration for SMBK membership among regular believers is rather casual; the local centre merely records the name, address, and telephone number of each believer, while the Main Headquarters keeps no record of individual members. To maintain his formal membership, the believer is obligated to appear at the local centre as often as possible on such occasions as purification rituals, various prayer sessions, some voluntary activities (e.g. publishing a local centre newsletter, etc.), and recreational activities (e.g. athletic meetings, picnic outings to historical sites which have special spiritual meaning for SMBK believers). When a regular believer tries to withdraw from the SMBK movement, he has to withdraw from his informal human relationships. Formal membership will vanish automatically when he stops going to his local centre. This makes dropping-out from SMBK much easier than other religious organizations in which similar person-to-person ties are also formally recognized. For example, an SMBK believer who intends to leave the organization may first shift the site of the purification ritual from personal occasions to the local centre. By doing so,
he can reduce contact with his SMBK friends. His friends may mistake his change for a sign of more active commitment to the SMBK religious system, because, doctrinally, performing the purification ritual at the local centre is more desirable than performing it among friends. Once he has become obscure among his friends, he can also disappear from the local centre without attracting much attention to his withdrawal.

In 1979, during my fieldwork, a formal division of the believers of the local centre into small groups of 20-30 persons (called han) was abolished because it failed to create a cohesive and efficient communication network among the believers. This system was ineffectual because another informal organization based on person-to-person ties between the believers was, in reality, functioning more effectively. The way in which these ties were formed is typically shown in Nakane's diagram of vertical social groups, especially when based on the recruiter-recruit relationship. Through the close contact in the recruitment activities, the recruiter develops a good understanding of, and cohesive relationship with, the recruit. The recruiter's practical knowledge of the recruit's life style permitted a swift transmission of messages from the local centre through the person-to-person ties to the bottom-ranked believers. (See Diagram 14). The failure in the formal grouping (han) was caused by the
unsuccessful linkage among believers already woven into the person-to-person ties to other independent believers who did not have a recruiter.

Diagram 14

Table 6 shows that nearly 50% of the respondents (category 1) maintain intimate relationships with their recruiter after becoming believers. In my observations, these people develop personal relationships based on frequent mutual visits, occasional exchange of gifts, and personal consultation including informal talks on private matters. The purification ritual plays a large role in this relationship, for, in principle, it has to be performed as often as once a day, and its performance requires a partner. It gives a good reason for an active believer to visit other believers and potential believers. Once the believer is woven into this relationship, he tends to be highly dependent on the feeling of intimacy
Table 6

Question: What relationship do you personally have with your recruiter?

Answer:

1. (intimate relationship) I have a very close relationship. I see him/her often, have a private conversation and ask for personal consultation.

2. (close relationship) I often see him/her at the centre and also privately, but I do not talk about personal matters.

3. (fairly close relationship) I see him/her at the local centre and enjoy partnership for the purification ritual.

4. (formal relationship only) I see him/her at the monthly prayer sessions.

5. (remote relationship) I rarely see him/her.

6. (family member) My recruiter is my own family member.

7. (publication) I was attracted to SMBK through the publicity activities, therefore, I have no recruiter.

8. other

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of relationships</th>
<th>Number of Respondants</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. intimate</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>47.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. close</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. fairly close</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. formal</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. remote</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>13.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. family member</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>17.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. publicity</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>7.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. others</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with his recruiter, and to be secured to the SMBK organization through friendship.

Category 6 (The respondent's recruiter is his own family member - 17%) may be added to category 1. (The recruiter and recruit keep an intimate relationship.) However, the recruiter-recruit relationship in the same family does not necessarily involve such an intimate activity as personal consultation on private matters. Sometimes the whole family joins SMBK so that harmony and peace in the household are maintained. In such a case, the degree of involvement in SMBK varies among the family members; the recruiter is likely a dedicated believer but other members' involvement in the SMBK activities may be lower than the recruiter or even be a compromise. Nevertheless, in spite of the variety of involvement among the family members, category 6 (17%) will constitute a part of the informal organization. Their family tie keeps them physically close and the recruiter will not lose his recruits as long as the family is maintained. Thus, the informal tie in the SMBK organization covers about 64% of the believers.

However, some problems remain. About 20% of the respondents (3 + 4 + 5) have failed to establish an intimate relationship with the recruiter, thereby becoming potential
dropouts. About 10% \((7 + 9)\) may be active believers but unfortunately do not have recruiters. Category 7 has been attracted by SMBK publicity through the Main Headquarters, while category 8 consists mostly of those who lost contact with their recruiters because they have either died or moved to a remote place. The believers who do not have recruiters are not necessarily inactive in doctrinal assimilation. However, they tend to drop out, because they often fail to receive the necessary information to attend important but irregular activities. They often become too isolated from common privileges given through intimate interpersonal relationships.

Morioka reports on this aspect of organization in his close study of Kōsei-kai.\(^{12}\) This religious movement first achieved a rapid increase in its membership through the formation of vertical ties based on the recruiter-recruit relationship. However, it had to reform its basic organizational orientation from vertical ties to residential groupings, because the maintenance of recruiter-recruit relationship became increasingly difficult due to a great internal mobility which was gained as the movement expanded. For example,

... In consequence of this reform 84 numbered Tokyo branches gave up all their non-Tokyo members, formally dissolved themselves, and
then reorganized themselves into 25 branches bearing Tokyo ward names ... 13

It appears to be a rule in the religious movement that, with the expansion of the movement, the person-to-person network has to be reorganized on the basis of regional grouping. In SMBK, in 1982, when the social organization was reformed, six Area Directors were newly assigned, Japan was divided into six areas, and the local centres under each area came to belong to a new category of "Area."

In another example, the case of Sōka Gakkai, each believer belongs simultaneously to the recruiter-recruit hierarchy and residential groupings. Membership of both is obligatory. Diagram 15 taken from my M.A. paper shows the basic structure. The recruiter-recruit hierarchy is one of Nakane's typical vertical social organizations, and the residential grouping at the level of gurūpu (group) is egalitarian (close to Nakane's model of horizontal social organization). The bilateral orientation of the Sōka Gakkai organization, in which one person is doubly defined, is also apparent in SMBK.

However, as its human relationships based on recruitment remain informal, the SMBK organization has different characteristics from those of Sōka Gakkai. In contrast to other religious movements (including Sōka Gakkai) where the recruiter-recruit relationship is a vertical one
Diagram 15

SOKA GAKKAI ORGANIZATION (obligatory to all members)

Sakubuku Line;  

(1) Sōgō Honbu (Central Head Quarter) 
↓ 

(2) Chihō Honbu (District Head Quarter) 
↓ 

(3) Sō Shibu (Branches) 
↓ 

(4) Chiku (Sections) 
↓ 

(5) Han (Sub-sections) 
↓ 

(6) Kumi (Circles under recruiters)

(Model of Organization)

Residential Grouping: Sōgō Burokku (Integrating Blocks) 
↓ 
Sō Burokku (Collective Blocks) 
↓ 
Dai Burokku (Big Blocks) 
↓ 
Shō Burokku (Small Blocks) 
↓ 
Gurūpu (Groups)
(analogous to the parent-child relationship in which there is irreversible superior-inferior orientation), in SMBK, the superior-inferior relationship is made ambiguous through the practice of the purification ritual in which the superior and inferior roles are exchanged. As the purification ritual is repeatedly performed and the recruit becomes familiar with the idea of role reversal, the recruit usually begins to extend the egalitarian implication of the role reversal into other aspects of his relationship with his recruiter. When the recruit attains the advanced level, he often formally achieves equal status with his recruiter, or possibly even higher status if his recruiter has not reached that level. In this way, the initial vertical orientation between the recruiter and recruit changes into a more egalitarian friendship as time passes. When the recruiter and recruit meet at the local centre, for example, it is not usually possibly to distinguish superiors from inferiors by their manners. This does not mean, however, that they have forgotten their recruitment relationship or that they are not polite or not concerned with status. In fact, the SMBK believers often appear old-fashioned in the eyes of liberals not only because the believers behave differently according to their status but also because they justify their acts of differentiation. Thus, among the regular believers, formal status differen-
tiation and informal friendship coexist; this relationship permits the individual believer to interpret his position in various combinations (in his act and awareness).
UPWARD MOBILITY

For individual believers, the relationship between social organization and ideology is a continuing and emergent process moving towards participation in "wholeness" of divine order, and accordingly, deeper engagement in the SMBK paradigm. Upward mobility is a flow of believers within the hierarchy of power and knowledge. SMBK offers two accesses for upward mobility: the regular access for the majority of believers and the access through teaching under more restrictive conditions.

1. Regular access

Upward mobility for regular believers means to join the body of clerics (Seep.124 for definition) through successful recruitment activities. (Diagram 4). This also means that believers achieve membership through the more direct participation in SMBK divine order presumably embodied in the formal organization, rather than through the informal and egalitarian friendship network. Thus, believers experience their interpersonal relationships becoming increasingly hierarchical as they climb up the strata.

The goal of upward mobility for the regular believer is to become the Head of a local centre. Usually
after reaching the advanced level the owner of a family shrine is encouraged to invite his recruits and personal friends (considered as potential believers) to his family prayer occasions and to the purification ritual. If he is successful, his home is made into an o-kiyome-jo (purification site), a formal branch belonging to his local centre. When the number of believers of his own branch centre reaches 100, it achieves independence from its superior local centre and itself becomes a new local centre. The owner of the shrine normally becomes its Head. Therefore, the executive positions are in principle equally accessible to all regular believers.

Achievement rate in upward mobility among regular believer is as follows (See Diagram 16):

Table 7 shows that about 80% of the respondents to the questionnaire have installed the SMBK family altar. (They will be mentioned as "holder.") The table also shows that about 15% have not installed the altar. (They will be mentioned as "non-holder.") About 5% who have responded to this questionnaire but did not answer this particular question should be included in the category of non-holder, because the question allows only a yes/no answer. Also, some believers told me that they did not answer because they felt too ashamed to reveal the fact that they had not installed the altar. Therefore, the ratio between the holder and non-
DIAGRAM 16: Membership Differences in SMBK

SMBK

clerics

core group

advanced level

20 %

shrine holders

transitional intermediate group

intermediate level

40 %

altar holders

peripheral group

elementary level

20 %

20 %

"hangers-on"

Japanese society
holder is 80% and 20%. Furthermore, Table 8 shows that the number of the elementary-level believers approximates 40% of the total respondents. This indicates that the elementary level believers consist of 20% holders and 20% non-holders. That is, the first 20% have no ambition for upward mobility, because the installation of the altar is a major requirement for advancement, whereas another half have already fulfilled it.

Concerning the membership composition in a religious movement in Japan, Morioka says:

A New Religious movement consists of two principal parts: a core group composed of followers who continually participate in the activities of the movement, and a peripheral group composed of those who cease to participate after a short time. In addition, one can distinguish a transitional intermediate group.

Accepting Morioka's generalization, the non-holders of the family altar, the bottom 20% of the SMBK movement should be defined as a peripheral group. This group should also consist of a number of potential drop-outs. The annual turn-over of membership at the local centre in SBMK is quite high. At the Koganei local centre, for example, it is as high as 80%. This means that about 20 people out of 100 newly initiated annual stay at this centre. (At this centre about ten people attend the elementary lecture session each time. The session is held once a month at most and about 10 to 11
TABLE 7: Question "Have you installed the SMBK family altar?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No answer</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>583</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Number of respondents to the questionnaire.

TABLE 8: The level of the lecture session of the respondent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. elementary level</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. intermediate level</td>
<td>209</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. advanced level</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. below elementary level</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>583</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 9: Question "Have you installed the SMBK family shrine?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Yes</td>
<td>401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. No</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. No answer</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>583</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>68.78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.00%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
times a year.) A large portion of the bottom 20% of the respondents ("peripheral group") representing the peripheral group should also overlap with a substantial part of the 80% turn-over. In other words, the members in the bottom 20% change constantly. This high turn-over rate is one reason why the Main Headquarters does not keep a record of regular believers. The up-to-date record is possible only at the local centre level.

Installing a family shrine is a great honour for the family, because it is permitted only to the believer who has been recognized as a master of the ritual and the doctrine at all three levels. Thus, Table 8 shows that about 21% of the respondents to the questionnaire have installed the family shrine. This corresponds to the figures in Table 2 which shows that about 21% have finished the advanced-level lecture session. If we follow Morioka's distinction, these 21% are the core group which has reached the highest level among the regular believers. They have a good chance to promote themselves to be Heads of their own local centres. Since about another 20% constitute the peripheral group, the remaining 60% may be defined as the "transitional intermediate" group. This group aspires to a higher status. However, the turn-over rate of this group is not clear to me. I was told that sometimes the Head of the local centre permits a believer of
the intermediate level to install a family shrine if the Head recognizes him as an exceptionally good believer. Such a case appears to be a real exception, and it does not show in the statistics.

2. Access through teaching

In 1982, six directors out of twelve, and thirteen Heads of local centres out of one hundred and ten, were former teachers. The reason why as many as half the number of Directors were former teachers was that the original followers of the founder of SMBK were all considered to be teachers.

Those who wish to be on the teaching staff are asked to start their career by living in the SMBK school for one year for intensive training. During this period, ideally, they should be segregated from any outside influence including that of their families.

The SMBK school started in 1975. The number of the students in the annual curriculum for the first four years since 1975 was about four. However, since 1979, it has jumped to forty-five. In 1981, forty nine students were admitted, and forty-six graduated. In 1982, the number of students-in-practice is forty-six, that of the assistant teacher thirty-seven, and that of the teacher seventy-one.
Oharai-sai: the Lord-teacher and believers

(From Mahikari Magazine, 1982, January)
The admittance procedure to the SMBK school is as follows: The basic qualification for application is that the applicant is presently a believer. The entrance examination is given only once a year. It is in two parts, and all believers are notified of its dates and conditions through the local centres. The two parts of the examination are: a comprehensive examination on the secular and divine knowledge (5:00-7:00 p.m. normally after Oharai-sai\textsuperscript{15} in December); and an oral examination on personality (5:00-7:00 p.m. normally after Risshun-sai\textsuperscript{16} in February). The comprehensive examination is given to test the applicant's ability to master the SMBK doctrine and to teach it to others in the future. The desirable personality, revealed by the oral examination, is harmonious, spiritual, and practical. The harmonious aspect is important because teaching staff are expected to "live in" the local centre and the candidate has to prepare for this through the collective process of education at the SMBK school. The practical aspect of personality is another important requirement, because the SMBK school tries to avoid those who separate theory and practice as two unrelated spheres of life. The SMBK believers consider this type of person to be one who "learns by head not by body." This means that he can understand but does not act on his understanding, or does not even imagine that a change in under-
standing requires a change in action. The SMBK people tend to
dismiss this type of person as an intellectual.

Those applicants who have passed the entrance
examination receive a notice by mail in March and then begin
one year of further training. The curriculum is divided into
two periods, one from April to September (or October) and the
other from October (or November) to March.17 (The former may
be called "the first term" and the latter "the second term"
for convenience.) From 1979 to 1980, the SMBK school
curriculum ran as follows: in the first term the SMBK school
students, called kunren-sei (candidate-students), were ordered
to live in the school building in Tokyo. In the mornings they
attended a lecture on doctrine, and in the afternoons they
were sent to the local centres in and near Tokyo to expose
themselves to the doctrinal and ritual intercourse of the
regular believers. In my fieldwork during this period, the
Koganei local centre received two candidate-students five or
six days a week, from about 3:00-6:00 p.m. In the second
term, the candidate-students were ordered to live in local
centres throughout Japan in order to train themselves for the
live-in style of service normally required for the teaching
staff. They are obligated to gather at the Main Headquarters
in Tokyo for monthly and annual prayer sessions. In this way
they keep in contact with one another, and are expected to
remain friends while receiving some general directions on a regular basis from the Director of Education and Training.

The curriculum was changed during the period of my fieldwork. From 1980-1981 the training content of the first term and the second term was reversed. From May to October the candidate-students were sent to live in local centres after a one-month training period in daily-life manners, instead of first learning the doctrine at the SMBK school. The rationale given for this change was "experience first, explanation next."

After graduation from this school, before becoming an SMBK teacher, there are still more steps to take: following graduation, the candidate-student is given the status jisshū-sei (student-in-practice) and usually spends one more year living in a local centre. Then he will be permitted to go on to a higher status entitled dōshi-ho (assistant teacher) for another year. After all these steps he is normally appointed to be dōshi (teacher), although he begins with the title of ni-kyū dōshi (second class teacher), and it takes one or more years to reach the status of i-kyū dōshi (first class teacher).
SOME FLEXIBILITIES

Upward mobility is related to a personal relationship which may be named a cross-status relationship. The way the close and hierarchical relationship functions depends on the following conditions: first, in SMBK, any recognition from a superior (either direct or indirect) is considered to be honourable. The most explicit example is the attention given by the Lord-teacher Sekiguchi: it is an honour for regular believers even to receive a few kind words from him, because the regular believer is not allowed to ask for them. Besides, the Lord-teacher rarely speaks to regular believers. Sometimes after a prayer session, the Lord-teacher shakes hands with regular believers in order to show his affection towards them. Even in this occasion they are not supposed to speak to him. Overt friendliness from them to him is regarded as a request for more attention from him which will likely be interpreted as a public display of a special personal relationship with him. This act will be considered to be an aggressive one.

The second condition for the close and hierarchical relationship is that formal relationships are also accompanied by personal involvement (The opposite is not necessarily true.);
The Lord-teacher giving close attention to his followers.

(Mahikari Magazine, 1979, May)
the failure in mutual and personal involvement means the failure of relationships. For example, the Directors and most Heads are not only long-standing members of SMBK but also are generally believed to have had an intimate relationship with the deceased first leader, Lord-savior Okada (now considered to have been elevated to a divinity). Their positions are authorized in this way. Under such circumstances, it is important for administrative members to pay active and personal attention to the believers who may potentially contribute to the expansion of the SMBK movement. Within a local centre this is vigorously done, because the Head is close to regular believers. Between the Main Headquarters and the local centre, regular believers who have been recognized as having a high commitment to recruitment activity are occasionally sent to the Main Headquarters to serve the Central Shrine. This creates a chance for Directors to develop a close relationship with them, to encourage them to promote themselves to be Heads, and also to investigate the personality of these potential Heads. Therefore, by the time a believer achieves the position of Head, his personal relationship with the Directors has already been established. Thus, intimacy or personal closeness mainly functions in two ways:

1. Among regular believers, it ties the recruiter and
the recruit in a highly egalitarian relationship.

2. Between an executive member and a regular believer, it functions to stimulate upward mobility of the SMBK hierarchy.

These two functions of intimate relationships may confuse regular believers, because both functions derive from the two-fold definition of the purification ritual. It offers to the recruit to develop an egalitarian relationship with the recruiter, but the recruit must relinquish it as he gains upward mobility through the performance of the same purification ritual.

Another element of ambiguity is the fact that personality counts greatly in informal human relationships. This is the aspect particularly criticized by Nakane as being indigenous, emotional and, therefore, irrational. However, if we define personality as a logical consistency in which the person relates himself to the world -- rather than the combination of repressed desires and the effort of surface rationalization of them -- its involvement is not necessarily irrational. The point is that anyone in an informal and personal relationship is required to master the way to deal with personal diversity. In the SMBK movement, the purification ritual offers an established and stylized means to master such human relationships. (Chapter V)
In the local centre, the close and personal attention given by the superior creates a double exposure of a regular believer to two authorities, the teaching staff and the Head. This double exposure to higher authorities of different statuses becomes distinctive when it occurs between regular believers and clerics, because human relationships among the regular believers are highly egalitarian.

Table 10 shows the preference of the regular believer for personal consultation and advice. (The total of the table exceeds the total number of the respondents because the calculation includes cases in which one respondent gave more than one answer.) According to this table the most preferred consultant is the Head of the local centre, in spite of the fact that the Head is usually engaged in his own secular job and his visits to the local centre are rather limited, and that the live-in teachers are always available. In addition, the high rate of consultation with the Head also indicates an easy access to him. This was particularly true at the Koganei centre, because the Head often sat with regular believers either sharing the same food or talking casually about doctrinal matters. This situation adds an element of insecurity to the teacher's position. In some cases, his authority over regular believers is undermined if a regular believer complains to the Head. The power structure
### TABLE 10: Preferred Personal Consultant in SMBK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Head</td>
<td>288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Recruiter</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>742</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
in the local centre in this respect may be diagrammed as follows:

```
Head
   | teacher
   | regular believers
```

Table 11 shows the way in which believers relate to their superiors. When an order from the superior comes into doubt, 27% of believers simply obey the order, 32% ask questions but obey, 11% go to a higher authority, but only less than 1% reject the order. In other words, once the order is given, the believers normally accept it. Therefore, the majority consider that a disagreement between a superior and inferior is (and should be) resolved by the two directly involved. This supports Nakane's argument that in such a hierarchical human relationship, as has been explained in Diagram 14 (p. 110), a person has access to power only through his direct superior. However, according to Table 11 more than one out of ten SMBK believers assume that it is proper to bring the issue to a higher authority. This creates an ambiguity in the power structure and sometimes puts the direct superior in an ambivalent position with relation to his
TABLE 11: What would you do when you do not think that the order from your superior is a right one?

Answers:

1. (obedience) I would obey without questioning.
2. (agreement) I would immediately ask for reason and clarify the point.
3. (withdrawal) I would ask my superior to exclude me from the activity.
4. (higher authority) I would go and ask questions to the person of higher status than my superior.
5. other
6. no answer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. obedience</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>26.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. agreement</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>32.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. withdrawal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. higher authority</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>11.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. other</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>6.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. no answer</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>22.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
superior. The teacher's position at the local centre is a distinctive example of this sort. However, the ambiguity remains within the transitional or liminal sphere in SMBK, and does not jeopardize the over-all frameworks of the SMBK religious system.
NOTES


2 C. Nakane, 1967. The direct quotes from this reference which follow were translated by K. Miyanaga and S. Parr.

3 N. Nagashima, 1977, pp. 185-216. (The quotation was translated from Japanese to English by K. Miyanaga.)

4 R. Benedict, 1946. For more discussion on giri, see Chapter V.

5 This answer was striking to some of my Japanese colleagues studying sociology of religion, because it is widely believed among sociologists that her generation has lost any concern with the reciprocal human relationships.

6 Sekiguchi san or sama, or even Sekiguchi shi (師) is not used among regular believers.

7 専士

8 専士補

9 実習生

10 創練生

11 班

12 Kōsei-kai is an abbreviation of Risshō Kōsei-kai.

14 Ibid., p. 239.

15 Oharai-sai: The annual prayer session to purify the dirt-poison accumulated for the year.

16 Risshun-sai: The annual prayer session held on the first day of spring, in order to purify the "original sin." (See Chapter IV for the "original sin.")

17 The academic year in Japan normally runs from April to March.

18 The titles, ikkyū and nikyū dōshi were abolished after the death of the first leader, the Lord-savior Okada.
CHAPTER IV: SMBK DOCTRINE

CONTAINMENT OF EQUALITY

IN

HIERARCHY
The SMBK religious system is a hierarchy of power and knowledge which consists of formal organization as the top structure and informal organization as the bottom structure. The organization of the SMBK religious system corresponds to the composition of SMBK doctrine. Cosmology justifies hierarchy whereas operational morality demands an egalitarian practise of compassion. However, there is a structural difference in composition between membership organization and doctrine. In doctrine, the relationship between the two components is containment; operational morality is contained in cosmology. In contrast, formal and informal organizations are only juxtaposed. Nevertheless, because the doctrine provides explanation for the SMBK religious system, the relationship between formal and informal organizations is conceived as parallel to the relationship between cosmology and operational morality. This is the reason why the formal stratification in the informal organization is functionally only nominal but does have an ideological meaning. When the membership organization is viewed through the SMBK doctrine, it appears as if the informal organization were contained within the formal organization. Thus, in SMBK, the membership organization and the doctrine are conceived as parallel to each other. Therefore, the shift from equality to hierarchy
in upward mobility occurs simultaneously in both spheres. (Diagram 17).

In the SMBK doctrine, cosmology is an expression of the religious paradigm. Because religion refers to "wholeness" (Chapter I), the SMBK cosmology also ascribes "wholeness" to the divine order. The notion of "wholeness" indicates logical completion. This means that the part of religious doctrine which subscribes to the "wholeness" of divine order is framed in a completely deductive logic and is not subject to empirical examination. Therefore, a particular myth of creation is logically necessary for the justification of existence as a perceived reality. It may be the product of one essential being, the Creator. That is, the order is considered to be an expression of the Creator's will. However, order may also have been born from a state which is not order, such as chaos, as in Greek mythology. In the latter case, the process is justified because it happened.

Therefore, the divine order may be expressed in the form of the cosmological order as it is believed to be and/or as the will of the omnipotent divinity who rules the cosmos. When the will is emphasized, the image of the cosmos may be poor. On the other hand, since the state of the order is usually the main focus, doctrine normally contains an elaborate cosmology. As may be seen in a variety of
DIAGRAM 17: Unilineal Process of Upward Mobility Through the Hierarchy of Power and Knowledge
mythologies, the cosmos is generally viewed as a pantheon. It consists of interpersonal relationships among divinities, spirits, supernatural beings, heroes and human beings. The state of the cosmos and will of the divinity may well be combined, as is the case in SMBK.

An example of an elaborate cosmology, in which the pantheon is an expression of order considered to have been born from non-order, and in which the cosmos is typically viewed as an order of static power, is provided by the Michi Hiraki, a self-proclaiming Shinto theorist group, characterized by a cosmology quite similar to that of SMBK but far more elaborate and detailed. Its name means "opening a way" with michi meaning "way" and hiraki meaning "opening." As is often the case in Asia, the "way" means the "proper way to be a human being." The Michi Hiraki doctrine shows "the way," by positioning the believer in a finely differentiated pantheon. The doctrine is independent of empirical examination because it stands on the myth of creation. Consequently, the logic contained in the doctrine becomes self-sufficient.

The Michi Hiraki pantheon may be briefly sketched. The supreme divinity is a pure spirit which fills the cosmos but does not have a tangible "body." He is not an anthropomorphic figure. In contrast, at the bottom level of the pantheon, inferior divinities have human-like appearances.
Between these two, the pantheon develops as various stages of purity/defilement in combination. In this pantheonic order, the tangibility of the "body" of the divinity is considered to be parallel to the degree of defilement. This spatial order, viewed as a pantheon, also indicates the birth order of the divinities. That is, the spatial order and the birth order correspond with one another, representing the necessity of the higher divinity in relation to the lower. Thus, the supreme divinity is the parent of the divinities in the second level of the pantheon and the second-level divinities are contained in the parent; the second-level divinities are the parents of those in the third level; the third-level divinities are the parents of those in the fourth level, and so on. In this way, the pantheon also constitutes a kinship map of the divinities. Each human being in this kinship map is spiritually tied to a particular parent divinity from whom the human being has been given spirit. As each divinity is considered to embody a certain quality, the quality of the parent divinity determines that of the child. This quality is also assumed to be reflected in the name of the child, for example, because the inspiration from the parent divinity controls the naming through the human parents and/or relatives.

When I studied the Michi Hiraki doctrine with the
female leader of this group, she said that I was predestined to be in anthropology because my personal name, Kuniko, means country or nation. According to her, anthropology in a broader sense is the study of human nature, which is also the study of the national origin of human nature in a more specific sense. She insisted, therefore, that my name guided me into anthropology. She also told me that a particular female divinity of wisdom is my parent divinity. According to her, this particular divinity was also her own spiritual parent. Therefore, we were spiritual kin. However, she added that she was a direct descendant while I was a figure of an inferior side-stream. That was why she was teaching her doctrine to me. Thus, when one finds one's own parent divinity in the pantheon, one also finds one's position in it. That is, one finds one's own fate. This fate, from an anthropological point of view, may be interpreted as self-identity.

Although the Michi Hiraki leader emphasizes that her followers should be able to regulate their personal lives based on their knowledge of the cosmos, they themselves expressed difficulties. When I was studying the doctrine with her, her followers sometimes telephoned to ask her how to deal with their daily life problems. Instead of giving them a pragmatic solution, she emphasized that they should study the doctrine more deeply. In other words, the Michi Hiraki
doctrine does not provide an operational morality which directly regulates daily life through the application of clear-cut principles. I would like to corroborate this point with the following JRKK example.

JRKK is an abbreviation for Jissen Rinri Kōsei Kai which may be translated into English as the "Association of Practical Ethics." This group is more widely known as Asaoki Kai (Early Bird Association) because they meet early for sessions. The believers have regular public confession sessions among themselves every morning before their daily jobs, most commonly from 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. The content of their morality is dependent on such common sense norms as respect for parents, practice of self-sacrifice, harmony, independence, happiness, vitality, practicality, etc. These moral aspects do not have any further integrating theory and are reduced to five principles which should be recited every morning.

1. All day today, I will work gladly for three on (social on, teacher's on, parent on);

2. All day today, I will not criticize others, will not advocate my good deeds.

3. All day today, I will do immediately without hesitation whatever I notice I should do.

4. All day today, I will not be angry, and will be satisfied.

5. All day today, I will live newly and strongly
on earth without three abuses (abuse of 3 materials, abuse of time, abuse of mind).

Although JRKK has been registered with the Government as a religious organization, and has also been categorized as one of the New Religions by academics, senior believers of JRKK often emphasize that JRKK is not a religion but a moral campaign. The reason may be as follows: As religion has been condemned as a false ideology since the end of World War II, it is not unusual that religious people advocate themselves as "scientific enlightenist." Even SMBK claims to be one, although this is difficult to justify because, to outsiders, its heavy involvement in spirit possession appears too irrational to be scientific. The JRKK's case has an advantage compared to SMBK because JRKK's doctrine consists almost exclusively of moral principles. The only exceptional conception in JRKK is nature (or Nature); but this is not further articulated into a cosmology, even though it functions to justify the moral principles in the same way as the SMBK cosmology does. In JRKK nature (or Nature) is not viewed in imagery but is used in the following ways: "It is natural to respect your parents." or "You can get up early in the morning with no difficulty once it becomes a natural way (because it should be)."

When the JRKK believers say that they are not
religious, they are trying to define themselves as enlightenment. However, they actively advocate themselves as sympathizers of religion by saying that their doctrine "opens the gate to religion." In this way they tactfully try to achieve a non-religious position, although they are in favour of religion. This positioning of JRKK may also have historical roots in Confucian tradition. For a long time until recently, as a ruling class ideology, Confucianism occupied an important position in Japanese society. Its basic doctrinal orientation is similar to JRKK because of its lack of cosmology and promotion of ethics as a natural way.

A problem arises when a doctrine contains both an elaborate cosmology and a developed operational morality. There can be a logical contradiction between the cosmology and the operational morality. The operational morality is a generalization of daily life reality, and accordingly, is inductive. In contrast, cosmology is a system of deductive logic which constantly refers to "wholeness" and completion. The process of reasoning is not the same in the cosmology and the operational morality. In the SMBK example, the operational morality is highly flexible in nature, because it basically consists of confessions told by possessing spirits. Because confessions may contain any fragments of the daily life reality, the operational morality may expand endlessly as
confessions are accumulated. On the other hand, the cosmology is still complete and does not expand. However, the problem is that the morality has to be a part of the cosmology because daily life is an indispensable part of the cosmos. The question then is how the morality fits into the cosmology. In SMBK, the morality is expressed in stories, and furthermore, their scenes are "geographically" located in certain parts of the cosmos. This containment is possible through the metaphorical expression of the operational morality. In contrast, in astrology, a compartment of an elaborate image of cosmos functions as the operational morality for a person, according to his zodiac; morality simply indicates fate with regard to his position in the cosmos. There is no discrepancy in the process of reasoning between cosmology and morality. The difference between SMBK and astrology should be attributed to the fact that the SMBK doctrine is a motivating force in a social movement, whereas astrology normally serves a discrete individual.
COSMOLOGY: PURITY AND PANTHEON

In the SMBK cosmology, hierarchy and equality correspond to order and disorder, and also to containment and conflict. In other words, equality is related to the notion of conflict and constitutes disorder. On the other hand, order is hierarchical but encompasses equality, conflict and disorder.

1. Pantheon

What SMBK doctrine insists on is a divine order "given" by the creator. SMBK people believe that our cosmos is an externalization of the will of their supreme divinity named Miyo- moto Su Mahikari Ōmikami, usually referred to as Su no Kami. As is the case in the Shintoist way of naming divinities, his name is a compact summary of his character: miyo- means parent, moto origin, su lord, mahikari true light (or divine light) and ōmikami great divinity. He is, therefore, the great(est) divinity and the creator (parent and origin of all beings), who fills his own cosmos with the true light which is the source of life. All the beings in his cosmos can live only by receiving energy (light) from him. This first premise of the creation of the cosmos forms an ontological basis for morality such that all the beings in
Omoto no Kami (Su no Kami)
Mioya-moto Su Mahikari Omikami
(He has many other names.)

Heavenly divinities (5th generation)
first
male female

Heavenly divinities (6th generation)
male female

Heavenly divinities (7th generation)
male female

Royal family
Ame no Hi no Moto Ashika-biki
Wushi no Mikoto (male)
A daughter of the Moon Divinity (female)

su no go-reitō

chi-dama

Hi no dei-kai

DIVAGAM 18: Pantheon (layered cosmos)
his cosmos should live only for the purpose of realizing the will and order of the supreme divinity.

The cosmic order is embodied in a pantheon, that is, a hierarchy of divinities distributed in cosmic space based on their status and power differentiations. (Diagram 18). Divinities of higher levels are more powerful and less differentiated, while those of lower levels are greater in number, each specializing in a more limited role. Specifically, the SMBK pantheon under its supreme divinity is divided into seven levels. At the top (seventh) level the essential properties of the supreme divinity are separated into the image of three divinities, namely, the divinities of time, space, and life. These are said to have been "born" from the supreme divinity. "Creation" is considered as giving birth, although believers claim that the act of creation at this level is totally beyond our conception. These three divinities are considered to have directly assisted the supreme divinity when he created his cosmos. The sun, stars, and galaxies were "born" from the divinities of time and space, and the divinities of the sixth level were born from the divinity of life. The sixth level has five divinities who represent other properties of the supreme divinity which are similar but not exactly the same: the divinity of the spirit of words, two divinities of light, and again two divinities of life. At this level the
role of creation is divided between two divinities, male and female, so that the meaning of creation becomes analogous to giving birth in a biological sense. Thus, the divinities of the fifth level were born from the interaction of a male and a female divinities at the sixth level. Moreover, the fifth level has numerous divinities of seed specializing in growing different species of plants, and various divinities of light. The God of the Christian Bible is classified as one of them because He is considered as light. The fourth level has a tremendous number of minor divinities born from the divinity of the sun of the fifth level. The fourth level also holds the spirits of the dead, so that the cosmos at this level contains both heavens and hells, usually referred to as yū-kai (the astral world). The third level is gen-kai, the present world of men considered as bottom ranking divinities, although the word "divinity" is not usually applied to them. At this level (and probably at the fourth level, although this is not clearly indicated) only one descent line called su no go-reitō (the divine spiritual line of the supreme divinity) is born from the divinities of the higher level, and others are born from the couple of the same level belonging to this line. At the third level, that is among men, such descendants are identified with the royal family of Japan and claimed to be the ancestors of all
Japanese. Furthermore, divinities of the fourth and fifth levels, following a special prophecy, may go down to this level; the second level is **chi-dama** (the core of the earth) and the first (bottom) level is **hi no dei-kai** (a mud ocean of fire). In this way, every being is considered a partial realization of the collective order of the cosmos according to his given status.

These seven levels of the cosmos form overlapping layers such that a lower-level layer is added to its higher-level layer(s). A higher-level layer does not discontinue at the point where it contacts the next lower level, but it continues down to the very bottom of the cosmos. The seventh (top) level continues down to the first (bottom) level, the sixth level also reaches the first level, the fifth level again goes down to the first level, and so on. As the result, lower-level layers of the cosmos share all the qualities of higher-level layers. Or, each level, toward the bottom of cosmos, accumulates more layers of new quality. By the same token, the divinities in the SMBK cosmos gain more layers of "body" as their ranking is reduced: the supreme divinity and the top three divinities are pure power and do not have bodies. The divinities of sixth and fifth levels have **rei-tai** (spiritual bodies), and those of the fourth level gain another layer, **yu-tai** (astral body). In the third level, men are
DIAGRAM 19: Layers of the Human Body
(a copy of a diagram drawn by an SMBK teacher at the elementary lecture session)
burdened with three layers of body: spiritual body, astral body, and physical body. These bodies are in one person, each belonging to a different level of the cosmic order (Diagram 18).

2. Purity and power

The second premise of SMBK cosmology concerns the concept of purity and defilement. The SMBK pantheon is also ordered according to purity. The supreme divinity is considered absolutely pure and other divinities accrue relative impurity according to their statuses. In other words, the SMBK cosmos is viewed in two ways, as a pantheon and also according to purity. This means that the SMBK cosmos has a double definition; that is, on the one hand, the pantheon viewed in imagery as a qualitative representation, and on the other, according to purity as a quantitative representation. The SMBK doctrine refers to these interchangeably according to the context.

The SMBK conception, の (spiritual level), bridges purity and pantheon: の indicates the pantheon, whose literal meaning is the "layered world of spirit." By the same token, の means the "elevation of the spiritual level" or "ascension through the layered world of spirit." This indicates that the elevation of one's
spiritual level is associated with the upward mobility in the pantheon. Thus, Lord-saviour Okada says:

The divinity has revealed (to me) that the tane kon (leaven spirit) of jin kon (human spirit) of a human being living in this world is held in the reiso kai (the layered world of spirit). Spirits towards the top of the layered world of the spirit are higher ranking, more responsible for the will of the supreme divinity and better qualify to be happy. Lower-ranking spirits are less happy and those at the bottom are miserable. The higher-ranking spirits (of the human being) are permitted to reside in the Paradise of Eden, which means a Heaven. There is no disease, no dispute, and an abundance of material goods. The purer the leaven spirit (of a particular person) becomes, the more upwards he moves in the layered world of the spirit and, accordingly, the happier he becomes in this world.

This paragraph requires further clarification. In the SMBK metaphor, one person is usually viewed as having a plurality of spirits. Confusion occurs as they are commonly categorized together or broken further into sub-categories according to the context. In the above quotation, Lord-saviour Okada refers to two fairly large categories of the spirit of a person, namely human spirit and leaven spirit. The human spirit is identified as the spirit of the person which belongs to this world (where his physical body belongs), and the leaven spirit is the spirit which belongs to the layered world of spirit.

Although the layered world of spirit in general usage should indicate the whole pantheon, in this specific
context it means the astral world. The reason is that the Heavens and Hells Okada mentions above are located in the astral world, and that the "after life" for an ordinary human being takes place in the astral world. In some exceptional cases, human beings after death achieve a place outside and purer than the astral world, although both are the same fourth level, or even at the fifth level. However, senior believers claim that those who ascend through two levels have to be those divinities which have descended originally from that level to their present level for a special prophecy given by the supreme divinity. The deceased Lord-saviour Okada is identified as one of them according to some senior members and teachers. In any case, as death is viewed in SMBK as losing the physical body, and, accordingly, the human spirit, the spirits of the dead (meaning the spirit of the person which remains with him after his death) should be interpreted as the leaven spirit Okada refers to. Thus, a living human being in the context of Okada's argument above has two different spirits of his own located in two places in the cosmos at the same time, as I indicated in Diagram 19. The level of the leaven spirit is extremely flexible: it changes constantly, corresponding to slight changes in the person's behaviour and thought. The level of the human spirit also has a certain flexibility but it is more restricted
Diagram 20: Human Spirit and Leaven Spirit

- SMBK cosmos
- Leaven spirit
- Human spirit
- Astral world (at the fourth level)
- Third level (this world)

Sub-layers (exact number is unclear)

Belongs to one person
because in this world the change is expressed in his social and physical conditions.

Although this part of cosmology is not shared by SMBK, the Michi Hiraki explanation may give a better image of the relationship between these two spirits of one person. In Michi Hiraki, the human spirit is located inside the head of the human body and the leaven spirit\textsuperscript{11} is inside the head of the astral body. Since the astral body is far bigger than the human body, the astral body overlaps with the human body such that the human spirit resides right under the navel of the astral body. The Michi Hiraki leader drew a diagram for me as follows (Diagram 21):

**DIAGRAM 21: Michi Hiraki View of the Bodies**

leaven spirit

astral world

human spirit

this world
In SMBK, purity is viewed as a state of power. For example, when two people with a spiritual gap in their spiritual state come into close contact with one another, the purity of the spiritually superior person automatically induces the discharge of the defilement of the inferior person. This discharge could be skin problems, rashes, diarrhoea, vomiting, bleeding, and other symptoms. In SMBK they are a normal process attributed to the nature of the human body ("physical body"), although in modern medical sciences they are described as symptoms of disease. When the gap between the two subjects is great, the defiled person is believed to die because his human body cannot endure intensive discharge of defilement caused by the gap.

When order is considered to be a state, the power attached to order remains potential until the boundary is violated. Once the removal occurs, the person who is disqualified from a certain state of purity (because he is more defiled) becomes exposed to danger. These conditions indicate that purity also represents the notion of "right," that is, the state for which the person qualifies and which he can claim without endangering himself. This interpretation may explain some aspects of magic and witchcraft when they are applied to the protection of a right or a property. For example, in a case of trespassing or theft, the punishment
for boundary breaking is automatic. It happens because the boundary has been set to protect the individual from invasion.

However, there is another kind of power: the power which derives from the will of the supreme spiritual being. It is intentional. In contrast, static power contained in the state of spiritual potency is mechanical. This power functions as it was originally set or ordered. In such a case, the order according to which the static power works is self-contained and unrevisible. Where the supreme divinity is external to the order of cosmos which consists of the static power, he maintains and changes the order by his will power. The relationship between these two powers may be well verified in the SMBK doctrine: The supreme divinity is the only being who sets the order, and he can also change it. The power with which he charges the SMBK cosmos functions mechanically as he has originally ordered it. Therefore, all the beings in his cosmos should submit themselves to his order, because it means their fate. Other divinities may be able to change the order only when they gain a portion of his power. When the supreme divinity wants to revise the existing order, he gives a "power of attorney" for a specific mission. Sometimes, human beings are given missions and are delegated with the power of the supreme divinity. Leaders of religious movements including the SMBK leaders, are considered to be
DIAGRAM 22: The SMBK Model of Cosmos, Power and Order
such people. They are supposed to be able to change the existing order in a limited area of cosmos.

The supreme beings in some cosmologies lack this kind of intentional power which is external and superior to the static cosmic order. In Michi Hiraki, the supreme divinity is another name for cosmos. He and it are congruent. This also applied to Dainich Buddha. The supreme divinity in these cases is ontological rather than intentional.

The above generalization of the spiritual power and boundary will clarify some ambiguity involved in the meaning of the SMBK talisman given at the initiation. The first major aspect of the talisman advocated in SMBK is that the believer who wears it receives a greater amount of divine light which ultimately derives from the supreme divinity and purifies any existing objects in his cosmos. The second aspect is directly related to the first; the holder of the talisman is assured that he will be provided with the capacity to perform the purification ritual as an active performer, although anyone can be a passive performer with or without the talisman. This is logically consistent because the purification ritual is the transmission of the divine light, and also because the active performer needs to receive a great deal of the light in order to purify the passive performer. However, the first aspect of the talisman is followed by a condition which may
appear confusing. Although the talisman increases the holder's ability to receive the light, the talisman is not a receiver of the light. What, then, is the talisman exactly? My answer is that the talisman is a device which provides the holder with the power of a high spiritual state. As the talisman elevates the general state of his spiritual potency, it creates a boundary which functions to protect the holder from anyone outside of it. Therefore, the third aspect of the talisman advocated in SMBK is that it provides protection from spirit possession and possible negative influence from evil spirits including the evil intentions of a living human being. Furthermore, the purification ritual provides the active performer with a special ability. He can direct his high spiritual potency towards a specific person, the passive performer. The divine light which the holder can transmit actively radiates, penetrating the boundary and reaching the defiled being. When this happens, the defiled being has only two choices to make: he can either be destroyed because he is defiled or change his spiritual position by submitting himself to the SMBK order. Therefore, the power of purification is the power to recover the proper order of the cosmos. According to SMBK logic, he does not have the choice of committing himself to more defilement and somehow creating a counter power against the power of the supreme divinity. In
other words, there is no black magic in SMBK. Evils derive from mistakes and are changeable.

However, the holder should also be protected from the divine light. The reason for this is that receiving the light places the person in a dilemma. That is, more light is desirable, but it is also dangerous when it induces an intensive discharge of defilement. With the talisman, he can enjoy purification on the basis of reduced and slower discharge of defilement. It may be continual, but it will not be destructive. He may be able to continue his daily life work and even experience discharge at the same time. Thus, SMBK believers who wear a talisman can achieve a higher spiritual potency. In contrast, the non-holder is under constant threat from the divine light. The reason why he can survive is that his high defilement blocks him from receiving too much light. But at the same time, because he is blocked from it, he remains highly defiled. This is a vicious circle. The only way he can break it is to become a talisman holder. Thus, the SMBK doctrine claims that the same amount of effort makes a great difference between the holder (believer) and the non-holder (non-believer). (See Diagram 23.)

With regard to the talisman, the SMBK leader is delegated with the power of the supreme divinity. First, he can "activate" the talisman through a special ritual known
DIAGRAM 23: Differences Between the Lives of the Faithful and Atheists

**Faithfuls**
- Small defilement
- Small redemption
- Receiving the divine light plus redemption through ritual
- Live for serving others
- Thankfulness
- Good progress
- Business expansion
- Successful investment
- Obtaining a job
- Going to a school
- Gain for himself and use for himself
- No consideration for others
- No appreciation for the parents' kindness
- Selfishness and arrogance

**Atheists**
- Small defilement
- Small redemption
- Receiving the divine light plus redemption through ritual
- Live for serving the divine will
- Real responsible attitude
- Business expansion
- Physical defilement
- Dependent on evil means
- Selfishness and arrogance

**Common Elements**
- More and more thankful
- Serving others
- Purification through receiving the divine light
- Reflection on own self
- Ascension towards un-disturbable happiness
- Real ease in old age
- Natural death after healthy life, going to a paradise
- Great goodness accomplished in the next life
- Live in eternal happiness

**Defilement**
- More defilement
- Prolonged purification
- Reflection
- Defilement becoming stronger
- Destructive life
- Bad fate
- Self destruction
- Giving great misfortune to others
- Give sufferings to others
- More spiritual problems
- More defilement
- Great effort only to receive hardships
only to him. Consequently he is a boundary setter. Second, he can maintain the spiritual boundary of its holder through another ritual technique. These rituals are considered to be the formal way to delegate the power from the supreme divinity.

The spiritual boundary which creates and maintains the spiritual potency of the holder of the talisman does not last automatically. The power of the talisman is valid only as long as the tie between the holder and the supreme divinity is provided by the SMBK leader. The believer is obligated to give a monthly donation for its provision.

Sometimes we become separated from the divinity, become suspicious of him and even forget about him. But even during such periods, our Lord-teacher apologizes to him in place of us, keeps our tie with him and ask him to protect us.

So we give a donation for the Lord-teacher's effort. It is the fee for the maintenance of the spiritual tie. Although the amount of our donation is small, it is an expression of thankfulness for the protection and miracles that we have received through the talisman during the past month, and also it is a wish to receive this delightful divine light continuously for the next month.

This donation is spiritually extremely meaningful as is stated above, so we must not forget it. Even a person in economic difficulty must manage to give this donation, for this is the easiest way for him to express thankfulness and sincerity to the divinity. This will redeem his accumulated economic defilement in his family.

From the point of expressing thankfulness, this donation must be given in advance for the
coming month at the end of each month, (so it does not appear to be paying for the already given result.)

Because the talisman ties the believer to the supreme divinity, its treatment requires a great deal of care which itself becomes a complex ritual. In SMBK, any principles including respect for the talisman should be realized in action. Following is a brief and interpretative summary of this ritual based on the SMBK elementary lecture session and its text book:

1. Anyone, before touching the talisman, must wash his hands. The believers do this even when their hands are not physically dirty. After washing, the hands must not touch any other objects. If they do they must be washed again. This principle is applied most strictly to the newly-initiated. The application becomes relaxed to the senior believers who are considered to have achieved a more solid state of faith.

2. The talisman must not be opened. It is a locket which contains the divine sign written on a paper. Since the inside of the locket has been purified by the Lord-teacher, it must not be defiled by contact with the
unpurified outside air.

3. The holder of the talisman must pay the monthly maintenance fee, for which the Lord-teacher ties him with the divinity.

4. The talisman must be worn all the time, even in bed, in the washroom and during physical exercises.

5. The hinge of the talisman must be placed on the left side of the holder. When the talisman is kept in a lace cover and/or a cotton cover, the correct side should be indicated on the surface of the top cover (by an embroidered cross pattern, for example).

6. The talisman must not be loaned to others. It belongs strictly to the holder.

7. Other talismans must not be piled on top of the SMBK talisman because their individualities may become confused.

8. It must be kept dry. For this purpose, it must be wrapped in five or six layers of plastic film for food and sealed with cellophane tape under the lace and/or cotton cover(s). The wrap-film must be exchanged often, for example, after heavy perspiration.
9. The talisman must not touch any place which has possibly been stepped on, such as the floor, the ground and even the bedsheets and the blankets. SMBK suggests that the holder should make a pocket inside the underwear and put the talisman in it. The pocket may be closed by a hook or safety pin so the talisman does not slip out, even during sleep.

10. The standard chain suspender for the talisman may be replaced with a string when the chain causes skin trouble (This skin trouble is rather common and considered to be a sign of high defilement). A new suspender must be purified before use.

11. The talisman should not hang below the navel.

12. When the holder takes off his talisman, for example, for bathing:
   (a) at home, it should be hooked on an L-shaped nail fixed on the wall only for this purpose.
   (b) on a trip, it should be kept in a special (purified) box which should be placed on a sheet of paper (also purified) on a shelf.
Any failure to meet these conditions is considered to be defilement and subject to a special purification ritual according to the degree of defilement.
OPERATIONAL MORALITY

The operational morality of SMBK is subject to constant revision. The SMBK cosmology has been and can be revealed only by the SMBK leaders, mostly by the deceased first leader, Lord-savior Okada. In contrast, the operational morality is constantly revealed in the form of stories through regular believers in encounter with the possessing spirits in the purification ritual. The following example will show a typical SMBK way in which a moral principle is advocated. It begins as follows:

One day, a pretty young geisha, about seventeen years old, came to ask for a purification ritual. When her possessing spirit began to respond under the ritual, the geisha blew her own hands and other parts of her body. Then, she patted her breast and arms, screaming, "Burning, burning ...." It looked as if her body had caught on fire. She even struck her head until her beautifully done chignon came untied. Finally, she tore the sleeves of her pretty kimono dress.

When the possessing spirit became relatively calm, it revealed that it was the geisha's sister. Several years before, the sister was burned to death in her sleep in the barn of her own countryside home. Her agony in burning to death was still lasting at this time, and drove her to possess her own sister.

When the possessing spirit disappeared with "calm down", the geisha said, "My body was burning as if it had caught on fire".
The section above describes a scene from the purification ritual. Then the text shifts to a moral teaching based on the story. It extends further than the content revealed directly by the possessing spirit.

She was possessed by a spirit which escaped from the Hell of Fire. Usually the spirits of the dead in the Hell of Fire and also the Hell of Ice cannot escape from their site. However, one out of one thousand does and possesses a living human being.

In the Hell of Fire, there are people forced to stay for discipline including those whose death was caused by fire such as in the above case, and those who killed themselves by jumping into a volcano or using gasoline to burn their own body. I am sorry to say this, but the Vietnamese Buddhist priest who committed suicide in protest using gasoline must have gone to this Hell. Also, those who disturb others or give great damages to others for mistakenly using fire go to the Hell of Fire. We must truly be cautious in dealing with fire.

This is the end of this particular story. There, it converges into a moral principle which indicates that we must be cautious with fire. The emphasis in the story is that the agony at the time of death caused by the fire will last even after death. The way Japanese houses are constructed, particularly in the city area, may be related to this strict regulation on fire as is shown in the SMBK case. In pre-modern Japan, when houses were normally constructed with wooden materials with paper screens used for partition, fire was a serious menace. Especially winter in Edo (Tokyo) is
extremely dry for more than a few months, and the humidity is reduced to less than 25%. Moreover, strong winds blow most of the time. Any fire could devastate a large part of the city. The Tokugawa Shogunate Government has records of such big fires. Since Edo had a special importance as the residence for the Shogunate, those who caused a large fire were seriously punished. Although today the possibility of holocaust is reduced, fire could still be a major problem where the houses are built close together and where traffic congestion often slows down the rescue activity. Besides, the traditional attitude remains that the person who caused fire damage to others sometimes has to compensate them for it with money, in order to maintain his social reputation as a moral person, although he may not have any legal obligation.

Concerning fire, SMBK takes a most traditional attitude: it appears that even a mistake is subject to punishment.

However, the issues of mistake and punishment need to be further clarified. In SMBK, the supreme divinity does not punish the beings in his cosmos, but demands correction of wrong self-orientation through disciplines. Ignorance is identified as the cause for the failure in submission to the divine order. In the example, above, of a geisha's sister, what should be corrected is her ignorance of such important aspects of daily life as the proper treatment of fire. Her unexpected death, from the SMBK point of view,
could have been avoided only if she had had the proper knowledge. When ignorance is to blame, no mistake is excusable; the mistake is intended in so far as the ignorance is admitted, or the practical effort to eradicate the misdeed is ignored or overlooked. Therefore, re-adjustment of ignorance is given in the form of self-discipline which brings the "sinner" to an awareness of his acts. He should realize the nature of his misdeed through his own painful experiences in Hell. Endorsing this view, the SMBK textbooks commonly use the word "discipline" (gyō or shugyō) when describing scenes in various Hells. But they do not refer to punishment (batu or bachi). By the same token, an SMBK teacher living in the Koganei local centre occasionally told other believers that the SMBK divinity does not give punishment. It seems to me that punishment in the regular sense is only destructive to the SMBK believers. An ignorant person will repeat the same mistake no matter how often the punishment is given, unless he realizes the cause of his mistake. For this reason the SMBK divinity does not give punishment but starts the "sinner" in a process of re-adjustment. This process could last forever depending on his progress.

In this world we know the purpose of our effort. But in the astral world the purpose is unknown and the effort is endless. It is the discipline to press the person to realize his own fault. At the very moment of realization (sa-tori)
until this happens, he will be forced to continue his discipline even for hundreds of years.  

Another moral principle closely related to the SMBK notion of re-adjustment is the Law of Retribution adopted from Buddhism. An SMBK textbook says:

Buddhists believe in the Law of Retribution. This is the teaching that a good deed will be rewarded with happiness and a bad deed will be followed by a misery. Ancient people practised this law in their daily lives.

Shaka taught this law since he witnessed the reality in the astral world. He realized that the cosmic order depends on the Law of Retribution when he saw a number of spirits of the dead disciplined. An evil person may appear prosperous for a while but he should be destroyed even in this present world. Otherwise, he must redeem his sin in the astral world.

Here, the necessity of re-adjustment is explained also in terms of redemption; that is, a misdeed has to be compensated. By the same token, being in a miserable condition indicates that the person has performed a misdeed and is now in the process of redemption.

Here again, this spiritual situation is identified in terms of purity and defilement. Thus, the above text continues as follows:

When a person is re-born before he has purified his spirit well enough, he has to continue his redemption in this world. Those who are born in a poor family or live a miserable life have not had sufficient discipline in the astral world.
Questioning of the possessing spirits under the purification ritual reveal that fact that both their present location in the astral world and their miseries correspond to their (evil) deeds in their previous lives.

Most possessing spirits lose their expressions of burning hatred and resentment and turn their heads down when they are asked if they are suffering from the same misdeed as they have done to others in their previous lives.25

A part of the operational morality is revealed in relation to the image of Hell.

The Hell of Fight is an example in which the dead fight with each other until they become completely tired (The spirit of the dead have astral bodies so they can "physically" fight). Those who are placed here are:

1. Persons who have liked fighting in their previous lives
2. Easily provoked persons
3. Violent husband
4. Persons who complain all the time and are unable to thank others
5. Vengeful persons

Another example is the Hell of Blood Pond, in which the dead suffer from worms crawling on their faces while their bodies are placed in a blood-like liquid up to the neck.

1. Lustful women
The Hell of Snake

politicians and scholars

A superior person should be more humane.

The Hell of Fight

The Hell of Blood Pond
lustful women and female atheists

ILLUSTRATIONS in
Baptism of Fire

(Translated from Japanese by K. Miyanaga)
2. Women who have deceived men in their previous lives
3. Female atheists

(This hell is designed especially for women.)

The third example is the Hell of Lust, in which the dead are tortured by vengeful people\textsuperscript{26} of the opposite sex. Those who are placed here are:

1. Men who have treated women as sexual instruments
2. Men who have seduced women out of their lust
3. Women who have seduced men and destroyed their lives
4. Women who have considered sex only as a matter of pleasure
5. Women who have committed adultery
5. Women who make money by prostitution.

The fourth example is the Hell of Snakes, in which vengeful snakes\textsuperscript{27} torture the dead until they learn that a person holding a superior position must achieve \textit{toku} (moral excellence). Those who are placed here are:

1. Politicians
2. High government officials
3. Scholars
4. Professors
5. Persons in superior positions who have damaged their inferiors because of their bad deeds
6. Company men who have betrayed their own company.
The fifth example is the Hell of Starvation, in which the dead, suffering from starvation and thirst, cannot eat or drink. Those who are placed here are:

1. The luxurious person with no sense of charity
2. The husband who has eaten well and drunk much outside his household, without feeding his family well.

Another part of the operational morality is related to the image of re-birth. The following list contains examples of human beings with particular moral defects who are born as animals.

fox: liars

cat: persons who have led a playful life without work, such as the mistress of a rich man

dog: persons who have been too curious of others' private lives

horse: egotists who have worked only for themselves

wild boar or wolf: gangsters, drug-pushers

sheep: apathetic persons

cock: men who have slept with many women and abandoned them

The spirits of the dead, which have the personality defects listed above, cannot resist the temptation to possess living animals with the same defects (the Law of Balance).
Therefore they neglect the discipline of the astral world and escape back into the present world. As they possess the body of animals with which they share the same defects, the possessing spirits (originally human beings) become completely harmonized with the animal nature. By being in this condition for a certain period, the quality of their nature is reduced to the level of animals. Therefore, even when they are permitted to be reborn in this world, they are reduced to animals. This reduction is considered a disgrace. The doctrine also says that once they are reduced to animals it is rare for them to return as a human being.

A more general and consistent principle behind these moral principles and images is the demand for a profound engagement with others. That is to say, compassion (omoiyari). This was a common traditional sentiment which has become obscure since Japanese society after World War II insisted on individual rights. SMBK is one of the movements attempting to retain old values. The reason why this basic principle remains rather implicit in SMBK is that its religious discipline is built on ritual. In ritual, the believer acts out the messages built into its ritual structure. Learning is behavioural rather than conceptual. This means that providing he is engaged with others in the SBMK way through real human relationships, it is unnecessary for the believer to
constantly confirm his own behaviour in words. Although I will develop this point in Chapter V I would like to clarify its basic doctrinal aspect here.

In the SMBK doctrinal vocabulary, the nearest word to compassion is *rita-ai*. Its literal meaning is altruistic love. However, I would prefer to apply the word "compassion" to it, because "altruistic love" emphasizes too much self-sacrifice to suit the SMBK concept of *rita-ai*. By self-sacrifice I mean that one has to sacrifice one's own interests in order to serve the interests of others. Here, self and others are in eternal conflict. Hans Kung, a Christian theologian, reflects on this issue as follows:

To many a non-Christian it seems that the Christian is so intent on self-denial and self-renunciation that he neglects his self-development. The Christian may indeed want to live for men, but he is often not enough of a man himself. He is very ready to save others, but he has never learned properly to swim himself. He proclaims the salvation of the world, but does not perceive the relativity of his own environment. He devises fine programs to give effect to love, but does not see through his own pre-programming. He is troubled about the souls of others, but does not recognize the complexes of his own psyche. By attaching too much importance to and making too many demands on love of neighbor, service, self-sacrifice, he is very likely to break down, become discouraged and frustrated.

To SMBK believers, the denial of one's own self for others is remote. In SMBK it is firmly believed that good deeds for others will be rewarded either in this life or in
the next life. For example, a poor man may be born into a rich family, a woman may be reincarnated as a man. Hence, a giving act is more like an investment for the future welfare in both a spiritual and material sense.

Interestingly enough, the common justification for this point in SMBK is taken from the Bible, although the SMBK interpretation of the following section is different from the common Christian understanding of it. In SMBK, the section is understood to encourage an investment for future welfare; one will receive greater profit if one invests in spiritual matters.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The essence of SMBK compassion, extracted in the form of a principle, is not to hurt others. This is different from shaping one's act to suit laws or rules which are fundamentally intended to be impersonal. In order not to hurt others, one has to learn when and how a particular person of a specific personality may be hurt. Although this may sound elementary, the point is that others may be hurt in the same way as oneself is hurt; in addition, they may be hurt differently from oneself. The former case requires sympathy,
and the latter case knowledge of others. Without sympathy or knowledge, others will be easily disregarded. This is exactly the reason why spirit possession gains a moral meaning. It has to occur in order for the victim to reveal the other side (victim's side) of the story of the same event which has been totally disregarded by the assailant; the possessing spirit demands, threats, and begs that the person it is possessing must know its own side of the story and accept it. The logic behind the act of the possessing spirit is this: First, ignorance is considered to cause a person to victimize others, regardless of his intention. Second, spirit possession is believed or "regarded as bringing" the ignorant person to a better awareness. Therefore, the logical conclusion is that, since ignorance is the cause, awareness should be the solution. This is the basic moral standpoint of SMBK believers.

Out of numerous moral stories, I would like to cite some examples from an SMBK publication to illustrate the points just discussed. The first story is about a problem caused by the spirit of a dog which resented her mistress. A middle-aged woman, the mother of two children, visited an SMBK local centre for consultation because her husband began to have an affair with another woman three months earlier. She wanted to bring him back to her through SMBK.
Immediately she was given a purification ritual. Her possessing spirit was identified as a female dog she had kept in her family for seven years.

(The spirit of the dog said,) "When I was kept in her house, she threw water over my men (male dogs) and blocked me from fulfilling my natural desire to preserve my blood line. She even locked me up inside the house, so I barked and bit around in vain to let her know I wanted an intercourse which I understood was my right given by the divinity. But, she was totally oblivious to my communication. After all I had to leave this present world for the astral world (died), because of too much frustration. As my resentment remained as strong as before, I possessed her body for revenge. I also drove her good husband to go to another woman to let her know the importance of compassion and harmony. However, she did not reflect on her own misdeed but wished to get her husband back. She is too selfish. Please, make her know that even a dog has this much thought." This was an opinion that Miss Doggie stated with a sad and annoyed expression.

Now the woman has understood what she did to her dog. Then it is the turn of the spirit of the dog to learn that either remaining resentful or possessing a living person is not good. This is also considered a fundamental mistake caused by ignorance. Thus, an SMBK teacher gives the following admonition to the spirit of the dog:

"Your agony is the result of your own defilement. Do understand it and try to be engaged in the spiritual discipline and ask for a divine pardon. Furthermore, do not forget about the kindness given by your mistress for seven years. Go back to the astral world."
As a result:

Through this admonition the spirit's resentment was wiped out. So it returned to the astral world. The next day the woman visited the local centre with a big smile on her face and tears of deep affection in her eyes, and said:

"Only with your help, my husband came back. I feel fine."

This story ends with a moral teaching such that:

This story tells us that we must have compassion and sincerity for all the living beings and spirits.

The basic structure of the moral runs as follows: (1) Ignorance or the lack of compassion causes the misery of others and the victim resents the assailant; (2) the victim, after his death, possesses the assailant, so the positions of victim and assailant are reversed; (3) through the SBMK purification ritual and teaching, both parties develop understanding and compassion, and the one reconciles to the other; (4) at the time of reconciliation the departure of the possessing spirit from the body of the living person and the person's recovery from his own problems occur simultaneously. I would like to emphasize again that the consistent underlying logic here is that ignorance is the cause of dispute and that providing proper knowledge is the key to the solution.

Social success is often assumed to indicate a lack of compassion because it may foster arrogance. SMBK believers share such a sentiment that successful people tend to justify
their own ignorance and lose compassion. Wealth, an indicator of social success, is considered likely to have been gained by depriving others.

The second example concerns a 26 year-old man (Mr. Kawara in pseudonym in the SMBK textbook) who was the owner of four companies in 1956 but lost all his fortune over a period of several years. In June 1956 a bank building his company had constructed was burnt down the night before the transfer day. In 1956, the roof of a tunnel his company was constructing fell in, and some workers were killed. Moreover, Mr. Kawara was also almost killed by the same accident. In 1959 he began a new business to recover from the loss caused by the last two accidents. This was the breeding of sweetfish, which he thought promised success. However, when it came near to success a sudden fog covered the whole fish pond and suffocated the fish to death. He failed again and was left with a big deficit. Through the purification ritual, the cause of his failure was identified as the cruelty of his ancestor.

Mr. Kawara's ancestor six generations before was a taxation officer of Kishū Han.38 He was a cruel man and exploited farmers extremely hard. (This implies that he embezzled a part of the tax and became rich, which was not unusual especially before modernization.) When a farmer could not pay his annual tax, and sent his daughter to him so that her labour would compensate a part of the unpaid tax, the
officer not only violated her but, within two months, also asked again for the tax. (This means that he was making it impossible, because the farmer, assumed to be a rice cultivator, had a harvest only once a year and, accordingly, only one chance of paying any debts.) The farmer and his wife committed suicide. Their daughter also killed herself in front of a shrine dedicated to a divine dragon, supplicating for revenge for her family.

Accepting her supplication, the dragon killed the officer. Then he prevented the Kawara family from having sons, so they had to maintain their family line by adoption for four generations down to Mr. Kawara. The dragon became irritable after he failed to destroy the Kawara family by eliminating their blood line and decided to bring an economic disaster ...

The structure of this story is the same as the first one: (1) ignorance or the lack of compassion by the Kawara family caused misery to the farmer's family which died resenting the Kawaras; (2) the dragon, representing the victim, possessed Mr. Kawara, so their victim-assailant roles were reversed; (3) through the purification ritual and teaching they are expected to reach understanding.

However, in this example, the idea of defilement and redemption is clearer than in the first one:

He (Mr. Kawara) was made to realize that his family defilement was so deep that he had no chance to construct a good life. He finally became an (SMBK) teacher to save himself through saving others. Since then he has been engaged in the activity to save those leading a mere day-to-day life motivated by their own selfish desires, like himself before. He teaches them now that one
cannot really achieve success out of one's egotism.40

Concerning the construction of a moral story, the role of the active performer in the purification ritual has to be clarified in relation to the other two parties. First, the dragon representing the victims' side now as an assailant, reveals the unknown side of the story. Second, Mr. Kawara, the descendant of the assailant family now as a victim, has to accept the dragon's side of the story no matter how unreasonable it seems to him because, for him, it is the only way to save himself. Standing between these two, the active performer (=an SMBK teacher, in this case)\textsuperscript{2} functions as a mediator, representing the divine order by offering a common ground for reconciliation. The point is that the teacher does not make a judgment. In other words, the dispute has to be dealt with by the pair directly involved. The extent of Mr. Kawara's attempted redemption is dependent on the dragon's generosity, and Mr. Kawara has to keep appealing to the dragon's sympathy.

In summary, any dispute has to be solved on the basis of negotiations between the direct victim and assailant under the divine guidance of the SMBK teacher.

One further point has to be made. Although SMBK publications give the impression to readers that the possessing spirit reveals its story as clearly as a criminal
in a detective story confesses to a detective-hero, the construction of a meaningful story through the purification ritual usually takes a long time. When the publication says "The spirit gave all these stories in three days," this often means that the stories given by the possessing spirit began to make sense in three days, which is quite an exceptional speed. Also, the time given by believers is not always reliable, because it is often forgotten in their memory that they had to spend a long time before they began to derive results from the purification ritual in the form which fits into the SMBK doctrine. According to my observation, each believer spends a long period of time regularly visiting a local centre, performing the purification ritual, having personal consultations with the teaching staff and the Head and learning the doctrine. By doing so they are expected to go through a personality change. This I will discuss in the next chapter.

Compassion, a core notion in the SMBK morality, functions as an equalizing element. The point here is that role-reversal is the SMBK way of constructing equality. This reversal is experienced in two ways in the purification ritual: one is in the form of the purification ritual itself (Chapter II), and the other in the content of moral stories revealed by possessing spirits. In the moral stories, the role-reversal occurs in the following way. The assailant
has to experience the misery of the victim by himself being victimized by his original victim. When the original assailant becomes a victim, the original victim is in the position of assailant. Both sides must know the real conditions of the other by experiencing them; not only has the assailant to experience the agony of the victim, but also the victim has to experience that it is so easy to be cruel and aggressive, as possessing spirits normally are.

In both form and content, the role reversal provides a particular sense of equality. This also means that in each pair relationship, there is not equality. Between the two performers of the purification ritual, the active performer controls the passive performer, and between victim and assailant, the assailant obviously has a power over the victim. Here the equality depends on the assumption that his advantaged or disadvantaged position is only temporary.
DIVINE HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHICAL CONTAINMENT OF DISORDER IN ORDER

In the SMBK doctrine, equality and disorder of the operational morality are also contained in the hierarchical order of the cosmology. This containment is made possible by the image of a layered cosmos. In SMBK, only certain layers of the cosmos are temporarily in disorder, and the beings suffering from conflicts are all contained within these layers. Therefore, the layers which contain egalitarian elements are also part of the hierarchy.

In its mythological history, the SMBK doctrine explains in terms of origins the reason why the present cosmic order is improper. At the very beginning of time, men lived in perfect harmony. There were never any conflicts because men were not given "desires". However, this made them slow in the process of constructing a divine civilization on earth, for which purpose they had been created. Therefore, the divinities of the sun, who supervised the creation of men, finally decided to increase the speed and efficiency in men's work by giving them desires and inducing competition. In order to do so the divinities of the sun delegated the task and authority to the divinities of the moon who specialize in the creation of desires. Although the divinities of the sun
intended this state of affairs to be only a short period of transition, the divinities of the moon took advantage of the trust given them by the divinities of the sun and decided to keep themselves forever in power over the earth. As a result, when the divinities of the sun asked the divinities of the moon when they would re-subordinate themselves, the divinities of the moon, instead of giving a humble answer, cast a spell and said, "Come back when roasted beans bloom!" Roasted beans, of course, do not bloom. They then threw roasted beans at the divinities of the sun. The children of the divinities of the moon were even worse: they stung the eyes of the astral bodies that the divinities of the sun left behind when the latter withdrew themselves to the sixth level of the cosmos where they properly belonged. This was equivalent to a violation of the bodies of the dead. Foolishly enough, men, now activated by desires, followed the divinities of the moon. They also threw roasted beans, cast the same spell, and violated the astral bodies of the divinities of the sun. This is the "original sin" of all mankind, and the source of all defilement.

SMBK believers consider that this mythological event is the origin of the ceremonial act still common among contemporary Japanese. On the eve of the first day of spring, children throw roasted beans at a figure wearing a monster
great cross civilization of divine men associated with material use and sciences

real ascending civilization

cross civilization

creation

transformation

development of fire spirit

material cultures

ruins of culture power

denial of divinity

Buddha or Spirit

human effort at a dead end

Material civilization changes men into material monsters.

analysis for the sake of analysis
mask, saying, "Go away, monster. Come in, wealth." Some traditional people decorate their door-ways with a branch of holly wood with a fish head (sardine) stuck to it. This repeated celebration of the original sin, which adds more to already-accumulated defilement, is considered a challenge to the SMBK supreme divinity. Thus, the SMBK believers have a regular prayer session on the first day of spring (Risshun sai) with the aim of redeeming such sin.

Full redemption in the SMBK doctrine implies that the proper order will be resurrected under the guidance of the supreme divinity. The end of the reign of the divinities of the moon is almost at hand. The materialistic civilization built on desires will be transcended, and a more spiritual era under the direction of the divinities of the sun will return to power. And ultimately the supreme divinity will purify his cosmos with a "baptism of fire." According to the SMBK doctrine, only a limited number of people will be chosen to survive this period of fire. They will be known as "leaven men," and will be the builders of a new divine civilization on earth after the end of the present world. Hence, because of their divine knowledge and mastery of the purification rituals, the SMBK believers will occupy a special position in the cosmos at this crucial moment of the recovery of the divine order. For this reason the SBMK doctrine compels its
followers to master the doctrine and rituals pertaining to purification.

In the SMBK cosmology, the proper order is viewed as harmonious and static. Nevertheless, the cosmos contains perpetual movements within itself which are categorized in terms of time and space. The movement in terms of space is the rotation of the cosmos which is shown as the movement of the sun, stars, planets, etc. The movement in terms of time is the history of the cosmos seen as doom for the many and resurrection for the few. This is an endless repetition whose continuation is caused by corruption. This is said to have already been repeated seven times. The process of this repetition is viewed as a spiral movement (Diagram 24) in which the beginning of each millennium is assumed as the achievement of a new civilization better, that is, purer, than the previous one. This historical process takes place only below the sixth level so that the highest two levels remain undisturbed. In this way, all the changes involved in divine history are a part of a regular process arranged by the supreme divinity. The role given to the SMBK is to participate actively in this process.
NOTES

1 The importance of pantheon has been mentioned by Y. Kubota (1978, pp. 217-8).

2 On: (恩) kindness.


4 The characteristics of these bottom two levels are not clearly understood among SMBK clerics, although the previously-mentioned Shinto group, Michi Hiraki, has an elaborate doctrinal explanation for them.

5 神層

6 神層界

7 神層昇華

8 種魂

9 人魂

10 Okada, 1970 (b) (The quotation was translated from Japanese by K. Miyanaga.)

11 Leaven spirit is an SMBK word. I use it to avoid confusion.

12 I am not sure if Michi Hiraki distinguishes between the astral body and the spiritual body. I used the word "astral" to avoid confusion.

13 The Japanese word kami indicating divinity could also indicate either the singular or the plural form. Here I treated it in the singular to indicate any divinity who is in the position to give protection to a particular person or people.
The SMBK Elementary Session Textbook (not distributed outside SMBK), pp. 63-4. (The quotation was translated from Japanese by K. Miyanaga.)

The cross in SMBK symbolizes harmony and energy.

Because it is the Japanese custom to place directly on the tatami floor the mattress and the mat (covered with a bedsheet) and blanket (often placed in a case), the sheet and (the case of) the blanket may be unintentionally stepped on, although it is considered to be bad manners.


Ibid., p. 138.

Edo is the name for Tokyo in the Tokugawa Period. Its population is estimated to have been about one million.

For the meaning of sa-tori, see Chapter IV.

Ibid., p. 130.

Mukashi no hito also means the traditional people in contrast to the modern and rational people.

The astral world contains various Hells.

Ibid., pp. 152-3.

Ibid., pp. 153-4.

These people are not specified in the SMBK doctrine.

The SMBK doctrine explains that these snakes are not real snakes but the vengeful spirits of the dead human beings who have gained astral bodies in a snake figure.


30. K. Okada, 1970(a), p. 214. (The quotation was translated from Japanese by K. Miyanaga.)

31. on (思"

32-34. In the original, the world rei-kai which normally used to mean the spiritual world is used. However, I have interpreted this here as the astral world, because sometimes the astral world is considered as a part of the spiritual world in a broader sense. In my thesis I limited their usage to the narrower meanings to avoid confusion.

33. Ibid., p. 214.

35. Ibid., p. 215.

36. Ibid., p. 215.

37. Ibid., p. 215.

38. Han is a territory ruled by a feudal lord in the Tokygawa era.

39. Ibid., pp. 197-8.

40. Ibid., p. 198. In SMBK a person is identified by his family. This will be discussed in Chapter IV.
CHAPTER V:

INDIVIDUALS

IN THE

SMBK RELIGIOUS SYSTEM
The hierarchy of power and knowledge in SMBK serves the individual believer by offering an established procedure for self-transformation, which occurs within the given framework of the purification ritual. Collectively, nothing changes. The purification ritual repeats the same pattern in every performance. However, the repetition creates a long process of self-transformation. It is a transformation from the non-SMBK self to the SMBK self. The SMBK self indicates the state of one-ness with the divine order. In this state, the believer thinks and acts according to SMBK cosmology. Or, probably more correctly from his point of view, he lives in the SMBK cosmos with full awareness of the fact that he does. The non-SMBK self indicates the state of isolation from the divine one-ness. The two states of self are exclusive to each other and, accordingly, the self in one-ness does not emerge from the self in isolation. Therefore, individually, this process of self-transformation means a total change. It should be referred to as an extra-paradigmatic change. This change, in other words, is a shift from one paradigm to another.

The purification ritual offers the only method for transformation from the non-SMBK self to the SMBK-self, or from the old paradigm to the new paradigm. The key is
behavioral submission. It enables the performer to act according to the new paradigm which he has not yet mentally assimilated. He still thinks according to his old paradigm. Consequently, his self experiences a separation of body and mind, which is artificially created in the ritual context. This separation often causes absent-mindedness in the daily life of the believer. He becomes disorganized, forgetful, self-involved and careless of external conditions. SMBK teachers and senior believers advise the believer in this state to perform the purification ritual regularly and frequently but not to philosophize about his experience. In other words, this stage should be overridden quickly by intensive learning. The SMBK standard interpretation is that such disturbances are caused by spirit possession, and the performance of the purification ritual is the solution for these disturbances.

The assimilation of the new paradigm is only possible behaviorally, because the new paradigm does not emerge from the old paradigm. This change necessitates the purification ritual. By reading the SMBK publications outside of the context of the purification ritual, the new paradigm can be understood only through the old paradigm. This is a process of rationalization; the new paradigm is screened by the old paradigm. Consequently, the basic epistemology of the person remains the same. In contrast, in the purification
ritual, the way to rationalization is deliberately blocked. The performer first has to see the fragmented parts of the new paradigm through the lens of the old paradigm. Subsequently, he has to find a new perspective in which all the fragmented parts become intelligible. This perspective is the new paradigm, and is offered in the context of the purification ritual. Thus, from the point of view of an outsider, ritual learning appears as an irrational process. It is a process of submission, but not commitment in so far as the latter is a rational act possible on the basis of rational thinking in the old paradigm.

In SMBK, the ritual process which begins with the disengagement from the old paradigm and which ends with the engagement in the new paradigm is transformational. In other words, assimilation of self into the SMBK paradigm is incremental. The believer first learns to accept spirit possession as a fact. Second, the believer is tactfully guided to recognize the importance of others. Third, the importance of others converges into that of his own ancestors. Fourth, he realizes that his ancestors are part of the pantheon. Fifth, he assimilates the concept that the pantheonic order constitutes the SMBK cosmos. Finally, he accepts that it was created by the SMBK supreme divinity.
The purification ritual which certifies these steps is a special form of ritual. It presupposes an object to be purified or removed. The removal presupposes the existence of defilement. The defilement has to be removed because it is blocking the person from the achievement of one-ness with divine order. The separation of the person from the divine order is considered to be disorder. The person, by becoming a ritual performer, gains the ability to convert disorder into order. This is the meaning of the act of purification. The recovery of order from disorder is logically made possible by the assumption that the state of one-ness is proper and that separation is a temporary and improper condition. (See Chapter IV.) In the SMBK purification ritual, the ritual performer (purifier) and the possessing spirit (to be purified) both recover order.

In the purification ritual, spirit possession is often treated as a defilement. In SMBK, the possessing spirit is a spirit of the dead which is isolated from order by being displaced in the pantheon. Thereafter, it represents disorder. It possesses the human being who also represents disorder by being in a state of isolation from one-ness. In other words, both the possessing spirit and the possessed belong to disorder. Since disorder is defilement in SMBK,
purification is necessitated in order to recover the proper order. In this context spirit possession is a "calling", as I.M. Lewis phrases it, because the possessing spirit explicates the dynamic between order and disorder. Also, the possessing spirit motivates the believer to be engaged in the purification ritual. In SMBK, only spirits of the dead have the mobility for possession. The divinities are viewed as basically static and not involved in possession.
SATORI AND SELF-CHANGE IN THE RITUAL CONTEXT

Satori is the state of self which has achieved oneness with the divine order. In SMBK, this word has slightly different meanings which ultimately indicate the awareness achieved at various levels in the process of transformation towards one-ness. However, before going into inquiring into the SMBK meaning of satori, I would like to briefly mention satori in Zen Buddhism, for two reasons: first, long before SMBK assimilated the notion of satori, it was historically the objective for Zen and was elaborated in various ways by Zen masters; second, the SMBK meaning of satori is basically an adoption from Zen with some modification by the Lord-savior Okada, the originator of SMBK. I begin the discussion with a brief introduction of the Zen meaning of satori, focusing on the aspect particularly related to SMBK. Then, I go on to discuss how Okada modified the meaning.

A world famous Zen master, D. Suzuki, explains satori as follows:

The object of Zen discipline consists in acquiring a new viewpoint for looking into the essence of things. If you have been in the habit of thinking logically according to the rules of dualism, rid yourself of it and you may come around somewhat to the viewpoint of Zen. You and I are supposedly living in the same world, but who can tell that the thing we popularly call a stone that is lying before
my window is the same to both of us? You and I sip a cup of tea. That act is apparently alike to us both, but who can tell what a wide gap there is subjectively between your drinking and my drinking? In your drinking there may be no Zen, while mine is brimful of it. The reason for it is: you move in a logical circle and I am out of it. Though there is in fact nothing new in the so-called new viewpoint of Zen, the term "new" is convenient to express the Zen way of viewing the world, but its use here is a condescension on the part of Zen.

This acquiring of a new viewpoint in Zen is called satori (wu in Chinese) and its verb form in satoru. Without it there is no Zen, for the life of Zen begins with the "opening of satori." Satori may be defined as intuitive looking-into, in contradistinction to intellectual and logical understanding. Whatever the definition, satori means the unfolding of a new world hitherto unperceived in the confusion of a dualistic mind.

Although its use is strictly limited only by expedience for real beginners, Zen Buddhists occasionally use a diagram popularly called the "picture of ten oxen." This diagram explains the process of "acquiring a new viewpoint" in ten stages as follows.

1. Seeking the ox; a person decides to find the "true self".

2. Finding the ox's foot prints; he is learning about the "true self," but only theoretically and intellectually not in practice.

3. Finding the ox; his theoretical learning begins to make sense in practice.

4. Catching the ox; he struggles not to lose his once-made sense.

5. Herding the ox; his understanding and practice are becoming his own.
1. Seeking the ox

2. Finding the ox's foot prints
3. Finding the ox

4. Catching the ox
5. Herding the ox

6. Going back home on the ox's back
7. No ox, but his own self

8. No ox, no self
9. Returning to the essence

10. Returning to the society
6. Going back home on the ox's back; his transcendence is completed. Now he is the master of himself.

7. No ox, but his own self; satori as an external objective has disappeared, so everything is contained in his own self.

8. No ox, no self; (dualistic) distinction or splits disappear, including that between the self and external objective (satori) and also that between the subjective self and the reflective self.

9. Returning to the essence; the religious self achieves one-ness with nature (or Nature).

10. Returning to society; he goes back to live with regular people to show them the real life.

In SMBK, the Lord-savior Okada interprets the ox sequence diagram as follows:

A man has a beast in his mind (like this ox) pulling him away from his proper way. Reaching a state of maturity requires him to be the master of such elements.

... Often we go around the same circle endlessly being pulled by our own mind like this ox with no control over it, although it is no doubt our own mind. We fall into such conditions when our mind is "flat."

Then Okada adds his own metaphorical explanation:

For example, man has intellect, sentiment (emotions), and will. These form a flat triangle the centroid of which is mind. (Diagram 25).... However, proper state of mind is cubic so that intellect, sentiment, and will have to form a cubic triangle. This is an ascending movement. (Diagram 25). The top of this movement should reach Su no Kami (the SMBK supreme divinity), that is, \( \uparrow \) (chyon). But, we have a \( \uparrow \) in the depth of our mind, and also have another \( \uparrow \) even in the deeper place inside of the first \( \uparrow \). Moreover, inside of the second \( \uparrow \), there is one more \( \uparrow \) which is our given portion of the spirit...
DIAGRAM 25: Flat and Cubic Triangles

(第一回)
平面三角形

(第二回)
立体三角形
of the supreme divinity. [Nesting is a typical SMBK metaphor.] In other words, as our mind ascends, our divine spirit in the real depth of our mind will be directly conjoined to the divinity. Powerful ascension will combine us to divinity after all. This is satori of the cubic triangle.

In the statement above, the Lord-Saviour Okada holds that satori is the recovery of one-ness with the order of the cosmos and its producer, the SMBK supreme divinity. The state of one-ness is asserted as proper and, accordingly, the improper separation from the order (and from its producer) has to be adjusted. In order to clarify this point, I would like to briefly summarize the meaning of the word satori, because the SMBK usage of this word is slightly different from the regular one. Linguistically, satori is a noun form of one simple verb satoru, and has two meanings, secular and religious. The secular meaning is simply to comprehend or to understand. Its connotation has a strong emphasis that such comprehension or understanding is an achievement. The religious meaning of satori is self-realization, that is, one-ness with the order of the cosmos or nature. This indicates the goal of achievement as is the case in Zen, for example. However, SMBK has its own unique interpretation of satori. According to SMBK, it is not a simple noun satori but a compound noun sa-tori; sa is a gap and tori removal. Together, the SMBK meaning of sa-tori is removing a gap between man and the
divine order. This interpretation provides two usages similar but slightly different from the regular ones. First, in SMBK, sa-tori is viewed as a process of achievement rather than the ultimate one-ness itself. It is a process of self-change or the transformation from one self to another. However, this process is also viewed as numerous stages of spiritual ascension - like going up a long stairway. Thus, the second meaning of sa-tori is the achievement of each stage. This is similar to the secular usage of the original word satori, because both focus on the accomplishment of understanding, although in SMBK the object of understanding is limited to its doctrine.

Although the use of the diagram of oxen is admitted to be an expedient, in principle, Zen rejects satori as a gradual change. Professor Keiji Iwata of the National Museum of Ethnology of Japan, also well known as a Zen Buddhist anthropologist, suggested to me that authentic satori must be tongo⁶ (an immediate or sudden realization of true self) not zengo⁷ (a gradual change of self). From the point of view of such Zen Buddhists who support the idea of tongo, zengo is a methodological detour which could spoil the quality of satori itself. More precisely, tongo is the way to cut through all the surface phenomena to the true self, but zengo as a method will likely instead mislead a person into a
feeling of better-ness in daily life routines. Therefore, from the Zen point of view, if such a notion of satori as gradual change is institutionalized, as it is in SMBK, the people in the pursuit of satori will likely be misguided.

Concerning this point, an SMBK member (a young man of about twenty at the Kanazawa local centre) gave me an interesting opinion, referring to an incident of someone finding 100 million yen on the street (money which eventually became his).

When you want to be rich, if you are an ordinary person, you had better accumulate money little by little, though it is not completely meaningless to start looking for 100 million yen on the street, for this has happened to someone in reality. You cannot say this way of becoming rich is unrealistic. It could even make you a millionaire! (He laughed).

And he added:

Since I am an ordinary person, I think I should achieve my satori little by little. If anyone believes that he can achieve great satori all at once, please try. It is totally his choice.
MORAL SPONTANEITY

The central issue for transcendence or self-change is solidity of the "newly acquired" self. The religious self is an integrated self in so far as it participates in the "wholeness" of divine order. The fragmented or compartmentalized self is a sign of failure in self-change, because compartmentalization indicates the lack of "wholeness", which may be either the result of the transcendental attempt or the continuity of the compartmentalized self before the attempt. Even outside of religion, some existential psychiatrists such as Frank A. Johnson define the lack of self-integration as the schizoid state and, also, the state of alienation (Johnson's word used in a sociological sense). In Zen, as I have stated earlier, the solidly integrated self is assumed to produce spontaneous actions. Therefore, its highly sophisticated and intellectual way of assimilating Buddhism is appreciated only when it is practised. Compared to Zen, SMBK places emphasis on morality in human relationships. As I have explained in the previous chapter, compassion as an SMBK operational morality has two sides: first, a compassionate state of mind, and, second, the act of assimilating the knowledge of others. Moral spontaneity in
SMBK is a demand to amalgamate these into a spontaneous action. As a moral attitude, that is, a more generalized state of mind which supports this moral spontaneity, compassion may be described as willingness or readiness to assimilate others' sides of the story about the same event. Without this, one's moral action will be hypocritical; the action taken on the basis of good knowledge but without compassion is manipulative. Action based on a felt compassion with no understanding of others may often result in mere self-satisfaction, or worse, an exploitation of others' sufferings. In fact, this is, apart from the SMBK moral thesis, a question fundamental to the relationship between self and others, or intention and expression.

Therefore, moral spontaneity is not a unique problem for SMBK. In Japan, this theme has been one of the major issues in religious and moral practices, and also in drama and artistic literature. In these, the whole problem has been made intelligible in a popularly accepted moral dichotomy, *giri* and *ninjo*. Semantically, *ninjo* is a compound noun with *nin* meaning human and *jo* meaning feelings. Together, *ninjo* means the natural human feelings that all human beings are supposed to be born with. It is similar to compassion but its connotation is much wider. *Giri* is another compound noun with *gi* meaning justice and *ri* meaning reason. *Giri* indicates the
rules through which \textit{ninjo} should be realized. From our anthropological point of view, the relationship between \textit{giri} and \textit{ninjo} may be found to be similar to that between the social norm or law and the common sentiment in the Durkheimian sense. For, \textit{giri} represents the collective and normative system of society and \textit{ninjo} is a parallel notion to the common sentiment which represents the psychological side of this system. As in the Durkheimian sense, law has a definite priority over sentiment when they come into conflict; \textit{giri} has to be chosen and the \textit{ninjo} side has to be repressed. The point is that both are different representations of the same morality, in spite of the fact that they could come into conflict. However, there is a difference between Durkheim and the traditional Japanese moral dichotomy: for Durkheim, the split between law and sentiment is inevitable in a modern society. Therefore, society has to be regulated by law, and sentiment has to be ignored when it does not support law. Hence, law and sentiment may be regarded as parallel to reason and emotion. In modern society, a political state whose function is based on law represents, or should represent, reason. In contrast, religion is also considered by opponents of religion as a representation of the emotional aspects of society.

In the traditional Japanese dichotomy of \textit{giri} and
ninjo, there is a strong tendency to negate the split; they are different — or more correctly, their difference is recognized — but such difference should not exist. Thus, Minamoto makes an interesting distinction between two kinds of giri as follows:

Then what is giri? As far as the present usage of this word we have discussed before is concerned, giri should be separated into "warm giri" and "cold giri". Cold giri is the kind of giri which makes us feel "forced to do" as is indicated in the usage of this word such as "to do for giri":

This giri indicates social norms or customs under enforcement and subject to sanctions which we may be reluctant to accept. Coldness of giri and coldness felt in our mind derive from such unwillingness. (In contrast) warm giri is an internal moral norm of a person, that is a morality of his own mind realizable in a personal and affectionate human relationship. ¹⁰

SMBK people are engaged in an attempt to eliminate the split between these two spheres of morality. In their case, compassion as an operational morality is also in danger of forming a split similar to Minamoto's notion of "cold" giri and ninjo, or Durkheim's notion of law and sentiment. Achieving spontaneity in the ritual way of assimilating morality depends on how the performer goes beyond the formal stage. In order to investigate this aspect, some basic characteristics of ritual require discussion.
SPIRIT POSSESSION AS A CALLING

The process of sa-tori in SMBK begins when the believer accepts spirit possession as a fact. The body movements of, and response given by the passive performer under the forehead purification (Chapter II) is, according to SMBK, the evidence that the spirit exists and that it possesses a living human being for a certain reason. Accepting or rejecting this point is a fundamental choice. If the person rejects spirit possession as a fact, he has no need to seek its reason. But once he accepts it as a fact, he has to know the reason for such a mystifying phenomenon, and SMBK doctrine provides an answer. The fear of spirit possession is dissolvable by mastering the doctrine and the purification ritual. However, "drop-outs" from SMBK may not be able to escape from the fear to which he has been exposed.

Acceptance of spirit possession has to be constantly confirmed and solidified through the purification ritual. This is the reason why SMBK believers are so anxious to witness the scene in which a possessing spirit actively responds to the given questions during the forehead purification. Furthermore, the communication with the possessing spirit requires the active performer to believe firmly that he is speaking to the possessing spirit not to the passive
performer. For the same reason, such an advanced stage of communication as "investigation" (identification of the possessing spirit) and "admonition" (teaching of the doctrine) is impossible without this firm belief.

When the person given the forehead purification ritual begins to be "controlled" by the possessing spirit and acts in some "strange" way, believers watching him usually show obvious signs of involvement in the event. Typically, chatting stops and the whole room becomes calm except for the loud voices of recitation of sacred verses, or whispering of private talks. Other pairs performing the purification ritual often pretend that they are concentrating on their own performances, but they become unnecessarily strained or cast frequent glances towards the scene. Sometimes believers (and some non-believers) attending the scene, but not performing the ritual, show their intense curiosity by staring at the person who is speaking and acting in a "strange" way. Sometimes they are so involved they even make facial expressions as the person controlled by the possessing spirit shows various emotions. An example is sadness and resentment on his face. This happens not only with the uninitiated or newly initiated, but also with believers at much higher levels, although uninitiated or newly initiated people are easily distinguishable because of their degree of strain and their
mixed expressions of fear and curiosity. An interesting point in this situation is that all such restrained signs of excitement are heard by the person under the control of his possessing spirit. Since his eyes are closed, often his hearing becomes keener.

However, before going into more details on SMBK spirit possession, I would like to clarify some basic points. The first point is that my attempt is not intended to judge if spirit possession exists as a fact (as the believers insist) or especially as a scientific fact, but to explore and understand how SMBK believers define it and what logic they construct based on such a premise.

For this purpose, I have found the definition given by Raymond Firth to be a good start. He defines spirit possession as "a form of trance in which the behavior actions of a person are interpreted as evidence of a control of his behavior by a spirit normally external to him." However, since the meaning of trance begs the question, I would prefer to change "a form of trance" simply into "a state". Then, my definition is that spirit possession is "a state in which behavior actions of a person are interpreted as evidence of a control of his behavior by a spirit normally external to him."

According to Paulson, a person in ecstasy can
recall his own experience later when he recovers, but he cannot in spirit possession. Concerning this point, however, Oesterreich reports two kinds of spirit possession, somnambulistic and lucid, and says that in the lucid form of possession the possessed person preserves his consciousness. Following this typology, the SMBK case seems to be a lucid form of spirit possession. Furthermore, the SMBK case is not a spirit mediumship, for a spirit medium actively and purposefully offers himself as a vessel for a spirit and is protected from the possible evil influence of the spirit. In SMBK, the possessed is defined as a victim of his possessing spirit.

The response to the purification ritual by the passive performer considered as controlled by the possessing spirit may be roughly categorized into two stages of intensity: one is a series of minor body actions or reactions such as dimsightedness, trembling of the hands in the praying position, twiching of closed eyelids, and the gradual leaning of the body in various directions. Although they begin unintentionally and the believer is told not to stop them, they can be stopped. These body motions are overt confirmation of spirit possession whenever any doubt is expressed.

Although the bodily reactive response is important, the second category of response to purification is more meaningful for SMBK. That is, the communication based on
questions and answers between the active performer and the possessing spirit of the passive performer. The possessing spirit answers in both words and physical motions. The communication is under the control of the active performer, and the possessing spirit only responds to the given questions. Obviously, the whole process of communication is guided. The guidance by the active performer is done in two ways: the questions are designed according to the SMBK doctrine; the answers are interpreted also according to the SMBK doctrine. However, interpretation is not simply given to the possessed person as a diagnosis of his problem after the purification ritual, but has to be confirmed by the spirit during the ritual. Thus, through questions and answers, interpretation and confirmation, and denial of the given interpretation and re-interpretation, the reason for a particular case of possession is gradually made clear. It is usually sought in the relationship between the possessing spirit and the possessed person (i.e. the passive performer in this context). The search for a reason for possession normally follows a long process of unfolding a story of resentment which first comes in fragments and then is gradually assembled into the SMBK pattern of a moral story. The story and process will be discussed later.

At this point, the third question is who are
considered or treated as the possessed. Lord-savior Okada, the originator of SMBK says that 80% of the whole world's population is possessed by external spirits. By this assertion, there should be a way to distinguish the possessed person from the non-possessed person, and the operative distinction should be the occurrence or non-occurrence of body movements and the response to the given questions under the purification ritual. However, this theory does not apply to any real ritual scenes. In the purification ritual, passive performers are all treated as possessed, which means that all the believers are treated as possessed. The principle operating here is this: everyone is possessed whether he responds to the purification ritual or not. In other words, the occurrence or non-occurrence of the response to the purification ritual does not distinguish the possessed person from the non-possessed person. Furthermore, no response from the possessing spirit indicates the power of resistance: a weak spirit is considered easily invokable by the forehead purification, shows the signs of its possession and answers the given questions. In contrast, the strong possessing spirit does not reveal itself, therefore no response is apparent. According to this definition, non-occurrence of the sign of spirit possession is evidence of spirit possession by an even stronger spirit. This is the basic operational definition. The only but mild exception to
this is the case in which the person was born with a special divine prophecy. In this case, his possessing spirit is under the control of a divinity so that it stays calm under any conditions until his divine prophecy is fulfilled. The point is that even in this case the person is considered to be possessed. According to the SMBK doctrine, being a regular human being and becoming a non-possessed person is an achievement based on an individual effort. However, the standard is almost too high to achieve; it is consistent one-ness with the supreme divinity. With this one-ness, the believer becomes an embodiment of the divine order and also the master of his spirit. In this state all his wishes are fulfilled and no external spirits can bother him. This is the goal. No matter how difficult it is for them to achieve, SMBK believers are obligated to strive for this.

One of the major pressures for making the initial choice between acceptance and rejection of the spirit possession is fear. It is terrifying to "see" the possessing spirit on the body of others waving their bodies and speaking in a "strange" way during the forehead purification. It is even more terrifying when this happens to one's own body. SMBK believers are aware of this point in their recruitment activity. In recruitment they treat the purification ritual as a healing instrument and deliberately avoid the forehead
purification, although they are also aware that this way of treating the purification ritual is permitted only as an expedient for recruitment. In fact, SMBK believers commonly experience that their careless leakage of the information on spirit possession easily drives away potential believers who have been attracted to SMBK for such pragmatic reasons as a quick and painless recovery from their present sufferings. Therefore, the introduction of spirit possession is saved until the initiation occasion, that is, the elementary level of the three-day lecture session on the SMBK doctrine. On this occasion, the notion of spirit possession is given as a question which should negate the basic orientation of one's life, and its answer is already available for the newly-initiated believer to take. Of course, the answer is SMBK doctrine.

For the first experience of the forehead purification, a newly-initiated believer (and sometimes a potential believer during the short waiting period before initiation) occasionally shows a firm denial of spirit possession believing that body movements could occur to others but not himself. One reason may be that he attributes the cause of such body movements to psychological insecurity or vulnerability and declares that he himself does not have such weaknesses. Or, he simply believes that he is stronger than others who have
shown such body movements or stronger than the believer who seems to gain a power in the purification ritual. Thus, once his body happens to move against his will his fear is tremendous. This type of person - and he is rather typical - asks for an explanation with the same degree of enthusiasm which characterized his initial denial of spirit possession.

However, until one is fully informed about the destructive power involved in spirit possession, one can receive the purification ritual without much fear. The ritual is gentle and relaxing, the local centre is bright and clean, and believers are friendly and open. Staying comfortable as an ignoramus is the general position for the people who are not dedicated but who remain loosely in the organization. They refuse to be initiated and cling to a clientele position. This marginal group appears to be the fourth category not treated by Morioka. (Diagram 15). These most marginal followers of the movement may be called "hangers-on." The common interest of these persons in SMBK is healing. The SMBK purification ritual for this purpose does not require them to be more than passive performers. But they can still receive almost the same privileges as the believers as far as the "effect" of the purification ritual is concerned. In this way, they can avoid a religious involvement which often causes an additional (and sometimes more serious) problem with their
families than the original problem that has motivated them to contact SMBK.

In the three-day elementary lecture session, those becoming believers are exposed to the SMBK notion of spirit possession. On the first day before the lecture, they appear to be quite relaxed. They generally hope to hear about the divine light and divinities. However, the elementary session concentrates on spirit possession, although it is mixed with some information about the divinities. On the third day they usually become strained. On this day in the early afternoon, they are given the talisman and become initiated. Following this they spend about three hours practising the active role in the purification ritual - for the first time in their experience. They commonly discover that the active role in the same purification ritual is quite different from the passive role. This is the moment when the body movements of the passive performer, which have been only a "strange" sight with some spiritual implication, suddenly stand out with a clear SMBK meaning. They "see" the possessing spirit instead of the passive performer.

When I attended the elementary session as a participant observer, I experienced a fear of spirit possession. I asked how other newly-initiated believers felt. The most common expression they gave me was "kimochi (ga) warui."
This literally means that my feeling is bad. Or, it simply means that it is dreadful or uncanny. This expression is also applied to a physical condition meaning that I feel bad or even that I am nauseous.

Much later I had a chance to speak to a female believer who was about 45 years old, a housewife and a well-educated suburban resident. She overtly expressed her feeling against the SMBK doctrine especially about spirit possession, and kept using the above expression. She explained to me the reason why she joined SMBK. She had intensive pains in the length of her backbone and in her jaw. Although she had seen more than seven medical doctors, she still could not escape from the pains. Finally she decided to try a religious method and joined SMBK. She was initiated and given a talisman. She explained that she did it for the hope for a cure, and said, "Otherwise, who would like to bother with such a dreadful (kimochi warui) religious practise?" When she said it, she made a face as if she had also had some physically bad feeling. I asked if the SMBK practise was that much "kimochi warui." She said, "yes. Of course. With such a thing as spirit possession!" I saw this person only a few times at the Koganei local centre, and after this conversation I did not see her again.

For a few weeks to a few months after the initiation,
depending on his enthusiasm and mastery, each believer is encouraged to visit the local centre as often as possible for the practice of the role of the active performer. During this period, the SMBK live-in teacher of the local centre emphasizes to the newly-initiated not to inquire about spirit possession more than he is taught at the elementary session and simply to concentrate on mastering the ritual performance. The teacher explained to me that too much thinking about it often makes the newly-initiated nervous or even neurotic because of the fear of spirit possession. The point is simply to accept whatever happens and trust the divinities.

The believers go through different emotional stages in dealing with spirit possession. In order to reduce the fear and nervousness at the beginning stage, the newly-initiated are usually matched with partners who already know not to show a violent reaction to the purification ritual, or with children whose response is normally much milder than that of the adult. The newly-initiated should concentrate during this period on learning the proper acts of ritual performance and memorizing the Prayer of Heaven.

Experiencing "the possessing spirit" beginning to show itself under one's palm is always frightening for the first time, even in the case where one has already had some minor experience of the body movement. This feeling is
maximized when the possessing spirit resists the given request, because newly-initiated believers are often totally convinced that the possessing spirit cannot resist the power of the divine light which comes in through the talisman. But, in this interpretation, as has been discussed in Chapter IV, they are mistaken. The talisman is neither a receiver of the light nor a transmitter of power from the supreme divinity, but it only protects the holder from an excessively intensive discharge of defilement and also from evil spirits, while he is making efforts towards divine one-ness. Protection provided by the talisman is relative, depending on the degree of engagement in the spiritual discipline. The newly-initiated believers usually miss the relative nature of the talisman, and mistake unusual response of possessing spirits for the lack of protection itself.

This problem is typically experienced when the spirit refuses to proceed with the purification ritual from the forehead to other vital points. At least in principle, the passive performer should immediately recover from the state of "having been taken-over" when he hears "O-shizumari!" (calm down). This (horrible occasions) happened to me, when I was an active performer as a participant-observer: the possessing spirit of the passive performer refused to disappear. I asked the Head of the centre for help. He told me to pray
to the supreme divinity and repeat "O-shizumari" a few more times. I did, but the spirit still refused to calm down. Finally I had to ask the Head to calm down the spirit for me. After the performance he said that the reason I could not handle the spirit was that my ego was too dominant to accept the divine will. This is the standard explanation for failure in the handling of the spirits. The failure in performance offers an occasion in which a newly-initiated believer realizes that the talisman is not a mechanical device which will automatically bring him power over the possessing spirit.

After the initial wave of fear, purification becomes an amusement. Once the fear is reduced it is quite a pleasant feeling to be able to control others simply by holding up one's palm. It is around this time that the believer's curiosity is particularly aroused. He begins to reflect on the lecture content of the elementary session and analyze the meaning of the words spoken by the spirits. Also, he often develops an interest in the reactions of the spirits when other believers are exorcising. This means from the SMBK point of view that he becomes less involved in his own ego and more liberated from the initial desire for his own quick salvation. He begins to realize that such a desire is an egocentric one, framed in a complete indifference to others. At
this stage the senior believers encourage him to ask questions, but give answers in fragments to see if he is willing to make an effort to assemble and find a meaning in them. This guidance is individually and carefully given, and when the Head of the centre approves, commonly with the recommendation of the live-in teachers, the person is permitted to attend the intermediate session. After this session – or even before if possible – the believer is expected to achieve further understanding: that the purification ritual should become a necessity of life, like breathing. Although fear and amusement and, most likely, curiosity still remain, they should be harmoniously encompassed in the spontaneous actions in the ritual performance. The achieved state is considered to be natural. Although I imagine this state should be aesthetically pleasing, it does not seem to be a consideration for SBMK.

Within the established form of the ritual frame, believers above the advanced level (senior believers) are more relaxed and achieve more flexibility than others. Senior believers are more spontaneous. The ability to be spontaneous is especially required for such advanced ritual acts as "admonition" (o-satoshi) and "investigation" (reisa). These two are the focus of communication because in SMBK the possessing spirit is not made to leave against its own will
but is based on its own *sa-tori* through persuasion. If the possessing spirit is forced to leave, it is believed to go straight down to Hell; therefore, the SMBK people do not permit themselves to be engaged in such an excessive use of power – even over an evil spirit. The purpose of purification is aimed at saving both the possessing spirit and the possessed. For this purpose "admonition" is particularly important because the spirit has to be convinced to leave. Preceding admonition, investigation is necessary. For, in SMBK, the sin is not a general attitude but a particular mistake. It has to be "pin-pointed" and all the names of the people involved in the case must be identified. Thus, admonition is not simply a preaching of general moral principles but normally leads to an unfolding of a long story of how the mistake has been made and how it has influenced others. The efficiency and accuracy of the unfolded story largely depends on the skill of the active performer.

At this stage of spontaneity in the ritual performance, the distinction between form and content disappears from the active performer. The ritual becomes as natural as breathing. According to Table 1 (Chapter I), about 21% of the respondents reach this stage by the SMBK standard, assuming that spontaneity in performance is one of the major qualifications of the advanced level. This figure also shows
that other believers remain at various emotional stages: some with more fear and some with more amusement. However, I did not see any clear correlation between these emotional states and the choice for leaving or staying in SMBK.

The following example is a scene from admonition. The dialogue develops much more spontaneously and may be compared to the example in Chapter II from an early stage of investigation. It is transcribed from a verbal scene tape-recorded at the Koganei local centre. In this case, the active performer was a female SMBK teacher, and the passive performer a female high school student. The active performer was trying to persuade the possessing spirit of the passive performer to accept the SMBK doctrine and leave her body. The active performer pressured the possessing spirit in various ways including coercion, display of sympathy and understanding, and suggestions for asking for forgiveness. Some believers witnessing this scene suggested to me that the possessing spirit spoke like a child and that it was identified and treated as a child.

ACTIVE PERFORMER: If you apologize to the divinity from your heart, he will forgive you. Please move to the tip of the fingers or toes, or be less bothering (to the possessed).

SPIRIT (of PASSIVE PERFORMER): No, No. I won't.

ACTIVE PERFORMER: He will not like you saying that you
won't. (In a tone of voice as if talking to a child, since the possessing spirit speaks like one).

SPIRIT: I promise not to be disturbing. Forgive me.

ACTIVE PERFORMER: The head and neck (of the possessed) are a very important part of the body. Your staying there itself is insulting the divinity.

SPIRIT: But I don't want to move.

ACTIVE PERFORMER: (Patiently) You must move. Otherwise, your apology is meaningless. (Carefully observing the reaction of the receiver, he adds:) Demonstrate your apology by moving to an undisturbing part.

SPIRIT: (Impatiently) So I am saying I'll not be bothering any more. I won't be bothering you anymore.

ACTIVE PERFORMER: The head and neck are important. Move to the tip of the fingers or toes. Otherwise you.....

SPIRIT: (Cutting into the transmitter's words, unresponsively) Not to such a place, but I want to go back to the astral world.

ACTIVE PERFORMER: So I am saying, go back to such a place.

SPIRIT: (In a relaxed tone of voice) Go back from there?!

ACTIVE PERFORMER: Otherwise, you cannot communicate your feeling of apology.

SPIRIT: (In the middle of the transmitter's words, suddenly says), I am sorry (in a very regretful tone of voice).
ACTIVE PERFORMER: Well, for today, I am going to say "o-shizumari" (calm down), so please move to the tip of the fingers or toes, and calm down quietly. Now ... (Is about to pronounce "o-shizumari").

SPIRIT: (Hastily) No, nooooo. Longer ... (in a childish manner).

ACTIVE PERFORMER: (Patiently) You cannot be purified all at once.

SPIRIT: Yes !!

ACTIVE PERFORMER: You cannot be saved unless you obey the law.

SPIRIT: Yes! (Resentfully) I am going to be nasty.

ACTIVE PERFORMER: Then you cannot go back to the astral world.

SPIRIT: Yes. Yes.

ACTIVE PERFORMER: You will not be able to go back to the astral world. And the divinity will give you hardship.

SPIRIT: No, I don't like it. Don't scare me (in a weeping tone of voice).

ACTIVE PERFORMER: (With dignity) Calm down gently.

SPIRIT: (In a weeping voice) No. I don't like that either.

ACTIVE PERFORMER: (Patiently repeats the teachings.) You apologized to the divinity a few minutes ago. You said you would not be disturbing any more, didn't you?

SPIRIT: No.!

ACTIVE PERFORMER: The divinity is watching you.

SPIRIT: No.!
ACTIVE PERFORMER: He is watching you carefully.

SPIRIT: No, I am scared.

ACTIVE PERFORMER: You apologize.


ACTIVE PERFORMER: (In a tired voice) If you say no ...
(Slows down, being tired).

SPIRIT: Yes ... (Changes to a sweet tone of voice, in response to the change in the tone of voice of the active performer.)

ACTIVE PERFORMER: (Her dignity restored) You don't mind if you cannot go back to the astral world?

SPIRIT: Yes. Ye...s. I don't like that either!

This forehead purification continued about thirty minutes repeating almost the same questions and answers. Then, finally the possessing spirit accepted the suggestion to "calm down" for the day, and the purification ritual ended for this time.

Numerous accumulations of such answers given by a possessing spirit in fragments are assembled into a moral story of the SBMK pattern. As the above pace is more or less typical of the forehead purification, it takes a long time even to assemble one story. In the ritual occasion, the content of question and answer, interpretation (by the active performer), confirmation or denial (by the possessing spirit), re-
interpretation (by the active performer), in the forehead purification is usually continued in a casual manner during the "healing" part of the purification ritual. On such an occasion, other believers who happen to be there often give their comments and interpretation of the actions of the possessing spirit of the passive performer. Of course the suggestions given by the SMBK teachers or the Head of the local centre have the strongest authority and are most likely to be accepted. When the moral story is formed, the believer is given a chance to publish it in a casual publication such as a local centre newsletter, leaflets for recruitment, or monthly SMBK magazine. If the moral story forms an excellent case of moral teaching, it is published in a textbook.

The unfolding of the moral story may take from a few weeks to several years. In the long-term unfolding usually the passive performer, the possessed, is responsible for the process of forming the story and informing other believers, because the active performers vary through the period. In a short-term unfolding, especially when the case is striking, sometimes the active performer, likely an SMBK teacher or the Head of the local centre, assembles the fragmented information spoken by the possessing spirit into one moral story. The moral stories in the following section are the final product taken from the SMBK textbooks.
ANCESTRAL SPIRITS AS A GUIDE TO THE PANTHEON

Once spirit possession is accepted as a fact, the message that the possessing spirit brings to the possessed should also be accepted as a fact. The focus of the message is one-ness with the order of the cosmos and submission to the will of the supreme divinity who created the cosmos. The complication occurs because, in the SMBK cosmology, the order is considered to contain some indispensable elements of disorder. This means that disorder is encompassed within order. However, at the individual level this construction of the cosmos appears as a conflict, that is, as a split between order and disorder. Hence, all the cosmic beings, including the spirits of the dead, men (as one kind of divinity) and other divinities are given a choice of joining either the order or the disorder. This is considered an individual option, although choosing disorder is defined as a mistake. With this condition, the possibilities may be restated as the choice between joining the order or making a mistake. Thus, in the SBMK cosmos, all the beings below the third level including the divinities make mistakes, because disorder, the source of mistakes, is asserted to exist below this level.

The additional condition here is that those who have
made a mistake should admit it and change their attitude, so that they do not repeat the same mistakes. Making a mistake is acceptable as long as it is corrected; the mistake is a result of immaturity and maturity can be achieved only through the negation of immaturity. Therefore, in principle, immaturity is encompassed in maturity because the disorder is encompassed in order. Those who happen to join the order are considered to have already achieved a higher level of purity and a great deal of self-discipline (redemption) has been achieved either by themselves in their previous lives or by their ancestors. However, in these cases the SMBK doctrine warns the believers who are self-disciplined not to become over self-confident, because their choice of order could be a fragile one. They have only "inherited" the accumulated purity but are not yet aware of the meaning and inevitability of their choice. These people are quite free to make mistakes and defile themselves again. In this way, even in the case of a successful choice, the SMBK doctrine emphasizes the possibility of making a mistake. In practice, the SMBK religious discipline simply begins whenever someone feels miserable, because the doctrine claims that human sufferings are a result of, or an expression of, the mistake.

The assertion that separation from one-ness is a mistake is followed by another assertion that the provision
of knowledge about the cause of the mistake will bring him to an immediate solution. In SMBK, evil is simply a mistake and is adjustable through the communication of proper knowledge. The concrete method established for this is the purification ritual. In this sense, the SMBK doctrine is monistic, and does not contain a dualistic and absolute split between good and evil. Although this logic seems to work well among the Japanese, it often receives a strong objection from those brought up in a Christian background. For example, a Brazilian Caucasian businessman about 30 years old and married to a Japanese woman who was an active believer of SMBK, insisted that the SMBK approach was powerless. Although he admitted that the SMBK purification ritual had had some effect on him (he felt good after it was given), he refused to join the SMBK order, saying that the SMBK divinities would not be able to compete with some demons in Brazil which had terrible power. He claimed that SMBK believers would be easily defeated by the Brazilian demons before they could possibly persuade the demons. He firmly believed that such demons were more powerful than any SMBK divinities, and his wife could not dissuade him from believing his point.

The notion of conflict in SMBK is an interpersonal dispute not a conflict within one's self. This is the reason why spirit possession is logically necessary; only the
possessing spirit can explicate the conflict as a dispute in terms of an assailant-victim relationship. Subsequently, the notion of assailant and victim is resolved into the idea similar to karma via re-discovery of the constant influence of the ancestral spirits. In the SMBK way of thinking the ancestral spirits guide the person to an awareness of the cosmos as a pantheon to which both he and his ancestors belong. This procedure may be schematized as follows: The cosmos is a pantheon containing order. Although it is basically a static constellation of divinities, it encompasses spirit possession and conflicts (disorder). Between these two the ancestral spirits bridge the gap. Therefore, the SMBK believer seeking sa-tori first encounters the possessing spirit, then the ancestral spirit, and finally finds himself as a "real" human being, that is, a divinity in the pantheon. In SMBK he is called, at this stage, "divine child" (kami no ko).

The purification ritual functions to provide believers with definitions of conflicts. The following is a scene from the Koganei local centre. A woman about forty years old dressed elegantly in a kimono responded to the purification ritual by waving her body in various directions and also rubbing it all over especially around her breasts and lap. She made some noises, trying to say something, but could not formulate them into words. The Head of the centre,
after the purification ritual, interpreted such actions as caused by a possessing spirit resenting unfulfilled love, because her possessing spirit, using her hands, enjoyed feeling her body. The Head was certain that the act of the possessing spirit had a sexual connotation and added that she must have attracted many men in her youth. Objecting to his interpretation, she said that all her actions seemed to have been motivated in the depth of her mind. (Her interpretation is modern and shows that she is rather well educated.) The Head denied her point of view firmly, by saying, "No, it is not in the depth of your mind. It is the possessing spirit. It is not in the depth of your mind. It is the possessing spirit. It is not part of you." Thus, in SMBK, conflicts do not exist in mind, but in disputes with other beings external to the person. To be a faithful SMBK believer, she was encouraged to accept the viewpoint given by the Head.

The Law of Balance dissolves conflicts into harmony. According to SMBK, in the process of self-change the stage of awareness of the possessing spirit is considered to be equal to that of the possessed. This is called the Law of Balance. According to this law, for the possessing spirit and the possessed to stay together in the form of spirit possession, they have to be at the same stage of awareness—which also means at the same degree of purity/defilement.
Therefore, in order to encourage the possessing spirit to leave, the possessed should achieve more and more sa-tori. This effort puts the possessing spirit in a double-bind condition; the possessing spirit also has to achieve sa-tori in order to keep in balance with the possessed, but by doing so the possessing spirit is forced to learn the SMBK doctrine which prohibits spirit possession as a mistake to be adjusted. This is the fundamental technique of "exorcism" in the SMBK ritual; it is persuasion based on investigation (identification of the possessing spirit in relation to the possessed) and admonition (teaching of the SBMK doctrine), but not condemnation by a stronger force. Also, according to the Law of Balance, the manifestation of the possessing spirit corresponds to the spiritual state of the possessed. An active manifestation by the possessing spirit is appreciated as the sign of self-change of the possessed. By the same token, no manifestation of the possessing spirit means that both the possessing spirit and the possessed are stubbornly resisting self-change towards sa-tori.

The audience of the purification ritual at the local centre actively supports the assertion that the possessing spirit and the possessed share the same stage of self-development. In the previous example of a forehead purification (pp. 270-273), a friend of the passive performer was
particularly vivid in her role as audience. (Both subjects were female highschool students and occasionally visited the Koganei Local Centre together after school.) The friend suggested to me that the possessing spirit could be a child, because it spoke and behaved like a child. I was not sure, although her suggestion made me concentrate on some possible juvenile gestures and vocabulary. Also, she suggested it could be a boy, but I could not decide. The active performer, on this occasion, was an SMBK teacher. After the forehead purification, when the ritual continued to deal with other vital points as usual, the active performer began to make suggestions in a similar manner to the admonition in the forehead purification. When the active performer said, "So, you must be obedient to your . . ." (I could not hear the last word), the passive performer suddenly responded by saying, "No, no, no, I don't like it, no, no." And she shook her body. Without a moment's delay, her friend said to the passive performer, "Ah, this is exactly the way your possessing spirit acted in your purification." Then she asked for confirmation from the active performer. "Isn't it true, Teacher?" and waved her body imitating the way. The passive performer was embarrassed and turned her face downward. Throughout the occasion the purification ritual continued smoothly without being interrupted by the friend's commenting
Based on the type of dispute they present, possessing spirits may be categorized into three groups, namely, resentful spirits, ancestral spirits, and miscellaneous spirits. The resentful spirits are the fiercest. Out of their resentment, they possess the descendants of their original assailant, intending to eliminate their family line. Or they possess the assailant after he is re-born as a different person. This type of spirit actively tries to give the possessed as much suffering as possible for revenge. The following are a few examples out of numerous stories in SMBK textbooks.

Example 1: One morning, Yōko woke up with her heart beating hard. She could hardly breathe. But, strangely enough, when she spoke to her husband and gave advice to her children she had no problem. When she was silent, she felt her heart beating too hard to breathe. In the case of ordinary heart disease, she should suffer when she speaks or walks around. But, her case was just the opposite. Out of her past experience, she noticed that it could have been caused by some spiritual reasons, so she hurriedly went to an SMBK local centre.

Soon after the purification ritual (for the forehead) began, her left arm fell asleep in a praying position. The paralyzing and stinging feeling extended into the left half of her body. Then it went into her right arm, and she felt all of her body becoming burning hot.

Both her arms fell on her lap. She poised her elbows like a warrior, and looked down slowly. Hot tears fell from her eyes. Her lips were tight with strain.
"What kind of spirit would you be" asked one of the leading figures of the centre who was performing the purification ritual for her.

From Yōko's lips were squeezed out some words.

"Killed... The Ancestor of Akitas (Yōko's family name) killed me and all my family... I resent it! I will never fail to balance out this resentment!"

"You were a warrior. Why were you killed?"

"The Akitas were merchants. They loaned me some money... Although I promised to pay it back, they used outlaws..." The possessing spirit caused her lips to tremble.

The summary of Yōko's story is as follows:

This warrior's name was Yamada. (Yōko forgot his first name. sic) He lived about three hundred years ago. He received money as a loan from the Akitas. Because he delayed in returning the loan, the Akitas used outlaws to kill all of the Yamadas.

The wife of the warrior was raped and killed in his presence, and also his three-year-old son, Tsurukichi, was killed. The warrior was beheaded.

It was indeed a tragic story.

Out of this resentment, these family members of the warrior possessed every generation of the Akitas and killed them. As Yōko was a subject of the warrior in her former life (she was a man at that time-sic), the warrior had possessed her since her childhood, made her marry into the Akita family, and arranged various types of revenges using her as his aid.

The warrior and his family members killed Yōko's father-in-law named Gi'ichi who died at 54. They also killed Gi'ichi's older
brother who died at the age of 25. Kōji (her son) was possessed by the spirit of the child who had been killed at the age of 3. Kōji's wanderlust and violence were both due to spirit possession.

Example 2: About four hundred years ago, a warrior was involved in a criminal case. An ancestor of the Shimomuras happened to be the superior, and judged that this warrior should take all the blame and commit harakiri.

The warrior forced to commit harakiri bitterly and permanently resented the ancestor of the Shimomuras, and killed every one of Shimomura's generation by possessing them. Apparently, some members of this warrior's family today are possessing Shimomura's family members.

The warrior did not tell his name (even for "investigation"), or his stories in detail. But, Shimomura's mother told him that the ancestors of the Shimomuras were warriors....

Anyway, under such circumstances the spirit of the warrior confessed that it arranged for Shimomura to have frequent car accidents. In the case of a motorcycle accident, Shimomura's friend fainted, and in the case of a car collision, the spirit blocked Shimomura from seeing the car coming toward him. When he collided with a super-express train, the possessing spirit blocked the noise and shape of the train from Shimomura's perception.

Although it may be an inevitable question to ask if a spirit of the dead is powerful enough to be able to do such tricks, Shimomura later experienced a fact which proved it to him.

It was about one month after his possessing spirit began to reveal itself during the forehead purification. On that day, Shimomura decided to go to his local centre instead of working because he felt his body weak and his head unclear. At a crossing, seeing a green
light, Shimomura drove his car straight on at the same speed. At this moment, a child on a bicycle darted out. Fortunately, Shimomura stopped his car only a second before running over the child, and then he saw the light was in fact red!

On the way to the local centre, he could not escape from the feeling that something was strange. Then, in the purification ritual, he experienced an intensive body movement caused by the possessing spirit: his body began to roll around in the local centre. Shimomura was surprised that such words as "Too bad. I failed, Too bad!" came out of his own mouth.

This shows that the possessing spirit regretted that it had failed to cause Shimomura to have a serious car accident. For this it even maladjusted his physical condition from the morning. After all, it was an easy task for a possessing spirit to change a red light to a green light in his eyes. Shimomura said that he was convinced that he had experienced the fearful power of the spirit of the dead on this occasion.

The second category, the ancestral spirit, possesses its descendants when the descendants neglect the ancestral rites. Since the spirits of the dead still need to absorb ki (chi in Chinese) of food and drink for a while after death (several years or more, depending on each case), it is the duty of the descendants to offer food (therefore ki) to the ancestral spirits. The spirits of the dead spend a transitional period after death adapting to the more spiritual way of the astral world. Until then, they are not completely free
from the way they have been as living human beings and need
to absorb ki of food and drink, although they do not
literally eat and drink in the same way as living human beings
do. According to SMBK, ancestral spirits can do this only
when they possess — literally in the sense of spirit
possession — their own tablets on which their names are
written. These tables are located in their family altars to
which food and drink are offered. SMBK has an elaborate way
of fulfilling this need for ancestral spirits: Name tablets
have to be black with gold letters and to be placed inside the
altar compartment in a certain order; the food and drink have
to be offered three times a day at the beginning, and later
can be reduced. Also, SMBK's unique way of showing respect
to, and fulfilling the needs of, ancestral spirits requires
the installation of a fluorescent light inside the altar and
the positioning of the altar above eye-level. Incense
burning is not practised. With any failure to complete this
formality, ancestral spirits may find possession of their
descendants as an inevitable aid for communication. The
following examples show spirit possession of this kind.
Example 3 is written in a narrative form, but, in this case
also, the story has been assembled in the same way as the
others.
Example 3: In November, I attended an elementary lecture session. In December, with my husband's approval, I performed a memorial rite for the honour of the Yasui family. Although he was suspicious at the beginning, my husband agreed with my attending the lecture session and performing this rite, since he had witnessed my recovery from disease.

After the memorial rite, my health became even better. The procepharic pain which had been reduced to an occasional pain since receiving the purification ritual disappeared completely after the rite. The right hand paralysis disappeared and hives became rare.

My husband attended the elementary lecture session in February this year (1978). He realized the importance of the memorial rite of the ancestors and developed sympathy towards the Hamada family (one of the families related to him, which had lost its successor). In March we had the memorial rite for the Hamadas.

Then, in front of the local centre shrine, the ancestral spirits of the Hamadas possessing my body all appeared one after another and thanked the supreme divinity. They came out taking turns: the spirit of the grandfather first, then, the eldest son, the second son, the wife of the eldest son, etc.

These spirits all promised clear dates on which they would leave my body. Because it went too well, I had a slight suspicion at the beginning that some animal spirit was ridiculing me. But, on the appointed dates all the possessing spirits left as they had promised.

All of them left for the astral world wholeheartedly thankful that they could be peacefully involved in a self-discipline because of the proper ancestral rite. Each time a possessing spirit left, my physical condition improved. Now, I have recovered almost completely from Basedow's disease, diabetes, and the symptoms of other afflictions.
The third category is a group of spirits of the dead (sometimes of animals) which possess strangers. The reasons vary: asking for salvation by speaking through a living person without knowing that it is an improper method, occupying a living body without being fully convinced that they are dead, enjoying the cozy texture of a living body knowing they are already dead, or even for amusement ridiculing living people. The next example is the story of the spirit of a fox which wanted to enjoy eating and drinking like a living human being. Also, the standard SMBK interpretation of an animal spirit pretending to be a divinity is that the spirit is enjoying ridiculing people, since real divinities are considered not to possess the body of others.

Example 4: Yaeko (pseudonym-sic), married for about two years, suddenly began to make strange statements, such as "I am so-and-so divinity," which surprised her in-laws.

Interestingly enough her strange activity was limited to a certain time of the day and did not jeopardize her normal daily activities. She ate well and went to work with no problems.

On the fourth day of the purification ritual, when her violent resistance to the ritual diminished, the SBMK teacher began "investigation." It was a spirit of a fox called Fushimi Inari, as the teacher had anticipated.

Responding to the teacher's question on the reason for possession, the fox answered, "I wanted to be a divinity so that I could eat the same delicious food as human beings eat." Or, "Last year around this time, this woman
came to my shrine with her husband. They
looked so intimate I could not resist the
temptation to possess her. I envied human
beings (like her)."

The ancestral spirit fulfills the same role without
possessing the descendant as the possessing spirit does for
awakening him. In Japan it is widely believed that a living
person is protected by a guardian spirit or spirits which is/
are usually his own ancestor(s). The guardian spirits do not
possess a living person but only remain standing behind him.
In this position the guardian spirits protect him and inspire
good ideas (which is normally received as coming from his own
intuition). Therefore, if the descendant is easily possessed
by miscellaneous spirits, it means that his guardian spirit(s)
cannot help him much in a normal way because his separation
from the order is too great. Here susceptibility to spirit
possession is also taken as an indicator of his separation
from the order. Apart from spirit possession, the guardian
spirits warn him by giving him suffering. In such a case a
warning from the guardian spirit(s) is easily identifiable
because it begins with a small accident such as hurting his
finger by hitting it or cutting it with a kitchen knife, or
dropping a book on his toe, and then escalates into more
serious and more painful events. Also, if it is a warning,
disease or any physical damage should be concentrated on the
left half of the body because the left half of the body represents the spiritual aspect. For example, when a book falls on his left toe, it is interpreted as an ancestral warning, but on the right toe it is normally dismissed as an accident or as a result of physical exhaustion. Additionally, in SMBK, other ancestral spirits, not only the guardian, may give warnings without possession, although this case is not emphasized so much.

The spirits of the dead in all four categories tie a possessed individual to his ancestors. These four categories, in summary, include two categories of ancestral spirits (one, possessing and the other non-possessing), resentful spirits, and miscellaneous spirits. The two categories of the spirit of an ancestor intentionally demand an identity from their descendants in terms of descent line: the possessing spirit does this through possession and a non-possessing spirit through causing minor but continuous troubles. In the case of the resentful spirit, the involvement of a descent line is also essential, because the resentment is directed towards the original assailant and his descendants. More precisely, the resentful spirit possesses a person in three cases: first, the assailant himself if he is still alive; second, the reborn figure of the assailant; and third, the descendants of the assailant. Because the resentful
spirit identifies the second and third as the same as the first, the possessed also has to accept this identification as a fact when he accepts spirit possession as a fact. In the case of a miscellaneous spirit, the notion of descent is more related to protection than to possession. Although the miscellaneous spirit possesses anyone available, such availability for possession is considered to be an indication of low protection from the ancestral spirit. In the last case the ancestral spirit appears as a kind of divinity given a role in the pantheon according to the cosmic order.

The SMBK believer then is gradually guided by his teachers and senior believers so he can integrate these experiences into the notion of positional relationships among the following three parties: himself, possessing spirits and ancestral spirits. In other words, he "discovers" a pantheon in which these three are located and paradoxically may be temporarily dislocated. For an individual believer in his ritual experience, the process of assimilation of such knowledge is an on-going dialectical process - dialectical in the most essential sense of the word. The believer, learning the positional relationship with his ancestor and his possessing spirit, locates himself in the pantheon. At the same time, by locating himself in the pantheon he can clarify the positional relationship with his ancestor and his possessing
Su no Kami

fire  time  space.

first  first  spirit of light  light  life  life
male  female  words

male  female  light  .......light  seeds  .........seeds

first  first  words........words  wind........wind  etc.
royal  royal
male  female

royal  human beings (five races)
family

su no go-reitō

DIAGRAM 26: The SMBK pantheon as a kinship map
spirits. In this way, possessing spirits and ancestral spirits, overlapping in some cases, both call an individual to an awareness of the divine order visualized in the image of pantheon through the notion of descent line.

In the SMBK doctrine, the pantheon is a kinship map. Diagram 21 of the SMBK cosmos below shows why the lineal male descent line should be the most respected.

This notion of the male lineal descent line is most explicit in the rituals concerning the family altar. Or, it may be more accurate to say that the family altar is an indispensable instrument when the believer assimilates the notion of the descent line through ritual learning. The SMBK doctrine asserts that each family must have an altar to celebrate regular ancestral rites and to make food offerings to the male lineal ascendants (plus their wives and their family members who died before marriage). In the exceptional case in which the wife is the last surviving descendant of her own father's lineal descent line, she should install another altar for her father's line. In this case her altar should be smaller than her husband's. In another exceptional case in which a possessing spirit demands the rites and food offerings of the possessed, although the relationship between the possessing spirit and the possessed is remote or even non-existent in terms of descent line, the possessed should still
install an altar. In this case the altar may be a very small one. If one person happens to have all three, the size of the altar should be changed according to importance; the father's altar should be the largest, the mother's second, and the others the smallest.
NOTES


3 Z. Shibayama, 1975, pp. 35-6). Although the diagrams with ten oxen are most common and well known, according to Shibayama, there are many other types of diagrams in Zen with more or less than ten stages.

4 This "Diagram of Ten Oxen" is according to Kakuan. (Ibid. pp. 37-58). (The quotation was translated from Japanese by K. Miyanaga.)

5 "Teaching of Ten Oxen and Human Mind" (Transcript from a recorded lecture given by Okada, p. 12). (The quotations were translated by K. Miyanaga.)

6 tongo (頼悟)

7 zengo (漸悟) Zen of zen-go means "gradual". It is not zen of zen (禅) Buddhism.


9 Giri de suru.

10 Minamoto, 1969, pp. 26-27. (The quotation was translated by K. Miyanaga.)

11 Firth, 1959, p. 129.

13 Here the active performer is engaged in "investigation" (identification of the possessing spirit).

14 Natsumura, 1977, pp. 58-61. (The quotation was translated by K. Miyanaga.)

15 Sekiguchi, 1979, pp. 42-44.

16 In Japan the fox is commonly considered a divine being and given a shrine. Such a fox and its shrine are called *inari*, and the fox of the Fushimi shrine is considered one of the most powerful.

CONCLUSION
This dissertation has been focused on what SMBK people wish to become and what they achieve. The central theme has been social creativity: the construction of a socio-religious system under given social conditions. From this point of view, the inquiry into motivation has been deliberately avoided. The reason is theoretical. The inquiry into motivation gains validity only if the assumption is correct that aspects of the religious movement are ultimately determined by factors external to the creative attempt of the people involved. Such determinism may be viewed either socially or psychologically. In social determinism, the determinants may be demographic factors including the age and sex distribution among the believers, or they may be other social elements such as economic condition, class and family background. In the psychological approach, personality type and personal life history are probably the major factors which are considered to determine the basic consistency of the people in a particular religious movement: the characteristics of the movement are considered to be the manifestation of a syndrome which belongs to a particular psychological type. Therefore, in either psychological or social determinism,
people's attempts at new creation are theoretically ignored; a particular movement is taken to emerge from those who are already thought of as particular.

In contrast to the deterministic approach, the emphasis in this dissertation is that people gain particular characteristics in the movement through interaction with the wider society. Therefore, this approach does not devaluate the meaning of social tendencies in the wider society. Society offers materials and reasons for the people involved in social movements to work for negation. Probably the attraction existing in the wider society to religious movements is found where the wider society fails to fulfill expectations. For example, physical and mental patients who have not been cured by modern medical science often go into religious movements which offer some curing methods. People who suffer from the loss of moral perspective in the modern wider society may join movements which enunciate clear moral principles. Those who feel alienated from their own nature in modern technology and associated pollution may seek some naturalistic life styles in religion. The point is, however, that "who chooses which movements" remains obscure. Religion often is esoteric, and believers are usually not fully informed at the initial contact about what they are going to experience in the movement. Also, the intensity of exposure to the recruitment activity and the skill of recruiters add complex elements. Therefore, individuals' encountering and joining particular
movements tend to be rather accidental, although I emphasize that general social tendencies are observable. What is not accidental are the procedures through which the participants achieve faith, and the religious system which provides and ensures this procedure.

In modern society, however, both religious faith and its products have to be recognized as democratic by the wider society. Therefore, they also have to be rational, because democracy is considered to be rational by definition. The construction of a socio-religious system which involves such irrational elements as magical healing and spirit possession is not fully acceptable, and often comes into conflict with its wider society. In order to be democratic, the system must be equally as comprehensible to outsiders who do not wish to share it. SMBK may be pointed out as a typical example, because it involves spirit possession as a central theme of the doctrine, which is totally incomprehensible to outsiders. The social tendency against religion is particularly strong in Japan today, because the failure in democracy before the end of World War II has been blamed on the religious leadership of the State. The accusation extends to religion in general beyond State Shinto and Shrine Shinto which used to serve as the national ideology. However, in the SMBK example, it has been shown that a religious movement, to a certain extent, can achieve a democratic ideal of the wider society under the religious ideology and ritual practice, although both are disdained by the wider society.
In SMBK, the norm of formal democracy and informal hierarchy of the wider society is reversed. In Japanese society in general, including SMBK, social organization consists of two sides, formal and informal. Formal organization embodies the ideology of the group, and informal organization ties the group members together into a team in order to fulfill group tasks. The basic difference between SMBK and the wider society lies in the reversed combination of formal and informal organizations: in the wider society, formal organization is intended to be democratic, but informal organization which substantiates the whole system preserves indigenous hierarchy. In contrast, the SMBK formal organization is explicitly hierarchical. But, its informal organization is an egalitarian friendship network. Although, in SMBK, egalitarian engagement moves upwardly to formal hierarchy, the majority of believers remain within the egalitarian network of the informal organization.

The egalitarian orientation of SMBK, however, becomes a major weakness for cohesion. "Dropping out" of SMBK is not difficult. The reason is the lack of a norm of a permanent relationship. In Japan in general, because informal organization is an aggregation of numerous pair relationships primarily separate from each other, the nature of cohesion is personal. The cohesion of the system as a whole is a sum of
loyalty achieved by the pairs. Therefore, the strength of cohesion depends on the promotion of loyalty in personal relationships. A quasi parent-child relationship is commonly imposed by the organization on the pairs for this purpose. Its basic pattern is simple; the "parent" and the "child" reciprocate various services, and, particularly, the "parent" provides psychological support for the "child." The point is that the content of the services and psychological support depends on each pair. As a result, the pairs develop personalised relationships built on the same pattern. Sōka Gakkai, Risshō Kōsei Kai and even Sūkyō Mahikari (a splinter faction of SMBK), for example, develop hierarchical pair relationships in which the concept of "dropping-out" is strictly constrained under quasi parent-child bonds.

Instead of offering a quasi parent-child relationship for the basis of cohesion, SMBK offers engagement through cure. The SMBK believers enter "pairing" through the repetitive performance of the purification ritual. It provides the basic context and meaning of interpersonal relationships in action. The context is acted and experienced. Therefore, it is lived. Although the action in the ritual is a symbolic one, for the believers who have experienced it the ritual is no longer an artificial construction of ideology. It becomes a special sequence of life in which
its essence is revealed. Thus, the organizational cohesion in SMBK is "metaphorical." The strength of cohesion lies in the strength of ritual experience. Hence, the reality of spirit possession as the case experience in the purification ritual becomes a crucial element.

The initial engagement in the process of cure in SMBK is physical. Table 12 indicates the categories which believers define as their "motivations." The Table indicates that, at the point of joining, most believers are not much disturbed by disputes and disputing and, therefore, there is neither much notion of spirit possession nor concern for others; less than 4% of the respondents (categories 5, 6 and 7) state dispute as their motivation. But 70% (categories 1, 2, 3 and 4) register ill health (including mental) either his own or in his family as the principal motivation. About 25% (category 9) are motivated by a doctrinal interest in Shinto, SMBK cosmology, and spirits. The reason why the overwhelming majority indicate ill health is that SMBK recruiters tactfully deliver the purification ritual as a therapy for diseases. Some advanced believers told me that successful recruitment depended on showing the instantenous effect of the purification ritual for such minor physical troubles as sore throat from a cold, a pain from a minor injury, burnt skin, sore shoulders, and tired feelings in the body.
TABLE 12: Advocated Motivation for Joining SMBK

1. Physical ill health of the respondent
2. Mental ill health of the respondent
3. Physical ill health in the respondent's family
4. Mental ill health in the respondent's family
5. Disputes in family
6. Troublesome human relationships in the job situation
7. Other trouble in human relationships
8. Trouble concerning money
9. Other
10. No answer

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In spite of a fair success of the modern medical system in Japan, the demand for naturalistic curing including the SMBK means has not diminished. Japanese society since the period of high economic growth after the end of World War II has developed general medical care through the Government's medical insurance system. The infantile mortality rate has drastically decreased, and Japan has achieved the longest life expectancy in the world. However, the quick expansion of the modern medical system has caused some problems: over-use of medicine (because the physicians are paid through the Government largely for the medicines they provide), and the lack of care for the comfort of the patient. Thus, it has been said, "Modern medicine cures the disease, but kills the patient." In sharp contrast to modern medical science, naturalistic cures including the SMBK method provide holistic care which have no side-effects. It may not "cure" the disease but will "cure" the person.

Provision of intensive care for the comfort of the sick person by his family is distinctively a traditional aspect encouraged in naturalistic curing. As has been pointed out, the idea of segregating the handicapped did not exist in traditional Japanese society. The sick person was closely watched by his family and given a special diet. This tradition is still remaining today. In
traditional areas, hospitals receive many visitors who wish to encourage the patients and also their families who bring special food. However, in modern areas, hospitals often deliberately discourage the patients' families, or even prohibit them, from providing this traditional care. This is one reason why such an apparently "backward" religious movement as SMBK gains popularity especially in modern areas rather than traditional areas.

Although modern and naturalistic curing theoretically oppose one another, in practice, people often use these two means together. This aspect is true even among SMBK believers. For example, intravenous feeding is officially approved in SMBK, because it injects energy into the body. Also, believers, especially at the bottom level, often take medicines and perform the purification ritual at the same time. There is no active punishment for the double practice, and the application of the principle of the prohibition of taking medicines is lenient, until the believer individually comes to the point where he realizes he must make a choice for the SMBK sense of "natural life and natural death" over the modern notion of therapy of disease. This circumstance explains the high membership "turn-over" rate after initiation. Nine out of ten leave SMBK, when they realize that they must reject modern medical means for the SMBK spiritual curing.
However, SMBK constantly attracts new-comers. Japanese people are extremely curious about both old and new means of naturalistic curing such as acupuncture, shiatsu (pressure massage), "mushroom tea," (Drinking tea "fermented" with a special kind of mushroom spread wide and fast but diminished quickly when it came into conflict with medical regulations.), and SMBK hand healing.

The later denial of the notion of "hand healing," a physical therapy for diseases which is initially imposed, is systematic and effective in the SMBK educational procedure. In the advanced notion of SMBK, diseases are non-existent. What is considered to exist is defilement. SMBK conceives the defilement in two categories: dirt-poison and possessing spirits. The process of either accumulation or discharge of dirt-poison is, according to SMBK, falsely conceived as disease by medical science. Therefore, SMBK insists that the treatment provided by medical science accelerates the accumulation of the dirt-poison by blocking its access to discharge. SMBK also insists that the purification ritual, in contrast to the medical treatment, charges the performers with the divine light which is a property of the supreme divinity and is the source of life. The divine light purifies the performers and, therefore, induces the discharge of defilement. The process of charging oneself with the
divine light is a spiritual cure, and the process of discharging the defilement is its "physical" side. The points are that the spiritual and physical cures are two sides of the same coin, and that the spiritual cure is essential and the physical cure is epiphenomenal.

The systematic denial of the diseases by the introduction of spiritual cure is possible only in the context of the continual practice of the purification ritual, because spiritual cure in SMBK begins with the acceptance of spirit possession as a fact. It gains reality exclusively through the purification ritual in which possessing spirits and human beings dramatically interact. In SMBK, possessing spirits are basically treated as defilement similar to dirt-poison, both of which should be discharged and purified. The difference between dirt-poison and possessing spirits is that, in order to overcome the fear of spirit possession, the believer has to become an active performer in the purification ritual. Being an active performer, when the believer assimilates the SMBK paradigm as his own epistemology, he can redefine spirit possession as a divine calling. The supreme divinity lets evil exist so that other beings become aware of goodness through knowing the nature of evil. In other words, spirits possess living beings only to lead both parties to the purity of the divine order, a property of
which is mental and physical health. The discovery of the
divine will and re-definition of spirit possession will
eliminate fear associated with spirit possession. The "drop­
outs" from the process of spiritual cure may not find an
active way to escape from the fear of spirit possession
outside of SMBK. However, the fear seems to fade away
after the person has left the context of the purification
ritual which offers a striking stage-setting for spirit
possession.

Of the two categories of defilement in SMBK, dirt-
poison can be discharged through the passive role, although
senior believers always emphasize that the active role is
far more effective. Some believers express the view that the
passive role is already effective enough for them, and they
would rather avoid more intensive discharges. The "hangers­
on" often wish to remain uninitiated for the same reason.
They would rather avoid SMBK spiritual discipline and be
comfortable beneficiaries of the purification ritual.

The turning point from a physical notion of cure
to a spiritual notion of cure is an individual "discovery,"
although the framework of the SMBK educational procedure
thorough the purification ritual is collective. The
"discovery" is possible only through the behavioral submission
to the context of the purification ritual. Because the
ritual is constructed to represent the SMBK paradigm (the divine order), submission to the context of ritual means the behavioral adoption of the paradigm which has not yet mentally been assimilated. However, in initiation, hints have been given. Based on them, the meaning of the change of emphasis in cure and, accordingly, in the purification ritual from the passive role to the active role has to be individually "discovered." Although the paradigm is exposed in the context of the purification ritual, the change itself is not suggested in the form of the ritual. The purification ritual is basically performed in the same way throughout the hierarchy of SMBK, although, according to senior believers who have already accomplished the change, the difference in performance between the elementary and advanced levels is obvious. However, the difference only becomes obvious once the meaning of the change is discovered. If the change is not discovered the difference remains puzzling; the ritual still appears the same to the eyes of those who have not discovered its meaning. They cannot fill the gap between what they see and what senior believers say about the same ritual.

Recruitment activity presses the believer to discover the meaning of the change of emphasis in the purification ritual. The meaning, of course, indicates the
redefinition of the physical cure by the notion of the spiritual cure. In recruitment activity, the believer is an active performer, by definition. The skill and meaning of the performance is subject to question. The people he tries to recruit will likely represent the outsider's critical opinion against religion. He is on constant trial. Therefore, recruitment creates confrontation: it is a confrontation with the outside rational world through the potential believers as well as with the spiritual world through the possessing spirit involved in the purification ritual. Furthermore, it is a confrontation with his own self through the simultaneous confrontation with the rational and spiritual worlds.

The dialectic of self and others, described above, occurs within the given framework of the SMBK religious system. It is rigid and essentially unchangeable. With the discovery of the meaning of the shift in emphasis from the passive role to the active role, the believer also shifts from the informal organization to the formal organization. This shift indicates upward mobility. However, for the individual believer, moving upward also means giving up creativity: the products synthesized between SMBK and the wider society, including egalitarianism and the friendship network, must be individually renounced. SMBK doctrine
emphasizes the importance of total submission to the SMBK divine order and overtly denies individual creativity. What is important is a divine "given," and individuals become "creative" when the divinity gives them such talent according to the necessity for the realization of the divine will. Therefore, creativity is also simply a "given." This denial of creativity embodied in the formal organization combined with freedom in the informal organization results in many regular believers relinquishing upward mobility. For example, one intermediate believer resented the SMBK religious system as too rigid (she said, "As rigid as Sōka Gakkai"), and insinuated that egalitarian orientation and freedom in the informal organization were even deceptive.

The overall framework of the SMBK religious system is rigid, because it embodies order which the SMBK doctrine describes as a divine creation and also unchangeable. Because the order is realized within SMBK (at the third level of the SMBK universe), the wider society is automatically assumed as a disorder. SMBK divine history tells us that the whole world is in a state of disorder now, and that SMBK is the only entrance to the coming order, that is, another divine civilization. However, at the same time, according to SMBK, order contains various changes and activities which are considered to be disorders. For example, the informal
DIAGRAM 28: Enclosure of Disorder in the SMBK Cosmos from the SMBK Point of View

order

the SMBK cosmos

order

formal organization

SMBK

informal organization

Japanese society

disorder
organization is a disorder, because it is not hierarchical. In this sense, the informal organization and the wider society are more or less continuous. This means that joining the hierarchical order is the "real" membership in SMBK, and is achieved through spirit possession, another disorder which exists both inside and outside SMBK, but which reveals its real meaning only in SMBK. Spirit possession is immoral and disorderly. However, spirits' making mistakes by possessing living human beings is, in fact, expected. By learning the meaning of the reason why mistakes are permitted, the person can assimilate himself into the order. That is, without mistakes there is no sa-tori either. Thus, in SMBK, participation in disorder is a necessary condition for choosing order as one's goal in life.

The metaphorical reasoning of the SMBK cosmology enables conceptualization of the process of disorder contained in order. It is a "geographical" containment: disorder in the middle and bottom layers of the cosmos is contained in the order of "wholeness" of the cosmos. Because equality is another name for disorder in SMBK, equality is also considered to be contained in hierarchy (order). By the same token, the informal organization (egalitarian and so a disorder) is considered to be contained in the formal organization (hierarchical and an order), although the
relationship between these two organizations in reality is juxtaposition (Diagram 29). The implication here is that a set of binary oppositions such as order/disorder and hierarchy/equality does not automatically form a dialectic. Within SMBK, the patterns of non-dialectic relationship are organizational juxtaposition and doctrinal containment. Through metaphorical reasoning, the dialectic in SMBK is kept separate between the individual and the collective levels so that the SMBK religious system is consistently reproduced. It may expand by drawing members from the wider society, but the framework of the SMBK religious system will remain unchanged. All the synthetic products between SMBK and the wider society created by individual believers are absorbed into the informal organization, and lose doctrinal justification as meaningful components of the SMBK religious system.

In the SMBK example, ideology is not a simple reflection of social organization. On the contrary, social organization provides a contradictory pathway to the ideology through spirit possession in terms of spiritual curing. In this way, in SMBK, individual believers go through a gradual educational procedure step by step as going up a stairway. Their negation of the epistemologies achieved in each step constitutes the condition for advancement to the next step towards assimilation into the SMBK religious paradigm.
DIAGRAM 29: Organizational Juxtaposition and Doctrinal Containment in the SMBK Religious System

= parallel expressions

- cosmology = formal organization

- (hierarchical)

- containment = juxtaposition

- operational morality = informal organization

- (egalitarian)
It sets the goal for individual submission to the context of the purification ritual, and harmonizes conflicts which might otherwise lead to change of the given framework of the SMBK system. Under the SMBK paradigm, that is, containment of disorder in order, individual changes do not initiate collective changes. However, the rigidity of the framework of the SMBK religious system does not jeopardize the vital individual attempt at self-development, but, instead, ensures it.
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