

Bodily Experience in Everyday Life and Folkloric Ritual : The Case of Take-Kagura in Iwate Prefecture

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Abstract

This paper is a tentative examination of the representation of folkloric ritual, focusing on the Take-Kagura handed down in Iwate Prefecture, from the viewpoint of ordinary bodily experience. The expression “Yamanokami spreads food among the people” has been considered to be an idealistic, or mental, expression. However, it is fundamentally dependent on an “image schema of supply,” formed through the recurrence of bodily experience of ordinary, everyday life. In the bodily experiences of people in the area of Take-Kagura, the natural phenomena forming the suppliers of food are basically incomprehensible. But those phenomena are expressed as *kami* and converted into a comprehensible pattern in the moment of prayer or ritual. On the other hand, the cognitive system for knowing *kami* is revitalized through the everyday bodily experience of receiving the blessings of nature and through bodily experience in rituals. Therefore, the bodily experience of receiving gifts from nature is understood as “the grace of *kami*,” associated with the emotions of “delight,” “thanksgiving,” and closeness.”

Key Words: folk ritual, bodily experience, cognitive semantics, image schemata

Introduction:

The advancement of the view of the body can be given as one of the conspicuous developments of the humanities and social sciences in the last half of the 20th century. Until then, the body was perceived to be vegetable or machine-like and, as such, was lesser and subordinate in comparison with the spirit or consciousness. But more recently, the body has instead come to be perceived as belonging with and governing humans’ “knowledge” and “spirit.” Of the research which fostered this paradigm shift, I would like to concentrate especially on that of M. Merleau-Ponty, M. Polanyi, P. Bourdieu, and various research in cognitive science which, while being based on empirical evidence, constructed a subtle theory of the body.¹ The basic thought common to these is that human knowledge and the body comprise an inseparable whole, and that bodies assume an important dimension of intellectual activities. At present, the widely shared premise is that human intellectual and cultural activities are not driven by conscious linguistic activities such as interpretation, reflection, or analogy, nor by so-called “unconscious” structures, nor by anything except the concrete body. What is more, in the field of cognitive semantics which is utilized in the analysis in this paper, the point of view is generalized that almost all cultural creations such as scholarship, art, and religion are drawn and created from bodily experience.

In this paper, I would like to consider how we can understand religious phenomena using the theories of body mentioned above. Nearly all religions are deeply concerned with the body. For example, we can cite various ascetic practices, rituals accompanied by bodily gestures, ascetic lifestyles which regulate the body, concepts which view the universe and body as one, and so on. Additionally, theories of body have come to occupy an important place even in religious studies research. However, it does not mean that in this paper I will focus especially on bodily practice in religion. Instead, the trivial, mundane bodily experiences themselves—continuing uninterruptedly and repeatedly in every aspect of our lives—are the main focus. I will attempt to think about how these mundane everyday bodily experiences influence religious expressions and understanding. The understanding and expression of religious ritual has until now come to be thought of as belonging to a logical, semantic, spiritual, or rational level; based on current theories of body, however, these understandings and expressions can be actually thought of as being regulated by concrete bodily experience, and melding deeply with the body.

In this paper the object of analysis is the ritual expression of Take-Kagura which is passed down in Iwate Prefecture.¹¹ In the Take-Kagura there are various ritual expressions such as the reproduction of myths, exorcism of bad spirits, driving away of demons, and so on. In order for the structure of a specific expression to be analyzed by the methods of cognitive semantics, of the various expressions mentioned above I will focus specifically on the expression, “*kami* spreads food among the audience.” With daily bodily experience as a base, I will elucidate how this expression is created.

The expression and understanding of the “*kami* spreads food among the audience” can be thought of as being founded in the repeatedly appearing patterns of concrete bodily experiences. In the case of this expression, the patterns of concrete bodily experience are comprised of the three elements of “supplier,” “receiver,” and the causal connection of these two in “supply.” In the context of the Take-Kagura, the mountain corresponds to the supplier. In this case, although it is viewed as a “volitional existence,” one of the important characteristics of the mountain is that its intention or purpose in supplying water or produce is unclear. This “mysterious volitional existence” is converted in ritual, however, to “*kami*,” something that can be comprehended. Therefore, the ritual expression examined in this paper can be thought of as a system which fills the incomprehensible void in the bodily experience of supply. Through this, people come to understand the bodily experience of incomprehensible supply as a feeling of thanks accompanying “the blessings of *kami*.” I would like to clarify the above in the following manner:

First, I will outline the context in which the expression the “*kami* spreads food among the audience” is actually performed. Next, I will formulate the conditions of the cognitive systems comprising the base of the communication symbols that bring about this expression and its understanding. The logic of cognitive semantics will be invoked in this task. And then, using the concrete bodily experience of “supply” specified here as a clue, I will reveal the characteristic of “food supply” and the supplier in the context of this example, before finally presenting some general considerations.

I. The “*Kami* Spreads Food among the Audience”

Many scenes in which *kami* spread food among the audience can be seen in the performance of *kagura* rituals. For example, beginning with the *kagura* of the Tōhoku region, there is the Horowasan *Shimotsuki kagura* 保呂羽山霜月神樂 of Akita Prefecture, the Hongawa *kagura* 本川神樂 of Kōchi Prefecture, the Bitchū *kagura* 備中神樂 of Okayama Prefecture, the Takachiho *kagura* 高千穂神樂 of Miyazaki Prefecture, and so on. In all of these examples, a *kami* wearing a mask distributes food from the stage to the audience members who vie to receive it.

Take-Kagura is performed in Hayachine Shrine, which enshrines Mt. Hayachine 早池峰山, the tallest peak in northern Akita Prefecture’s Kitakamisanchi area 北上山地. This *kagura* retains its style from the Muromachi Period, and currently around forty pieces are taught.ⁱⁱⁱ The performing group is comprised of fifteen members. A lion’s head (*shishitō* 獅子頭) represents the object of worship, Hayachine Daigongen itself, and is made to be used in invocatory dances (*kitō no mai* 祈禱の舞). Take-Kagura developed mainly from dances included in Shugendō rites, medieval *sarugaku*, or *kyōgen* performances. In addition to performing at Hayachine Shrine and nearby communities, members of the group travel to cities or events to dance publicly when there are requests.

The community of Ōhasamamachi in Hanamaki City 花巻市大迫町 requests Take-Kagura each year when it holds a festival of prayers for a good harvest after the rice transplanting is finished. On the other hand, there are some communities which hold *kagura* festivals as a celebration in autumn when the harvest has been completed. In either case, we can consider that they date back to the Edo Period.

In the case of the festival for a good harvest held in Ōhasamamachi, the Take-Kagura takes the following form: first, the Take-Kagura members arrive at the community in the early afternoon and perform the ritual of inviting the *kami* down (*kamioroshi* 神降ろし) at small shrines (*hokora* 祠) in several locations in the area. Upon finishing, the men of the community usually gather in the house where *kagura* is scheduled to be performed and have a party. The party finishes, and as the time for the *kagura* performance approaches, more community members begin to gather in large numbers. Because men and women of all ages are gathered there, the area takes on a lively air. When I attended for fieldwork in May of 2004, roughly fifty people were gathered.

In this type of religious event pieces called “the six ritual dances” are performed first. The order of these is the “Bird Dance” (*tori mai* 鶏舞), “Old Man Dance” (*Okina mai* 翁舞), “The Third Old Man Dance” (*sanbansō mai* 三番叟舞), “Hachiman Dance” (*Hachiman mai* 八幡舞), “Dance of the Mountain *Kami*” (*yamanokami no mai* 山の神の舞), and “The Opening of the Stone Door” (*Iwatobiraki no mai* 岩戸開きの舞). Together, the dances suggest the creation of the universe.^{iv} In the fifth of the dances, *Yamanokami no mai*, a mountain god wearing a red mask first climbs onto the stage and repeats various mantras and ritual actions. This series of actions is meant to gradually strengthen the *Yamanokami*, and its peak is indicated by his display of the immovable heart *mudra* (*Fudōshin’in* 不動心印). Next, the *kami* takes a tray on which rice or sweets (depending upon the type of

performance) have been placed, and liberally tosses this food out amongst the audience members (Picture 1).



Picture 1: The Dance of the Yamanokami

During a festival, a large amount of sweets are dispersed among the entire crowd. When this happens all of the audience members laugh and have fun as they attempt to receive the dispersed sweets by reaching out hands, or by picking up ones that have fallen to the ground, resulting in substantial commotion. The audience members sitting in the back appear a little envious, since few sweets are thrown to them.

After this, an additional ten more pieces are performed. When it becomes late in the night, the Gongen Dance (*Gongen mai* 権現舞) is performed as an invocation, and the *kagura* performances are concluded. Following this, *kagura* amulets are distributed to the households of the community, and after a closing party with everyone, the *kagura* group returns to their homes before the daybreak.

II. Understanding of Experience from the Image Schema of Supply

I have given a brief outline of the circumstances in which the Take-Kagura is performed above. However, in this context, how is the expression “Yamanokami spreads food among the audience” connected with everyday bodily experience, and in what way is it organized within the cognitive system made up of sense organs and nerve tissues?

First, we should confirm how this expression is understood among the people of the area. When asked about the meaning of this expression, the local people generally replied that it indicated “the conveying of the blessings of the Yamanokami.”^v Many Japanese people would probably understand this explanation as an obvious, commonsensical one. In the area where Take-Kagura is performed, mountains—as sources of water and food—are thought of “something to be

appreciated” (I will discuss the change which occurred in the contemporary period later). Therefore, it is natural to understand the “spreading of food” by the Yamanokami as the “conveying of blessings” by the Yamanokami.^{vi}

In this paper, I am not pursuing contrived symbolic operations—in other words, I will not examine semantic content or the issue of discourse. Rather, I look at how this expression and its understanding are established within bodily experience and the cognitive system.

In our everyday understanding, “dispersing” and “conveying” are naturally understood as actions with self-evident meaning. And because the concepts are articulated as the words “disperse” and “convey,” and already categorized and ordered in consciousness, the possibility exists not merely for a natural understanding, but smooth communication as well.. This type of natural understanding and communication can be thought of as being made possible through the functioning of the cognitive system based in bodily experience. I would like to consider this.

When we break down “Yamanokami spreads food among the audience” into the smallest units of being or power that are concretely experienced by the body, we get “Yamanokami,” “food,” “audience,” and the power of “supply” binding those elements together. In illustrated form, the relationship of these elements might appear like the accompanying Diagram 1.

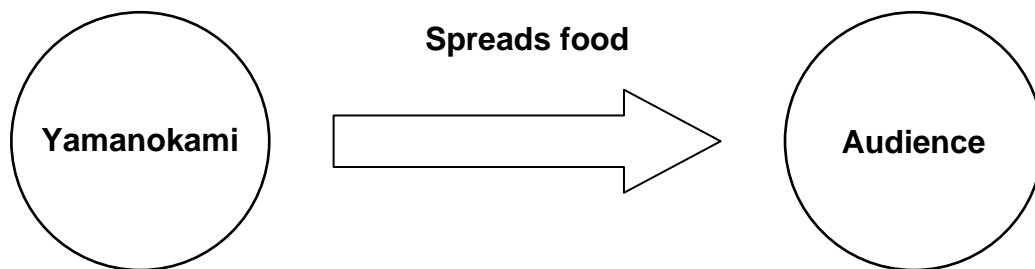


Diagram 1: A representation of “Yamanokami spreads food among the audience”

From the viewpoint of cognitive semantics,^{vii} this kind of ordered arrangement can be seen as reflections of “image schemata,” basic systems humans use to order and understand the world. M. Johnson says the following about image schemata:

[H]uman bodily movement, manipulation of objects, and perceptual interactions involve recurring patterns without which our experience would be chaotic and incomprehensible. I call these patterns “image schemata,” because they function primarily as abstract structures of images. They are gestalt structures, consisting of parts standing in relations and organized into unified wholes by means of which our experience manifests discernable order.^{viii}

As represented graphically, in the Dance of the Yamanokami “dispersal” and “conveyance” are at the most basic level of bodily experience “supply.” The experience of supply by itself, however, is chaotic, without meaning nor significance.. However, when the same types of actions are repeated, those experiences are organized into specific image schemata in the cognitive system. From these

operations, the experience of supply is at last grasped as something that can be understood. In this systematized schema, supplier and receiver are connected causally through supply. Through the establishment of this schema, the experience of supply is made understandable (Diagram 2).^{ix} Until now, the comprehension of experience has been thought of as simply being attained through experience and cognizance, however, in reality it is first achieved by schemata embedding in the body.

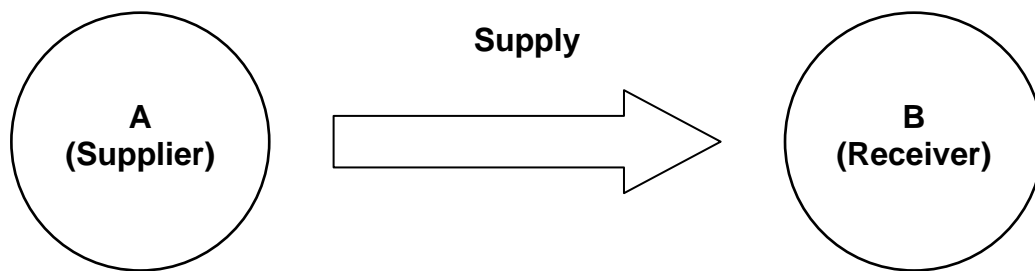


Diagram 2: The Image Schema of Supply

“Dispersal” and “conveyance” in the Dance of the Yamanokami can be thought of as concepts which supply—made understandable by the supply schema in the cognitive system—has projected. Expressed obversely, had people not already possessed a schema of supply, the expressions “dispersal” and “conveyance” would not be possible..

When applied to the expression of the Dance of the Yamanokami in Take-Kagura, we can say that the bodily experiences of the people living in that region are accumulated in that dance. That is to say, the “supply from the mountain” experienced in the region where Take-Kagura is performed becomes tangibly understood by being accumulated in the schema of supply. So then, in the Dance of the Yamanokami, the expression the “Yamanokami disperses food among the audience” is precisely the projection of the schema of supply from the mountain, which causally links the mountain as supplier on one side and ourselves as receivers on the other. Further, from this schema “the conveyance of the blessings of Yamanokami” becomes understandable.

The above analysis indicates that the expression the “Yamanokami disperses food among the audience” in the Take-Kagura is based in bodily experience. That is to say, this expression is formed based on the bodily experience of supply organized in the cognitive system as a schema, and on becoming able to distinguish various the elements in this schema. However, by exposing this most concrete level of bodily experience, the problem that now becomes conspicuous is the supplier, in this case, the Yamanokami. This is a problem because Yamanokami itself is not concrete. It can be seen that in the expression of the Dance of Yamanokami, the physical mountain representing the supplier is expressed in the form of “*kami*.” However, there must be some reason behind the change in which the supplier expressed in the dance is not left as “mountain” but becomes “*kami*”. Below, focusing on the mountain as the supplier expressed in the form of “*kami*,” I want to consider the circumstances of the concrete bodily experiences concerned with this expression; that is to say, those relating to the nature of the supply of food and water, and the supplier.

III. “*Kami*” as something understood

Take-Kagura has been transmitted in a mountainous region, where people have lived surrounded by overlapping peaks. The mountains provide people with various resources such as water, food, and timber, but it is the water, used for drinking and farming, that is the primary requirement for existence. This “supply from the mountains” can be understood as connectedness with the surrounding natural phenomena and within the whole of that connectedness. In other words, the water from the mountains is connected to the sky through rain; the food grown on the mountains is connected to the earth and sunlight. The whole of these natural phenomena are vast in expanse, autonomous, and powerful in action. The major portion of phenomena like weather, water supply, and plant growth operate via a certain autonomous system^x and cannot be freely manipulated by humans. And just then, when we think that system provides the warmth of sunlight on a clear day, water, or food, it contrarily exhibits massive destructive force through such phenomena as violent winds and heavy rains, fires and earthquakes^{xii} The people living in the area of Take-Kagura often say “we are kept alive by nature,” and this thought indicates clearly that they hypothesize about a willful agency that keeps them alive. We can perhaps say that when supply and disaster are repeatedly experienced within individuals, the natural phenomena that cause these experiences come to be viewed as animate, willful things.^{xiii} It is precisely these willful natural phenomena themselves that are experienced as the suppliers of food. Mountains exist as one element within this.

Ordinarily, the aims and intentions of food suppliers are obvious in the case of mothers, farmers, or even small shop owners, but concerning mountains or natural phenomena, these intentions and aims are unclear. In spite of coming to be viewed as having a willful existence, in reality, the intentions and aims behind this supply can neither be guessed nor verified. In other words, the mountains in this region, though thought of as suppliers with a will or intent, remain somewhat incomprehensible.

With what we have seen until now, we can understand that the supplier/mountain which is the “*kami*” in the Dance of the Yamanokami corresponds to this willful, incomprehensible supplier. The mountain, which is an incomprehensible supplier, is expressed as the “*kami*” which supplies “blessings.” This can be seen namely through understanding the incomprehensible mountain as “*kami*”: it is thought to be understandable as a unified substance that people are “thankful for” and which has the aim and intention of “blessing” people. Here I should stress the point that “*kami*” is not simply a symbol indicating the supplier. In the way that we have seen, the expression “*kami*” is based in the bodily experience of supply from nature, from which it cannot be detached. And so, perhaps the incomprehensible supplier first becomes connected to the schema of supply in the dynamic cognitive system, and becomes able to be comprehended as “*kami*”. We should not view the various concepts that arise at the level of bodily experience as symbols. They are always dynamic, relational, and kinetically fluid.

The understanding of the supplier as “*kami*” is not simply something arrived at interpretively through logical meaning. We can assume that this mode of understanding includes the sentiment, viewpoints, and feelings specific to the bodily experience of food supply at its base. Eating food brings enrichment to one’s existence. Conversely, by not eating one soon dies. This very self-evident fact means

that one's fate definitely depends upon a supplier. That it is possible to view the word "*kami*" as a projection of "up" [which is also pronounced *kami*] in the "up-down schema"^{xiv} perhaps originates in this. We can think that the feeling of thanks toward the supplier arises from this total reliance. Familiar phrases such as "the labor of a hundred farmers is in one grain of rice," "the blessings of nature," and "the flavor of a mother's cooking" concisely express the feeling of thanks toward the supplier of food. When the supplier is understood to be "*kami*," these feelings of thanks are directed to natural phenomena in the form of prayers or rituals. In the case of religious actions such as ritual and prayer, the pattern of the supplier of unknowable character is integrated with the pattern of knowable experience of "blessings" from and thanks to the "*kami*." There is a clear case of emergence here.^{xv} In this way, one reason that the expression shown in Diagram 2 is executed as a ritual is in order to fill such incomprehensible voids .

By being expressed in ritual as "*kami*," the incomprehensible supplier becomes understandable. The experience of supply from a willful presence of unknowable character is organized as the experience of supply of "blessings" from "*kami*," and this incomprehensible void is filled by this act of categorizing. This thing of unknown nature is called "*kami*" and becomes understandable as a categorized willful presence. In this way, the immensity, power, will, and seemingly animate character that natural phenomena impress upon people's experience as "supplier," are summed up in the rubrick of "*kami*" understandable as beings that "brings blessings" and "to which we are thankful." The expression of *kami* in the regional society of Take-Kagura is something that is itself experienced through tradition and repetition, in the spaces and customs of everyday life, and in the performance of rituals, thereby becoming fixed in the society and embedding itself in the cognitive system of the society's members. Seen from the point of view of P. Bourdieu's theory of *habitus*,^{xvi} the expression of *kami* can be thought to settle in the individual's bodily scheme as one element of society's various requirements, and become embedded as one element of the system of mental dispositions. Until now, we have considered the expression of *kami* in the cognitive system from the relationship of humans and nature; however, in this new dimension we come to see that the expression of *kami* itself becomes embedded in the cognitive system as one element of society. The expression the "*kami* distributes blessings among people" which was formed by the pattern of bodily experience of the supply of food from natural phenomena embedding in people's cognitive systems, is doubly embedded there as a socio-cultural element. From this embodying of *kami*, the expression and understanding of *kami* can be thought of as acquiring a socially and culturally stabilized base.

IV. The Revitalization of *Kami*

Above I stated that the expression and understanding of *kami* is based in the embodiment of *kami* as the bodily experience of food supply from nature and as a socio-cultural element. However, the experience of supply from natural phenomena in the regional society of the Take-Kagura has decreased considerably in the present. In Ōhasamachi where Take-Kagura is passed down, the proportion of those engaged in primary industry to all of those employed was roughly seventy-seven percent in 1955, but it had decreased to thirty percent in 2005. We can surmise from this that the experience of supply from natural phenomena has lessened to some degree.

Additionally, as I have already discussed elsewhere,^{xvii} Take-Kagura in the modern period has experienced a large transformation as it has been objectified as “Culture,” and has come to involve activities removed from its locale. Take-Kagura has come to be considered objectively as a tourist resource either as a valuable cultural property or as an object of consumption. The expression of *kami* in the socio-cultural dimension discussed in the preceding section is thus not necessarily guaranteed.

However, as I mentioned earlier, the people living in the area often use the expression “we are kept alive by nature.” This can be thought of as suggesting their apprehension of the reality of supply from natural phenomena in the contemporary period. Although the number of people engaged in primary industry in Ōhasamamachi has greatly decreased, it has held steady at thirty percent. Furthermore, since this number represents only those who depend upon this industry for their income, it is necessary to consider including cultivation done in the household economic sphere but not expressed in this percentage. It is surmised that between these in the “straightforward” thirty percent and those who garden as an additional part of their household economy, the raw experience of “supply from natural phenomena” is still maintained. Additionally, Ōhasamamachi is surrounded by mountains, and the area in which the Take-Kagura performers live is within a deep mountain valley; compared with plains, mountain ranges hinder travel. Also, this area is covered in snow, ice, and cold air in the winter. The cold—which seems to cut the body—fills the world everywhere, and so one must take various precautions in daily life. Particularly when there are heavy snowfalls and blizzard movement not only becomes almost impossible, but the environment makes it easy to die from cold. Mt. Hayachine becomes pure white wrapped in snow; the mountain entrance becomes a difficult and exceptionally dangerous place. The hindrance to travel in the mountains, in addition to the pains, limitations, and dangers brought by the cold, are strong restrictions in the dimension of concrete bodily experience. These are also conditions which greatly limit the control of nature which was supposedly accomplished to a high degree with modernization and enlightenment. In these mountains nature appears uncontrollable, and is experienced as a powerful, autonomous, and volitional presence which frustrates humans’ desire to overcome it. In the area of the Take-Kagura, it is this autonomous, volitional nature that is the supplier. Therefore, the sense of reliance expressed in the saying “we are kept alive by nature” is produced by the repeated raw experience of the supplier. Certainly, the number of people engaged in farming has decreased, and *kagura* also has been objectified as “Culture” for a long time. As we have seen here, however, the fact that nature as an experienced source of supply continues to be experienced bodily as an immense, willful and volitional presence, produces for many farmers even now a sense of reliance evident in the expression “we are kept alive by nature.” Furthermore, we can consider that the expression is revitalized through its linkage to the expression “the blessings of the *kami*.” Near Ōhasamamachi, the residents of the urban area of Hanamaki City generally have the image that “the residents of Ōhasama have strong religious faith in comparison with others.”^{xviii} One possible reason for this is the environmental restrictions or conditions represented by Ōhasamamachi’s particular location in the mountains. What springs to mind from this is that in folk rituals filled with energy such as Yamagata Prefecture’s Kurokawa *Nō*, Okumikawa’s *kagura* or *dengaku*, or Kyūshū’s various *kagura*, we can still see to some degree the maintenance of feelings of thanks towards nature. It is perhaps necessary to point out that these folk rituals are all located in deep mountainous regions.

The expression of the concept of *kami* or “the blessings of the *kami*” has been shown to have been produced from the bodily experience of supply from nature; however it is also revitalized by bodily experience. By this definition, *kami* is inseparable from bodily experience, and it does not exist independently on an abstract level, as it has come to be academically conceptualized as “the concept of *kami*,” for example.^{xix} The expressions of the concept of *kami* and “the *kami* provides blessings” are revitalized by the ceaseless repetition of the experience of supply from nature that occurs under certain conditions mentioned above.

Conversely, without the hindrance and intense cold caused by the mountains, if nature were to be controllable to a high degree, then nature the supplier would, as a simple source of materials, become a dispenser or a rational means of living, and probably it would be unnecessary to name it “*kami*.” From another angle, if most of the people were engaged in work besides primary industry or did not have household gardens, the supplier for them would be understood as a simple, clear intermediary presence in offices, factories, or small shops. In this case the relationship with “*kami*” would probably end. The concept of *kami* can be thought to decline when not constantly revitalized by bodily experience.^{xx}

On the other hand, it is not simply the experience of supply from nature, but the ritual performance of the expression “the *kami* gives people blessings” that also can be thought to revitalize the way people understand natural phenomena. It is the case that *kami*, as an expression which is embedded in the systems of mental dispositions, is activated again by being performed as ritual. In this sense, the argument is close to the theory of D. Sperber, according to which ritual symbols are internal systems that invoke “knowledge.”^{xxi} However, what should be added in this paper is that the invocation of knowledge through ritual is tied to the patterns of bodily experience of large, willful natural phenomena which supply food. People understand the bodily experience of “supply” from natural phenomena as “the blessings of the *kami*” in addition to expressing feelings such as “joy,” “thankfulness,” and “familiarity” in the performance of the Take-Kagura. So the expression of “*kami*” is revitalized during the performance of ritual symbols and in the uniting of natural phenomena with repeated experience in the vastness of “supply.” Johnson said the following concerning the form of “understanding” in which this type of bodily experience and social context are inseparable.

[U]nderstanding does not consist merely of after-the-fact reflections on prior experiences; it is, more fundamentally, the way (or means by which) we have those experiences in the first place. And this is a result of the massive complex of our culture, language, history, and bodily mechanisms that blend to make our world what it is.^{xxii}

Conclusions

In the above I have considered the expression of the Dance of the Yamanokami from the viewpoint of bodily experience.

The expression, “Yamanokami disperses food amongst the people,” is understood among the inhabitants of the area as the blessings conveyed by the Yamanokami. This expression and its understanding are founded on bodily experience, made possible by the image schema of supply formed in the cognitive system, and

reflected in this schema. Bodily experience by itself is chaotic, but by repeated patterns being systematized as schemata in cognitive systems, experience is at last able to be grasped as a comprehensible thing. The expression “dispensing food” and the understanding brought by it are formed based on the supply schema that is comprised of the causal union of supplier and receiver in “supply.”

So, the mountain “*kami*” becomes the supplier expressed in the supply schema. In the regional world of the Take-Kagura, the supplier of food is a natural phenomenon, and is sensed on a large scale as a strong, autonomous, willful presence. However, in the experience of the supply of food, the intention or aim of that supply are completely unknowable. We can consider that this utterly unknown and incomprehensible supplier becomes comprehensible as “*kami*” in the ritual of Yamanokami. The “*kami*” of this ritual can be considered to be an expression made in order to make the incomprehensible supplier comprehensible.

This ritual expression and way of understanding is reactivated through the actual bodily experience of supply from nature or through the performance of ritual expression. Further, within the emotions of “joy,” “gratitude,” and “familiarity” experienced in the performance of ritual, it becomes possible to fully understand the life and death struggle involved in the supply of food as the “blessings of the *kami*,” within that very place where the *kami* has been invited. In previous scholarship, the contents of expression of religious rituals or the understandings of the participants have been grasped on logical, semantic, psychological, or rational levels. There, religious ritual has been depicted as a thing which expresses logical or semantic structure such as social construction, political ideas, mythical worldview, or theories of the universe. Those ways of grasping ritual are based on fixed ideas in which understanding of phenomena is obtained consciously through experience, memory, and language. For example, the expression of “*kami*” (in the consciousness or intuition) becomes a symbolic expression of the experience of nature. However, this manner of grasping ritual places “*kami*” as a symbolic expression on a logical or semantic level, as but one more sign with static content.. When one sets this kind of logical, semantic, abstract “*kami*” as the premise of argument, one is limited to studying the exterior forms of faith—the customs, ritual etiquette and manner and systems of organization—linked to established religious signs such as “the *kami* Hachiman.”

In contrast, the new attempt in this paper places cognitive systems and bodily experience at its analytical core. The most important concept which emerged from this was “supply.” From this, the apparently abstracted symbol of “*kami*” is understood as one part of the system whereby humans connect to the raw physical experience of supply which they know *through bodily experience*.. This agrees with the schema of supply from nature, and is constantly reactivated by bodily experience. “*Kami*” here fills the incomprehensible blank in the schema of supply from nature. The question of whether contemplation of or belief in the *abstract* “*kami*” still exists or was lost is not a problem here. That is because it is fundamentally impossible for “*kami*” to be purely abstract..

The above investigation of course does not leave the realm of tentative hypothesis. It contains many points which should be examined in further research. However, the point of view of bodily experiences makes clear that the trifling,

common and therefore easy to overlook masses of everyday bodily experiences are important elements in the expression of religious ritual. The viewpoint expressed in this paper, namely, the view of religious ritual from the perspective of schemata of concrete bodily experience, is simply a beginning. What kind of bodily experiences form the basis for various religious expressions? It is likely that the wave-washed body of the fisherperson is inseparable from an understanding of *kami*, and that the mud- and dirt-stained bodies of farmers can be seen in the milieu of faith in the Grand Shrine of Ise. In any case, the work of referring religious expression—understood till now as an idealized thing—back to the physical body needs to be further enriched..

ⁱ Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945); _____, *Le Visible et l'invisible, suivi de notes de travail*, ed. Claude Lefort (Paris: Gallimard, 1964); Michael Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967); Pierre Bourdieu, *Le sens pratique* (Paris: Minuit, 1980); George Lakoff & Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980)

ⁱⁱ The author continuously visited and investigated Take-Kagura and the area in which it is performed from July 2001 until the present (2008). The argument in this paper is based on the investigative data and experiences obtained during that time.

ⁱⁱⁱ For information concerning the art of Take-Kagura, please see Nagasawa Sōhei, *Hayachine Take-Kagura* (Iwata shoin, 2009).

^{iv} Ibid.

^v June 2004 investigation. Of course, this does not mean that they believe implicitly in the appearance of an actual non-human *kami*. To the end this is a self-evident understanding of the meaning of the expression.

^{vi} The action of the *kami* spreading grain can also be interpreted as a purification (*harai* 祓い) by the spiritual power of the grain, but even if for arguments sake we considered it to be so, the clear distinction between distributing power and purification does not go beyond the linguistic level. It is similar to the amplification of life force and the healing of illness being the same phenomenon.

^{vii} Cognitive semantics is one field of linguistics which has developed in earnest since the 1980 publication of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (op.cit.). From that development, metaphors which had been thought of as problems of figures of speech in language were reinterpreted as a system made up not only linguistic behavior but thoughts, actions and conceptual organization, while arising from general bodily experience and being inseparably tied to it. What was especially suggestive in this dialogue for this paper was the concept that humans understand the world based on bodily experience.

According to Johnson, human discrimination and understanding of things is based in bodily experience. Soon after we are born we begin to perform bewildering bodily actions and perceptual activities of various physical objects and space, and we repeat these unconsciously innumerable times in daily life. The patterns of bodily experience that become fixed within this repetition, becoming abstract structural forms called “image schemata,” are embedded in our cognitive systems, and then become the basis for the formation of conceptual metaphors. This thought is fully developed in *The Body in the Mind* (Mark Johnson, *The Body in the Mind* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987).)

Cognitive semantics is basically attached to linguistics, and it is discussed comprehensively yet subtly by experiential scientific methods concerning grammar, polysemy, hierarchy, analogy, and so on. The validity of its concepts and logic has come to be confirmed. In order to take a dynamically extensive view of human cognitive systems, this theory carries with it the possibility of being able to search for general communicative expressions: religious rituals are not exceptions. The pioneering work of cognitive semantics given above,

Metaphors We Live By, says the following: “Religious rituals are typically metaphorical kinds of activities, which usually involve metonymies—real-world objects standing for entities in the world as defined by the conceptual system of the religion. The coherent structure of the ritual is commonly taken as paralleling some aspect of reality as it is seen through the religion” (George Lakoff & Mark Johnson, op. cit., p. 234). In religious studies it can be thought that there is plenty of space in which to expand the methods of cognitive semantics, nonetheless, whether it becomes a discussion which focuses on religious ritual or symbols cannot be determined at the present time. This paper can perhaps be considered to be one essay which attempts to embark towards that topic.

^{viii} Mark Johnson, op. cit., p. xix. In this schema itself, there is no limitation of rich imagination, mental image, or semantic content; it is said to function on an abstract level where power, direction, line, division, and so on are obtained from the feelings of movement of the body. Even though this is said to be an image, it does not accompany visual images or semantic contents.

^{ix} And, the understanding of the experience of supply is further concerned with the basic experience of “connection.” For example, humans experience “connection” in the joining of blocks of wood with a nail, a child grasping her parent’s hand, or the fastening of the snap on a child’s jacket. Additionally, because the event A is connected with event B by a series of events which are mediated temporally, the causal connection of two events on the temporal axis is experienced. In this way, humans to a great extent experience the connection of two or more concrete things. Within this experience being physically repeated, the connection is organized in the cognitive system within the gestalt structure, and the image schema of connection is formed (Mark Johnson, op. cit. pp. 117-119). In this way, physical connection becomes comprehensible as a thing which established order. The image schema of supply can be thought of as a thing which was formed as a combination of cause and effect in this type of connection.

^x The reason I say “a large portion” is because agricultural and industrial methods are achieving a certain degree of control over nature. Concrete examples of this include the plant cultivation, dams, power plants, and so on. However, plant cultivation techniques have stopped at the regulation of growth, and normally are completely unable to adjust complex natural growth systems themselves (excluding biotechnology). Additionally, we cannot control weather, ocean, or ecological systems. Still, when people in pre-modernity attempted to manipulate the natural order they could resort to nothing but magic, however I will not touch upon this issue here.

^{xii} In modern cities there is a foundation of people’s daily lives, and in that limited space daily bodily experiences are repeated which are life conditions of people living in cities. That the bodily experiences of those living in the country that I have mentioned here decisively lack some of these conditions is a question which should be pursued. Bodily wisdom, which is created unconsciously by the repetition of trifling daily experiences, regulates without thinking ways of viewing things, orientations in the construction of reasoning, or mental dispositions. For this reason, the bodily experience of natural phenomena in the countryside – which is composed of complex, limitless information and algorithms – forms widening, complex fields of knowledge in cognitive systems. Beneath the outward appearance of farmers, linguistically difficult to grasp, clear and quick fields of knowledge are cultivated. However, in the “ideal” space of the modern city which was constructed with priority given to functionality and efficiency, such conditions for cultivation are limited. Therefore, if we do not see their actions and words from the premise of bodily wisdom discussed in this paper, relying unconsciously on the appearance of “ideal” political or commercial motives in our analyses is thought to be inescapable.

^{xiii} Natural science can be thought not to have that much influence over this sense. The knowledge concerning nature which is explained in the earth sciences, biology, oceanography, and so on does not exhaustively control knowledge which settles in the cognitive systems

through constantly repeating bodily experience. For example, the phenomenon of parents and children or husbands and wives understanding each others' minds is comprehended unconsciously "using the body" through the accumulation of bodily experiences, and the limitation of sciences concerning bodily knowledge is the same as natural sciences not having persuasive powers over this unspoken communication amongst close acquaintances.

^{xiv} The up-down schemata depict perceptions of high and low and are widely used in understanding phenomena such as those seen in metaphorical expressions of "lofty," "higher order," "height," "sinking into," "low-level," "base," and so on.

^{xv} However, this emergence does not indicate creation by Buddhist priests or practitioners of *Shugendō*. Even if for the sake of argument it were so, that creation can be considered to have been derived originally from the cognitive unconscious by the continuation to some degree of the operations of the image schema of supply in the cognitive system embedded in their bodies. I am not expressing a modern illusion that a free individual at a certain time creates something in one effort. Instead, the emergence that I mean here is gradually created by the countless accumulation of trifling things within the vast repetition of daily life such as when someone expresses to the listener with him or her the willful side of natural phenomena by pointing to an insect or leaf and saying "that is angry."

^{xvi} Pierre Bourdieu, cited above.

^{xvii} Nagasawa Sōhei, "'Jōen' ni nezasu chiiki dentō bunka," *Shakaigaku hyōron* no. 235, Nihonshakaigakkai, 2008.

^{xviii} From my field notes, December 2004.

^{xix} The concept of *kami* has been a central issue in folklore studies since Yanagita [Kunio], but with the large change in folklore, critical considerations have been added. Works such as Komatsu Kazuhiko's *Kaminaki jidai no minzokugaku* [Folklore studies in an age without *kami*] (Serika shobō, 2002) are detailed concerning this argument. However, even from a standpoint which criticizes the concept of *kami*, there is no difference in the understanding itself which considers the concept of *kami* to be a problem of "concept."

^{xx} Concerning the change in quality of meaning of ritual from the loss of actual bodily experience, Ichida Masataka has added an examination of the example of the Noto Peninsula of Ishikawa Prefecture "*oide matsuri*" (Ichida Masataka "Minzoku shakai ni okeru rekishi no seisei – girei ni kansuru 'arifureta' katari kara rekishi wo tou" *Seikatsugakuronsō* no. 10, Nihon seikatsu gakkai, 2004.)

^{xxi} Dan Sperber, *Le Symbolisme en general* (Paris: Hermann, 1974).

^{xxii} Mark Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

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