

# The Circular System of Rites Linking the Emperor and the *Kami*— Menacing Apparitions of the *Kami* in Antiquity

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**Summary:** The curses of the *kami* can bring torment to human beings. People in the ancient period were exposed to a variety of natural threats in the form of plagues, famine and disasters—and these were considered to be the manifestations of curses wrought by *kami*. The Japanese emperor himself, on numerous occasions, met with the curses of various *kami*. The *kami* and emperor, and the *kami* and human beings are at the center of a relationship which revolves around ritual activity and is constantly fraught with tension.

As was often the case for physical ailments experienced by the emperor, efforts to discover the source of such problems led to an investigation of the presence of curses by *kami*. Any anxiety over the physical well-being of the emperor could lead to instability in the maintenance of the state and, for this reason, it was deemed necessary to quickly unearth any curse that might potentially extend to the emperor. As a ritual means of preventing the occurrence of and isolating the specific cause of a curse, the *ōmima no miura* (a divination into the condition of the emperor's body) was regularly performed and, as a form of instant response to curses under extraordinary circumstances, the *bokuzei*—a collaborative divination on the part of both the Department of Divinities (Jingikan) and Bureau of Divination (Onmyōryō)—would be conducted. Beginning in the Nara and continuing to the early Heian period, the organization of an increasing number of *kami* into the system of governmental shrines, the arrangement of “eminent shrines” (*myōjin*), systemization of a hierarchy of *kami* and the special

designation given to the Sixteen Shrines was believed to be one way to pacify the *kami* and enhance their benevolent and supernatural powers. Furthermore, these various systems were also part of the movement to prevent and ward off curses and the violent apparitions of *kami*.

Concerning the nature of curses against the emperor prompted by the provincial *kami*, the government administrators and shrine priests who served as intermediaries between the *kami* and emperor came under increasing pressure as the system for administration of the *kami* expanded and intensified. This process also stimulated the rebuilding of shrines, the performance of rites and the establishment of regulation for priests and led to the construction of a system of rites that was circular in both structure and function.

## Keywords

Central and provincial      circular system of rites      imperial rites  
menacing apparitions of *kami* (*tatarigami*)    *ōmimanomiura*      *bokuzei*

## Opening

Cursing was an important attribute of *kami* in the ancient period. In conjunction with the protection of territory, *kami* also manifested violently and possessed the role of performing curses as “cursing kami” (*tatarigami*).<sup>1</sup> In modern times, individuals that believe that the *kami* have had an unwaveringly protective nature are by no means few, however; this is not accurate. The *kami* of the ancient period—for example, the *kami* of Ise, Izumo, and Hachiman and a number of other areas—often made their presence felt through curses which remain in records and, at times, even resulted in a promotion for those *kami* in the *kami* ranking and/or the formal shrine structure.

With the middle of the Heian period forming a turning point, this type of belief in curses transformed dramatically. Amidst a flourishing new faith in spirits and the *kami* of heaven, belief that *kami* possessed the ability to curse was subsumed and from that period on the prominent *kami* desisted their menacing ways and came to be associated exclusively with protection and guardianship.

The development of Shinto, its shrine structures, and perceptions of the *kami* are typically separated and characterized by two distinct formations—from dreaded *kami* to revered *kami*; from natural *kami* to anthropomorphic *kami*; from animistic *kami* to rational *kami*; from a faith connected with the hills, forests and boulders to a faith connected with the shrine and the mirror, sword and jewel, from the “forest” to the “shrine,” etc. This methodology attempts to explain the changes in Shinto as evolutionary and has taken a leading role in discussions of the formation of shrines and studies concerning the concept of *kami*.<sup>2</sup> However, this “evolutionary” model which attempts to classify the development in the ancient period as a movement from fearful *kami* to revered *kami*—in other words, a movement from cursing *kami* to protective *kami*—gives rise to several evident misinterpretations. The *kami* of the ancient period were both fearful and respected *kami*.

The Ichinomiya System (a system provincial shrine organization wherein each province designated one prominent, representative shrine), which developed in the late Heian period, and the rites administered by the government that preceded, became a “two-way interactive” system of ritual that tied the outlying territories to the central establishment by linking the consolidated provisional system of ritual for the *kami*, as it had been formulated by provincial government officials, with the capitol.<sup>3</sup> It is the menacing apparitions of *kami* that formed the underpinning of this structure that bound the outlying areas with the center and formed a circular system of ritual which linked the *kami* and the shrines with the emperor. The foundation of the *ritsuryō* state ritual system takes the shrine administration system with the *toshigo no matsuri* annual distribution of ritual offerings as its core, but

the hierarchy of the *kami*, with its beginnings in the *ritsuryō* system, is characterized by its cyclical function.

Hereafter, I will primarily make use of the Six Official Histories (*rikkokushi*) in an examination of the relationship between the emperor and the *kami* as it existed in the ancient period.

## I. The Emperor and the *Kami*

I will begin by identifying a number of instances where the curses of various *kami* extended to the emperor as they appear in *Nihonshoki*.

In the fifth year of the reign of Emperor Sujin, plague spread resulting in the deaths of the better part of the population and for the next six years the people remained dispersed. With the spread of the epidemic, the virtue of the emperor himself proved unable to maintain order and the emperor devoted himself, from early in the morning to late in the evening, to petitioning the *kami* for pardon of any possible offense. Concerning the offense committed by the emperor in this case, Amaterasu ōkami and Yamato no ōkuni tama no kami—each, in their own respect, divine entities of great power—had been enshrined together in the Emperor’s palace. On account of this dual enshrinement, or rather the impossibility thereof, Amaterasu was moved out of the palace and positioned in Kasanuhinomura. Seven years later, the emperor, in order to illuminate the specifics of the disaster, made inquiries through divination and the source of trouble was found to be Ōmononushi (also known as Ōkununushi or Ohomononushi). Subsequently, the shrines for the *kami* of heaven and earth were established and, through the administration of rites as a counter measure, the epidemic finally came to a close.

From the time of the *ritsuryō* government, in the event of crises such as these, *Enginoritoshiki*, a magio-religious invocation (*norito*), was employed. This invocation bears witness to the fact that even

the highest of the *kami*, which were enshrined near the emperor in the interior of the palace, could indeed enact a curse. In this *norito* it states, “In order that you may end your rampaging, you, the imperial *kami* who reside in the palace of heaven and who are the venerable ancestors of the emperor...shall be transferred from this place to a place with pure rivers and mountains and enshrined on your own land,” and, “So that you, *kami*, may end the curse and become calm, you shall be sent out and enshrined in a area with pure and wide rivers and mountains and you shall be enshrined as pacified *kami*.” The conditions surrounding the transfer of the *kami* of Ise to its new location correspond precisely to the contents of this *norito*.<sup>4</sup>

The entry for the second month of the ninth year of Emperor Chūai reports that Emperor Chūai fell under the curse of a *kami* and suffered from “bodily pains,” became ill and passed away. The reason given for this curse was the emperor’s “disregard for the *kami* which led to his sudden passing,”—in other words, his failure to follow the teachings of the *kami*. Empress Jingū, acting as the ritual specialist herself, identified the *kami* of Ise (the *kami* enshrined at Isuzu no miya), Wakahirume no mikoto, the *kami* of Kotoshironushi, the *kami* Sumiyoshi as those responsible for the curse (*Jingūkōgō sesshō zenki*).

In the fifth month of the seventh year of the reign of Emperor Saimei (661), during the construction of Asakura no miya—the imperial residence in Chikuzen—a sacred tree on the grounds of Asakura shrine, located behind the construction site had been cut down enraging the *kami* and resulting in the appearance of will-o’-the-wisp (*onibi*). During the seventh month of the same year, Emperor Saimei passed away. Taking into consideration the events leading up to and following this event, it is evident that the *kami*’s curse had extended to the physical body of the emperor.

In the seventh year of the reign of Emperor Tenchi (668), the Kusanagi Sword—Atsuta Shrine’s sacred sword—was stolen by a vagrant monk who had planned on escaping to Silla. However, during his escape, he encountered inclement weather and the sword was safely returned. Subsequently, on the 24<sup>th</sup> day of the fifth month of the first year of the era Shuchō (686), Emperor Tenmu fell ill and, on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the sixth month, this illness was confirmed to be the effects of a curse arising from the Kusanagi Sword. A divination of the emperor’s condition indicated, “the nature of the emperor’s illness has been ascertained and it is a curse emanating from the Kusanagi Sword which shall on this very day be delivered to and deposited in Atsuta Shrine in Owari.” Upon receiving the results of this divination, the court ensured that the sword was sent immediately to Atsuta. Afterward, records show an increase in the number of Buddhist services praying for the emperor’s recovery. Moreover, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> days of the seventh month, offerings were presented to Kii no kuni’s Kakasu no kami, the four shrines of Asuka and the *kami* Sumiyoshi. On the 9<sup>th</sup> day of the eighth month, “given the Emperor’s poor physical condition, prayer was made to the *kami* of the heavens and earth,” and, on the 13<sup>th</sup> day, an offering was conducted for the “great *kami* of Tosa.” These offerings to various divinities—in particular, the distant *kami* of Tosa—are assumedly a response and countermeasure to the existence of a curse but, in the same year on the 9<sup>th</sup> day of the ninth month, the emperor succumbed. Judging from the fact that the divination took place on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the sixth month, it has been stated that the divination of Emperor Tenmu’s illness took place as part of the annual performance of *ōmima no miura* which I will discuss later.<sup>5</sup> However, for the moment, as the *ōmima no miura* is used to assess not the present but the future condition of the body, this instance, where the emperor is already ill and attempts are being made to isolate the source of said illness, seems to be different in nature. Furthermore, it is possible to conceive that the timing of the Kusanagi Sword’s curse and the resultant death of the emperor was responsible for establishing the sixth and twelfth months as the customary time for conducting the *ōmima no miura*.

Among the four examples drawn from *Nihon shoki* above, all of these emperors succumbed to the curses of *kami* and—in all except for the case of Emperor Chūai—it was only after a few months of contracting the curse that each of these emperors died of physical illness.

The officially recorded examples of curses befalling emperors may be limited to certain particular instances but, in general, curses exist in great number in the folk traditions of the provinces. I would like to introduce one example of this from the *Hitachi fudoki*. *Hitachi fudoki* contains a legend concerning the *yato no kami*—a spirit taking the form of a horned snake—of the Tamekata district. This tale is often cited as a typical example of the founding and establishment of a shrine.

During the reign of Iwamure no tamaho no miya who ascended to the throne in the first half of the sixth century as Emperor Keitai, Yahazu Matachi began land cultivation efforts opening up grasslands as new rice paddies. At this time, on account that a *yato no kami* began to interfere with the cultivation of the fields, Matachi, having come to the entrance of a mountain, erected a pillar marking the border and relating to the *yato no kami* (who was in the form of a snake) that from this point on was “sacred ground” and, hereafter, because the *yato no kami* shall be “celebrated as a *kami*” and revered and enshrined for ages to come, “we pray that there be no curse or lingering grudge.” It is said that the descendents of Matachi carried this ritual on until the time of this recording (early Nara period). This *yato no kami* folktale illustrates how a shrine may be founded through the development of provincial land. There are many other examples which depict the character of *kami* as they were in the provinces and outlying areas.

Provincial leaders, representing the community in connection with the worshipping of the *kami*, could be called upon to respond to disasters and other forms of the *kami*'s manifested anger. Provincial aristocratic clans, as those in control of the rituals and knowing the will of the *kami*, were in the position

of performing rites necessary to soothe angry *kami*. In this same fashion, the emperor, as ruler of the land, was in charge of rites at the state level and, if something occurred—such as a situation that brought calamity upon the people—the emperor was responsible for restoring the natural order. The systemization of shrine administration—including the rituals performed by the emperor and the formation of the Department of Divinities—likely originated with this kind of thinking.

In the succeeding, unless otherwise specified, the examples of curses from the Nara period will be drawn from *Shoku nihongi*. It will not be possible to conduct an exhaustive introduction of the succeeding cases here. However, there are about thirty-seven separate incidents of curses in the Six Official Histories and these can be viewed publically at Kokugaku University's COE Program Shinto Jinja Database (<http://21coe.kokugakuin.ac.jp/db/jinja/>).

In the third year of the Jinki era (726), in response to the illness of the Empress Genshō, criminals received pardon and animals were liberated. On the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month, there were offerings made to the shrines of Ishinari, Katsuraki, Sumiyoshi, and Kamo, respectively. No explanation as to the reason for this offering is given but this too, along with being a petition for the recovery of health, may be considered an offering to *kami* identified as emanating curses.

In the second year of the Tenpyō era (730), during the sixth month, the Department of Divinities was struck by lightning and, on the 17<sup>th</sup> day of the same month, emissaries were sent to various shrines in the Kinai area associated with the central and outlying regions of the entire realm as “worshippers.” Such offerings were also likely prompted by curses.

During the ninth month of the seventeenth year of the era Tenpyō (745) and prompted by the Emperor Shōmu's infirmity, offerings were made at Kamo and Matsunoo Shrines on the 19<sup>th</sup> day and,

on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the same month, a ceremonial offering was conducted at Hachiman Shrine. Subsequently, according to a document issued by the Council of State (Dajōkan) in the twelfth year of the Kōnin era included in the fourth volume of the *Tōdaiji yōroku*, “in the eighteenth year of Tenpyō, with the emperor in poor condition, there were prayers for a cure, and [Hachiman] was promoted to the third rank and offerings of four hundred houses, fifty ordained monks and paddies measuring twenty *chō* were made.” As seen here, with Hachiman being assigned to third rank, this is an early example of ordering *kami* into ranks. Three years later, in the first year of the era Tenpyō shōhō, there was an offering of a single item. One can surmise that acts such as praying for the emperor’s health, conducting offerings and bestowing ranks to *kami* were also performed as responses to curses.

In the first year of Hōki (770), on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of the second month, the results of a divination of Emperor Shōtoku’s ailments led to the conclusion that the curse was emanating from a stone at the base of the temple Saidai-ji’s eastern tower (a stone taken from Mt. Iimori). This is yet another case of *kami* enacting a curse. In the third year of the same era, on the 29<sup>th</sup> day of the fourth month, Saidai-ji’s western tower was struck by lightning and the corresponding divination revealed this was the manifestation of a curse produced by “a tree taken the grounds of a shrine in the Shiga district of Ōmi,” which had been used in the construction of the tower, and “and the shrine was allotted two *en* of servant houses in the same district.” There are other examples of amending curses by allotting households “to shrines (so-called *fuko*)”. For one, in the first month of that year, having obtained the results of the *omima no miura*, in addition to offerings, allotments of houses and land were made to shrines (to be discussed later).<sup>6</sup> Also, on 6<sup>th</sup> day of the eighth month, an investigation of a tree that had fallen during a storm and destroyed a building determined that the act was the product of a curse originating with Tsukiyomi kami of Ise and, every year during the ninth month, this *kami* was offered a horse as Aramatsuri no kami—Amaterasu’s violent form.

Response to curses in the Nara period primarily took the form of plastromancy—divination through reading the cracks on heated tortoise shells—as conducted by the Department of Divinities but, upon entering the Heian period, there are recognizable changes in this process.

## II. *Kiboku* and *Senzei*

The methods for divination employed in cases of curses through the first half of the Heian period took three forms.

- 1) “Divination and report by the Department of Divinities”: A divination using tortoise shells called plastromancy (*kiboku*) performed exclusively by the Department of Divinities. The examples above fall under this category which has pre-Nara origins.
- 2) “Collaborative divination and report by the Department of Divinities and the Bureau of Divination”: A divination conducted by both the Department of Divinities and the Bureau of Divination which is collaborative and consisting of both a tortoise shell divination and divination performed by fracturing bamboo sticks (*bokuzei*). This was first performed publically in the first year of Enryaku (782) and is the source for what subsequently became the Konrō Divination (*konrō no miura*)—a divination practice customarily performed in one of the halls of the emperor’s palace (Konrō).
- 3) “Divination and report by the Bureau of Divination”: A divination using bamboo sticks (*senzei*) carried out exclusively by the Bureau of Divination which can be traced back to the second half of the ninth century (Reliable evidence for this exists in *Sandai jitsuroku*, when on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of the second month of the second year of the era Gangyō (878), an account of a “strange curse” led to the fire at Kehi Shrine in Echizen.).

These are the three types of divination. The first appearance of the second type is the following. On the 29<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month in the first year of Enryaku (782), As Emperor Kanmu was in mourning for an extended period of time after the death of Emperor Kōnin. This prompted the Ministers of the Right to make entreaties to the throne requesting that the length of the mourning period be curtailed.

At this period in time, when calamities and strange occurrences were appearing in large numbers, a “collaborative divination” (*bokuzei*) was sought and the results garnered by the Department of Divinities and the Bureau of Divination stated, “Although the state performed the customary rites and regular offerings, the world is filled with death, fortune and misfortune are confused, and troubles have sprung up everywhere. These are the curses of the *kami* of Ise and the various shrines. In instances such as this where misfortune cannot be overcome and one cannot follow the path of fortune, there is the fear that this curse may even threaten the emperor’s physical well-being.” Obviously, this is a report on the curse emanating from the *kami* at Ise and other shrines and, because this curse may even threaten the physical person of the emperor, the performance of rites throughout the country was taken with utmost seriousness.

This “collaborative divination,” which is a “joint statement by the Department of Divinities and the Bureau of Divination,” is the combination of the divination conducted by the Department of Divinities using tortoise shells and that conducted by the Bureau of Divination which employed bamboo sticks. Later, this system of collaborative divination performed in the Konrō (a hall) of the Shishinden—the emperor’s main palace—came to be known as the Konrō Divination (*konrō no miura*). The first appearance of the term “Konrō Divination” occurs in *Hokuzan shō* and *Eka shidai* in a passage dated the 28<sup>th</sup> day of the fifth month of the eighth year of the Tenjō era (945). The first record of the

performance of a combined divination, which is considered to be the origin of the Konrō Divination, is the one given above from *Shoku Nihongi* which details the events of the first year of Enryaku (782).<sup>7</sup>

Next, as recorded in *Nihon kōki*, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of the third month of the first year of the Daidō era (806), divination showed that because Emperor Kanmu's tomb occupied land near Kamo Shrine the country was experiencing a curse at the hands of the *kami* of Kamo. However, the divinations of the Department of Divinities and the Bureau of Divination delivered conflicting results and it was impossible to perform a collaborative divination. This is a good example of a case where divinations of these two offices did not coincide and where primacy was ultimately given to the divination results obtained by the Department of Divinities.

The elevation in rank of the *kami* Inari also stems from a lapse in the emperor's health. The first instance of Inari being placed into the official ranks of the *kami* occurred on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of the first month of fourth year of Tenchō (827) when an imperial proclamation was offered to the *kami* at Inari Shrine.

The imperial edict states as follows. "The content herein is an official proclamation of the Emperor delivered before the *kami* Inari. On account of the emperor's continued poor health these past days, a divination into its causes has been called for and said divination has determined that lumbering of trees belonging to the shrine of Inari was an offense warranting a curse. These trees were logged and subsequently used as lumber in the construction of a tower for the court-funded temple Tōji and this resulted in the present curse. The court has responded by promptly dispatching Ōnakatomi no Katsura, who is a member of the inner court and of the Junior Seventh Rank Lower, to the Inari shrine to pay respects and confer the rank of Junior Fifth Rank Lower [on the *kami* Inari]. If this curse is indeed the will of the *kami*, we ask that the emperor's illness be brought to a swift end and, even if it is not the

work of the *kami*, we entreat the mighty *kami* to use its power to protect and assist in an effort to bring peace and well-being to the emperor. It is with this thought only that we have delivered preceding imperial proclamation.” (*Ruijū kokushi*, 34).

The cause of Emperor Junna’s health problems was determined to be a “curse” brought on by the lumbering of the trees belonging to Inari Shrine, which were used in the imperially ordered construction of Tōji and, as a solution, Inari was promoted to Junior Fifth Rank Lower.

During the fifth month of the ninth year of Tenchō (832), another divination revealed a curse issuing from the *kami* of Izu. This then, as mentioned in *Shaku Nihongi* (quoting from *Nihonkogi*), resulted in the *kami* Mishima and Ikonahime being inducted into the ranks of the eminent shrines (*myōjin*) and, as a counter-measure to curses, it was determined that granting the *kami* ranks and incorporating them into the system of major shrines was a method by which the miraculous powers of the *kami* could be increased while simultaneously pacifying them.

Unusual situations, in both the state and outlying areas, were believed to be the work of curses originating with and emanating from *kami*. Furthermore, the method for identifying the source of curses was the performance of a divination. Likewise, the method for placating the *kami* and restoring stability was the performance of rites and fines/exorcisms/purifications. These curses could also extend to the emperor and the relationship between the *kami* and the emperor—especially, that between Amaterasu and the emperor—was one of frequent exchange.

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of the sixth month of the seventh year of Kōnin (816), *Nihon kōki* reads, “It was determined that the ritual specialist (*miyajī*) at the Grand Shrines of Ise Ōnakatomi no Kiyomochi, who is Junior Seventh Rank Lower, has met with a curse for having committed polluting acts and

performing Buddhist rites. He was fined (*oharae*) by the court and removed from his position.” Here the responsibility for the curse was traced to the conduct of the administrator of the shrine’s rites and, if responsibility for the curse could be sufficiently determined, this administrator was to be exorcized along with the curse.

The entry for the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the fourth month of the first year of Tenchō (824), as recorded in the *Ruijū kokushi*, reads, “a dispatchment was made to present the sword and offerings to the Great Kami of the Ise Shrines because of the existence of a curse.” *Shoku nihonkōki* states in an entry for the 19<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month in the ninth year of the era Jōwa that, “these days everything is like a blaze, drought dries up the water, and the autumn grains are burnt and withered. An extensive collaborative divination into all of these occurrences was performed revealing that these are the results of curses by the *kami* of Ise and Hachiman and Ōnakatomi no Fuchina, the Head of the Department of Divinities has been ordered to conduct prayers at these shrines.” This is a confirmed case of a curse issuing from the *kami* of Ise and Hachiman, whose relationships with the emperor were ones of extreme intimacy, and, as a response to this curse, the master of rites who was directly under the emperor (who was a member of the Ōnakatomi) began to conduct prayers. Throughout both the Tenchō and Jōwa eras, the recorded instances of curses continued to increase and, correspondingly, the figure of the emperor came to be strongly sought out as a sacred entity in and of itself.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the seventh month of the fifth year of Jōgan, the *Nihon sandai jitsu roku* mentions that in the previous month there had been a shooting star and, “a divination and report by the Department of Divinities revealed this curse was the work of Amaterasu and prayers would be conducted to prevent any potential misfortune.” As can be witnessed here, a curse was the reason given for undertaking prayers to the *kami* of Ise.

In the first half of the Heian period, curses at the hands of the *kami* had come to have a process much like this one demonstrated by an instance of a curse described in the *Nihon sandai jitsu roku*: “a joint report by the Department of Divinities and the Bureau of Divination has revealed that the mysterious hail storm was a curse of the Kamo and Matsuo *kami* and an emissary has been dispatched to the shrine to make offerings and present a horse and, thereby, appease the angry *kami*.” Simply put, this process takes the following shape: the experience of a strange phenomenon or outbreak of calamity→a collaborative divination by the Department of Divinities and Bureau of Divination→the identification of the curse as that of a particular *kami*→the making of offerings as a method for raising the prestige of said *kami*→and a return to status quo.

Concerning the way in which this process, whereby curses arise and the status quo is restored, has been analyzed, Yonei Teruyoshi illuminated many of the principles that are at work in the appearance and management of curses and called this process a “curse system.” “At times of strange or disastrous events, [this system] would calm the confusion of the populous and contribute to the maintenance of everyday calmness and the continued existence of the norm. Also, by looking back in time to find the source of strange or disastrous occurrences in the errors of human beings, it is possible to provide solutions to acts that took place on the level of the *kami* through human action and, consequently, handling irregular or calamitous events could be done with relative ease. Lastly, given the fact that occurrences were understood as acts taken by the *kami* in response to failures on the part of humanity shows that the functioning of this curse system was based on a causal relationship of sorts and proved useful in understanding and making use of a wide variety of supernatural powers.”<sup>8</sup> This curse system, by including the system of rites performed for *kami*, became a cyclical structure of rites that included everyone from the emperor to the provincial clergy.

Entering the Heian period, outside of curses that may issue from the *kami*, curses emanating from imperial burial grounds began to appear with increasing frequency. As curses such as that of Emperor Sūdō (Sawarashinnō, eleventh year of Enryaku), of the Takahata Mausoleum (Empress Kanmu, fifth year of Daidō), the Sagara Mausoleum (eighth year of Tenchō), Emperor Kanmu (seventh and eighth years of Jowa), and Empress Jingū (eighth and tenth years of Jowa) Mausoleums attest, along with the curses of *kami*, curses emanating from imperial mausolea were on the rise. In regard to the kinds of curses investigated in *ōmima no miura*, in addition to *kami*, there are reports of curses originating with spirits of the earth (*dokujin*), demons, spirits, etc. and the increase in these and the curses associated with royal graves spurred on new developments.

### III. Shrine Administration and the Regulation of Priests

In this next section, I will discuss provincial shrine administration and the relationship between the central administration and the priests.<sup>9</sup>

Preserving the sanctity of any particular shrine was taken to be the responsibility of the ritual performer of that shrine and various governmental administrators. The maintenance of purity was also connected with heightening the spiritual efficacy of the enshrined deity.

The phenomenon in which the emperor was subject directly to the curses of *kami* from various areas created an atmosphere that demanded the thorough administration of *kami* by the officials and ritual specialists in the outlying regions. In other words, this meant potentially rebuilding/refurbishing shrines, performing Shinto rites, and/or regulating the clergy. The frequent outbreak of curses and the policies for shrine administration are obviously linked but, up until now, there are few references made to this relationship. In the administration of shrines after the Hōki era in the late Nara period and

continuing through the first half of the Heian period, delegation of power to government officials and a stricter regulation of shrine priests were seen as a means for preventing curses from infecting the emperor who stood at the center of the imperial government. It was during these years that the priests were made part of the official bureaucracy—a phenomenon that has to be understood in relation to countermeasures against curses emanating from *kami*.

In the seventh year of Tenpyō hōji (763), on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the ninth month, plague and drought had caused disorder and “strange fires” began to appear. This was said to be “the *kami*’s condemnation of the irreverence of the various provincial officials.” An order was put out to enforce the rotation of the subordinates of the provincial governors (*sakan*). As for the “strange fires” they were taken as the sign of a curse and the court used this as an opportunity to make officials throughout the country conform to its benevolent rule.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the fourth month of the seventh year of era Hōki (774), an administrator received orders to visit and inspect various shrines for their cleanliness and purity. Every year the information garnered from this inspection was presented to the court and, if there were any transgressions, the provincial administrator responsible would be punished for failure to follow orders. This makes it clear that the responsibility for supervising shrines belonged to the provincial administrators. Subsequently, on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the eighth month, a cleaning of a number of shrines was ordered. As for the management and care of the local provincial *kami*, it fell heavily on the local administrators and the shrine priests.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> day of the first month of the seventeenth year of Enryaku (798), an imperial edict recorded in *Ruijūkokuji* commands, “The shrines shall be cleaned and the *kami* revered and this will prevent disaster and secure fortune. As has been heard, the priests and caretakers of shrines have been

entrusted for a lifetime but they have been improper, polluting and disrespectful and their errors have continually incurred curses. It has therefore been considered best to select pure and upright individuals from among the nobility to serve as the priests and administrators of the various shrines under Heaven and, further, alter the term in office to six years.” This was an attempt to undertake personnel reform and to introduce a six year term of office in the place of the prior lifetime system. During the ninth month of the same year, on account of the growing intensification of the distribution of ritual offerings (*hanpei*), in remote and outlying areas, there was an effort to divide the offering made by the Department of Divinities (*kanpei*) and those made by provincial officials (*kohehei*) and reorganize the shrine administration system. These efforts can only be considered evidence that the ritual rights and responsibilities of the provincial administrators had intensified.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month of the seventh year of Kōnin (816), there is a command in *Nihon kōki* that states, “it has been determined that it is best for the Head of the Department of Divinities—who is pure, upright and holding fast to the various restrictions and precepts—to conduct offerings in the central Kinai region and the outlying areas and prayers to end the rain.” It is evident from this command that the *kokushi* (provincial governor with ritual responsibilities) shared in the administration of offerings to the eminent shrines (*myōjin*), but this was also part of a strategic attempt to harness the spiritual capacities of the *kami*. As reported in both *Montoku jitsuroku* and *Ruijū sandaikaku*, during the fourth month of the third year of Saikō, the possession of *shaku*—a placard carried by nobles that varied in material as the bearer did in rank—was allowed for the Shinto priests of the rank of *kanushi*, *negi* and *hafuri* at eminent shrines of the top three ranks. Granting these kinds of honors to priests was a way to encourage the performance of offerings and services. Additionally, this sort of action was effective in enhancing the spiritual benefits granted by the *kami*. In other words, the granting of honors to priests was a crucial element in the defense against curses produced by *kami*. According to an edict given on the 27<sup>th</sup> day of the seventh month of the sixth year of Jōgan (864), in

order to quiet unrest and bring an end to the calamity that had gripped a number of areas including Kinai, Iga, Ise, Shima, Ōmi, Sagami, Kazusa in the seventh month of the previous year, a solution was sought by paying respects to the *kami*. However, these provincial officials (*kokushi*) in there extravagance “they neglected their ritual duties—leaving them entirely to the *kannushi*, *negi* and *hafuri*—and, as a result this led to a breakdown in the ritual workings of the shrines and ritual duties were neglected. This is the reason why the *kami* have enacted a curse and disasters abound throughout the nation.” Reacting to this state of affairs, *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* mentions that petitions were made to quickly supply shrines with “flower decorations.” Here again, one can see the intent to prevent the outbreak of curses which can invite state-wide catastrophe.

It has been pointed out that during the years of the Jōgan era the provincial governors (*kokushi*) gained tighter control of the management of the *kami* throughout the empire and shrines were organized into a system based on the official hierarchy of *kami*.<sup>10</sup> Along with these changes, advancements were made in organizing and ranking the *kami* from all parts of the nation. Even if these policies were not implemented directly in times during which curses were active, it is highly possible that curses provided the setting for such policies.

The reinforcement of a system of rites for the *kami* in the central government became an opportunity for the ritual system throughout the country, which had been entrusted to the provincial authorities, to take shape. The structure in which *kami* from outlying areas may enact a curse on the emperor produced a demand for higher and higher levels of reverence for the *kami* on the behalf the provincial authorities and clergy, who served as intermediaries to the emperor and the *kami* of the provinces. It also functioned to further regulate these priests and local governmental administrators. The systematization of shrine and priest management and regulation took place within a cyclical system

of interaction between the central and outlying areas that was fueled by the appearance of strange and calamitous phenomena in provincial society.

#### IV. *Ōmima no miura*

As I have touched on above, the emperor's poor physical health could lead to an investigation of its source in the curses of *kami*. Any instability caused by infirmities in the health of the emperor, could lead to upheavals in government affairs or even a conflict of succession. In order to avoid such problems, it was necessary to quickly identify any potential curse that might reach the emperor. As a ritual method for both preventing and detecting curses, it was customary to perform a twenty day ceremony during the sixth and twelfth month of every year. For the first nine days, a full divination of the emperor's health and well-being was conducted and the prognosis for the next sixth months was presented on the tenth day along with a prescription of what precautions to take. This ritual was called *ōmima no miura*. In the event that a curse was identified, there would be an attempt to make amends with the *kami* in question and this would be accompanied by an investigation of the shrine officials involved and a possible purification.

Following the *ōmima no miura*, on the eleventh day, the monthly ritual offering to the various *kami* would be made at the Department of Divinities. That evening, the emperor would himself conduct the *jingonjiki* (or *kamuimake*)—a ritual wherein the emperor prepares food on a sacred fire, and then makes offerings to and sleeps with Amaterasu. During this ritual, the founder of the imperial line Amaterasu would be invited and Shinto ceremonies praying for the health and well-being of the emperor would take place—a process considered to be part of the same class of rituals performed for house divinities by individuals on a private level. Performing the *ōmima no miura* prior to the *jingonjiki* gave the court a method for ensuring that the emperor was in fact free of any possible curses and, therefore, suitable to conduct the ritual for/with Amaterasu.

According to a fragmentary text called *Konin dajōkan shiki*, “Generally, the *ōmima no miura* would be led by the head of the Department of Divinities, a member of the Urabe clan, and divination shall commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the sixth and twelfth months and, having finished on the 9<sup>th</sup> day, the results shall be presented to the emperor on the 10<sup>th</sup> day.” This record shows that the *ōmima no miura* had already, at this early point, been organized into a system and, on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of the first month of the third year of Hōki (772), it is mentioned again in a document bearing the signature of Ōmo no Yakamochi.<sup>11</sup> This same document was part of the papers passed on within the Yoshida family concerning the Department of Divinities.

An Official Order of the Council of State to Department of Divinities

Concerning the *kami* of two locations

The *kami* Sakuri who resides in Kuse district of Yamajiro

Has been allotted one *tan* (a unit of measurement for area) in fields.

The *kami* Oto who also resides in the Oto district of Yamajiro

The Houses of this *kami* have been allotted one *en* (a unit of measurement for used for people) in servant households and offerings have been made [to the *kami*].

The Department of Divinities presented a statement (*kan ge*) on the day of the *ōmima no miura* in service to the court concerning the places exhibiting curses. On reception of imperial order, the Department of Divinities is to adhere to the report made to the emperor and file a written report concerning these events with the imperial court. The Department of Divinities is to act in accordance with this order and, upon its reception, conduct the necessary offerings.

Junior Four Rank Lower Kōsachūbenken nakatsukasa daifu ōtomo no sukune

“Yaka no mochi” sashōshi shō

Seventh Rank Upper Haji no Sukune “Katori”

13<sup>th</sup> day of the first month of the third year of Hōki

This fragment is the oldest confirmed historical evidence concerning the actual performance of the *ōmima no miura*. According to this record, on the tenth day of the twelfth month of the second year of Hōki (771), the results of Emperor Kōnin’s *ōmima no miura* revealed two curses—one emanating from the *kami* Sakuri (described in the list of kami names in the *Engishiki*) as the *kami* of Sakuri Shrine in the Kuse district in the province of Yamashiro and one emanating from Oto no kami (described as the *kami* of Otokunimasu Honoikazuchi Shrine) in the Kuse district in the province of Yamashiro in the *Engjinmyōshiki*). Additionally, offerings as well as grants of land and servant households were made to the shrines of these two deities. Also, as discussed previously, during the fourth month of the same year, there was a curse issuing from the *kami* Ono of Omi and, similarly, the shrine was presented with servant households. The use of both customary and extraordinary means of divination to identify curses and the subsequent apology and presentation of offerings that contributed to the economic upkeep of the shrine was conducted systematically during the years of the Hōki era.

The above passage concerning the official statement by the Department of Divinities (*kan ge*) cited in the order given by the Council of State (*dajōkan fu*) from the third year of Hōki and another document containing a similar statement by the Department of Divinities dated the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the twelfth month of the sixth year of Tenryaku (952) recorded in the *Ruijūfusenshō* bear a great deal of resemblance.

- (Hōki) The Department of Divinities presented a statement (*kan ge*) on the day of the *ōmima no miura* in service to the court concerning the places exhibiting curses. On reception of imperial order, the Department of Divinities is to adhere to the report made to the emperor and file a written report concerning these events with the imperial court.
- (Tenryaku) The Department of Divinities having formed a statement (*kan ge*) on the tenth day of this month presented it to the court stating according to precedent on the day that the *ōmima no miura* was performed. Thereupon having received an order to proceed, the Department of Divinities filed an official written report.

Despite nearly two centuries of separation, both of the reports above we both share the “statement by the Jingikan” (*kan ge*) section and this writing style found in these reports concerning the *ōmima no miura* can be traced back as far as the second half of the eighth century. It is clear that by that time the *ōmima no miura* system had already been established.<sup>12</sup>

From the middle of the Heian Period, the manner for conducting the *ōmima no miura* was formalized. Concrete examples of this are carried in two works found in the *Jingikan* portion in volume six of the *Chōyagunsai*. There are two records describing the presentation of the *ōmima no miura* as taking place on the tenth day of the sixth month—(A) a document the fourth year of Jōryaku (1080) and (B) a document the fifth year of Kōwa (1103). Along with these two examples and drawing on a collection of secret transmissions of the Urabe clan from the years of the divided court called *Miyaji*

*hijikuden*,<sup>13</sup> I would like continue my examination while also addressing previous studies of the *ōmima no miura*.<sup>14</sup>

For the *ōmima no miura*, from the first through the ninth days of the sixth (and twelfth months), a ritual specialist associated with the Jingikan (*miyaji*) would seclude himself in the Department of Divinities and enter into the necessary preparations to conduct the plastromancy. On five different bamboo slats used in divination (*chōchiku*) it is written “will the emperor his majesty from the coming seventh month until the twelfth month be in peace?” (For the twelfth month, the following is written, “will the emperor his majesty shall from this year’s twelfth month until the sixth month of the coming year be in peace?”) Continuing, on these five bamboo slats it is written, “Have all the various rituals performed by the Department of Divinities been conducted without failure that might bring about a curse?” and “Have the any of the various members of the imperial family, ministers or administrators done anything to bring about a curse?” and “Will there be any curses resulting in winds, rain or drought?” and “Have any visits from foreign dignitaries resulted in curse?” On the ninth day, by examination of the ten items labeled (a) to (j) listed below, the condition of the emperor’s body for the next six months was divined.

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- (a) The possibility of a curse stemming from the *kami* of the earth (*dokōjin* or *dokujin*)
- (b) The possibility of a curse stemming from the *kami* of water (*suijin*)
- (c) The possibility of a curse stemming from an imperial procession (*gyōkō*)
- (d) The possibility of a curse stemming from dietary (*gozen*) infractions
- (e) The possibility of a curse stemming from the *kami* of the hearth (*kōjin*)
- (f) The possibility of a curse stemming from the polestar (*hokushin*)
- (g) The possibility of a curse stemming from a spirit (*kiki*)
- (h) The possibility of a curse stemming from lifestyle (*onmi*)
- (i) The possibility of a curse stemming from the *kami*
- (j) The possibility of a curse of stemming from spirits (*reiki*)

- ① A curse wrought by the great *kami* enshrined at Ise
- ② A curse wrought by [the *kami*] of Toyouke (or Toyuke) Shrine
- ③ A curse wrought by the *kami* enshrined in the palace
- ④ A curse wrought by the *kami* enshrined in the capitol
- ⑤ A curse wrought by the *kami* of the five areas surrounding the capitol
- ⑥ A curse wrought by the *kami* of the seven outlying regions

- (イ) According to misconduct of attendants
- (ロ) According to infractions committed by shrine priests
- (ハ) According to mismanagement of entrusted lands
- (ニ) According to mismanagement of shrine subjects
- (ホ) According to mismanagement of shrine supplies

- (あ) A curse wrought by the *kami* enshrined on the Tōkaidō
- (い) A curse wrought by the *kami* enshrined on the Tōzandō
- (う) A curse wrought by the *kami* enshrined on the Hōkurikudō
- (え) A curse wrought by the *kami* enshrined on the Sanyōdō
- (お) A curse wrought by the *kami* enshrined on the San'in dō
- (か) A curse wrought by the *kami* enshrined on the Nankaidō
- (き) A curse wrought by the *kami* enshrined on the Saikaidō

In the case of document (A) in the fourth year of the Jōryaku era (1080), the categories (a), (g), and (i) came up “positive” (*bokugō*) for a curse and it was determined that the remaining categories were “negative” (*bokufugō*). In document (B) from the fifth year of the Kōwa era (1103), (a) and (i) again resulted as “positive” and it certainly seems that curses at the hands of *kami* (i) remained an object that required consistent and perpetual divination.

Getting to the roots of any incident of curse was one of the major issues involved in the production of the *ōmima no miura*. In the case of divining the source of curses enacted by *kami*, Ise and Toyuke (or Toyuke) Shrines received priority, and other potential sources were investigated in an ever growing circle beginning with the emperor’s residence in Kyoto as the epicenter, and continuing on with the *kami* of the palace, followed by the *kami* of the capitol, those of the five areas surrounding the capitol and finally extending out to the *kami* of the seven outlying regions. Furthermore, the order in which the outlying provinces received treatment was determined by the order given in *Engishiki jinmyō*.

As related in the *Miyaji hijikuden*, because of curses emanating from the *kami* of 1) the inner shrine (Kōtaijingū) and 2) of the outer shrine Toyouke (or Toyuke) at the Grand Shrines of Ise, a decision was made to conduct a divination into whether any (□) infractions on behalf of the shrine priests existed. Thereafter, in the sixth month, one *negi* of the inner shrine and two of the outer shrine came under investigation by divination and in the twelfth month two *negi* of the inner shrine and one *negi* were investigated. As the result, it was established that the shrine priests had indeed committed an infraction. In addition to those cases, at the Ise shrines, investigations of the responsible administrators also involved those responsible for the servant households allotted to the shrine (*Miyaji hijikuden* lists that the administrators (*kanbeshi*) of servant households belonging to the *kami* of Tōtōmimoto, Shin, Ikaga, and Kawawa as being infected with curses) and property assigned to the shrine (ノ) (ニ) (ホ).

Other than confirmed cases of violent apparitions of *kami*, there were a great number of curses based on Yin-yang practices and thought (*onmyōdō*). It is not possible to specify exactly when these practices entered the picture but, judging from the fact that the *bokuzei* was performed in a collaborative divination in the first year of Enryaku (782) and from the fact that, beginning in the early Heian period, these Yin-Yang practices were used frequently in the event of curses issuing from imperial tombs, one may conclude that these ten cases of existing curses required divination (*bokugō*)—occurring in the first half of the Heian period—correspond to an early implementation of these Yin-Yang practices.

Continuing this analysis by moving on to the *Jingikan kanso* of the fourth year of the era Enryaku (785) as it is contained in *Chōyagunsai*, we have the following.

The Department of Divinities reverently presents the following.

In performing the emperor's *omima no miura* the Urabe were commanded to perform the plastromancy (*futomani*) and performed divination on the behalf of the court making inquiries into concerning the imperial family, the various ministers and administrators, foreign affairs, the winds, rain and drought, and into the emperor condition for the six months beginning in the seventh month and ending in the twelfth month. Out of the one hundred sixty divination fires (*miura no ka*), one hundred ten direct fire divinations (*chokuboku*), eleven fire divinations into disasters (*saiboku*), six fire divinations of the earth (*chisōboku*), twelve fire divinations of heaven (*tensōboku*), eight fire divination of the *kami* (*shinsōboku*), six fire divinations into human affairs (*jinsōboku*), seven fires divinations of omens (*chōsōboku*) were employed in the performance of the divination.

(i, ①②)

The mismanagement of the territory where the *kami* is enshrined in Ise, the territory and subjects of the *kami* of Ikaga, the subjects of the *kami* of Mikawamoto, the subjects and territory of the Shin households of Tōtōmimoto, again the households of Shin, the Ise Loom-weaving Hall and the polluting acts of the ritual attendants have resulted in a curse. An emissary has been dispatched in service of the state with orders to conduct the appropriate purification, and to dispense judgment and punish [those responsible].

(i, ⑥)

Also, (the details of the specific shrines and *kami* are given below) infractions on the part of the shrine priests and polluting acts have incurred curses and an emissary has been dispatched in service of the state with orders to conduct the appropriate purification and to dispense judgment and punish [those responsible].

【 a g 】 Also, in this coming fall there will likely be a curse enacted by the *kami* of the earth (*dokujin*). At the beginning of the autumn season, the ceremonies for the palace, the capitol and the surrounding six regions should be performed and, in junction, purifications should also be performed.

If three conditions mentioned herein are met, a condition appropriate for the emperor's well-being should be achieved in accordance with the divination performed and presented to the court.

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The aforementioned plastromancy has been conducted in service of the court and consists preceding which has been humbled presented to the court.

The 10<sup>th</sup> day of the sixth month of the fourth year of Jōryaku

Ritual Specialist Senior Sixth Rank Upper Kō Gonnoshō Urabe no Sukune

Kanemune

Nakatomi Junior Sixth Rank Lower Kō Daiyū Ōnakatomi no Ason Tadakore

This document bears the inscriptions of the Nakatomi and the Department of Divinities hereditary ritual specialist of the Urabe (*miyajī*) and, following their production, these documents were presented to the court on the tenth day of the sixth month. The opening portion presents the results of a number of plastromancies and, in connection with the Great Shrines of Ise (i 1 and 2), the administrator responsible for the shrine lands was singled out and ordered to pay the heaviest level of fines. There are also forty-nine *kami* listed for the seven outlying regions (of those, three regions came up “positive” for curses during divination) and again those responsible were fined. Furthermore, cases of curses involving the *kami* of the earth (*dokujin*) and spirits (*kiki*) that were confirmed as “positive” (a,g) also convey the necessity to perform the rituals for the purification of imperial palace, purification of the capitol, and purification of the realm. By implementing the three provisions listed above, prayers were made for the peace of the imperial residence and a report of the *ōmima no miura* results was made.

According to *Miyajī hijikuden*, it was decided that the divination of the *kami* of the seven outlying regions would begin with the *kami* of the Tōkaidō, Tōzandō Hokurikudō and Sanyōdō in the sixth month and, in the twelfth month, the divination would begin with the *kami* of the San’indō, Nankaidō and Saikaidō. In the sixth month of the fourth year of the Jōryaku era (A), the Hokurikudō, San’indō, Nankaidō were designated as “requiring divination” and, in the sixth month of the fifth year

of Kowa (B), the Tōzandō and Hokurikudō were selected for divination. With (A), the divination of the sixth month includes the San'indō and Nankaidō and, therefore, differs from *Miyaji hijikuden* which was compiled at a later date.

Regarding the number of *kami* selected and believed to be currently enacting curses, document (A) lists forty-nine *kami* and document (B) lists forty-five *kami*. Moreover, the number of *kami* is not uniform for any one particular province. Document (B) even contains nine accounts of *kami* from the province of Mutsu. *Miyaji hijikuden* mentions, “we ask is there a curse emanating from the *kami* of Tokaido at this time.” (exceptionally, a divination is not conducted for Ise or Shima) and “The Tossaka *kami* of Iga has come up positive for a curse.” In this manner, inquiries were made into whether curses “existed” (*bokugō*) or “did not exist” (*bokufugō*) by selecting one *kami* per province. Here a difference can be seen in the way that areas belonging to the seven outlying regions and *kami* were selected for divination as performed in the late Heian period and, later, how it was performed in *Miyaji hijikuden* during the period of the divided court from 1336 to 1392. This is a result of ever increasing levels of regularization and formalization in the performance of the *ōmima no miura* that started to take place in the middle ages.

### Itemized List of *Kami* and Curses

The names of districts as they appear in the *Engjinmyōshiki* have parenthesis and if the name of the *kami* is represented differently the shrine name will be give in brackets.

(A) The 10<sup>th</sup> day of the sixth month of the fourth year of Enryaku (1080)

Wakasa      Wakasahiko *kami* (Eminent Shrine, Onyū District), Tsune *kami* (Mikata District)

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- Echizen      Kehi kami (Eminent Shrine, Tsuruga District), Tsurugi kami (Tsuruga District),  
Shiisaki kami (Tsuruga District), Asuwa kami (Asuwa District), Hiraide kami (Nyū  
District)
- Kaga          Shirayama kami (Ishikawa District, [Shirayamahime shrine]), Ketamiko  
kami (Enuma District)
- Noto          Keta kami (Eminent Shrine, Hakui District), Isurushigiko kami (Noto  
District)
- Etchū        Usaka kami (Nei District), Keta kami (Eminent Shrine, Imizu District),  
Shiratori kami (Nei District), Miyake ([Miyake Shrine] of the  
Koshi District of Echigo?)
- Echigo       Ōmiwa kami (Kubiki District), Iyahiko kami (Eminent Shrine, Kanbara  
District), Eno kami (Kubiki District), Keta kami (Kubiki District [Kota  
Shrine]?), Monobe kami (Santō District)
- Sado          Ōme kami (Hamochi District), Watatsu kami (Hamochi District), Hikitabe  
kami (Sawata District), Imochi kami (Sawata District)
- Tanba (should be Tango) Komori kami (should be [Komori shrine] of the Yaso District  
of Tango), Suki kami (Not included in the *Engjinmyōshiki*)  
Monobe kami (should be [Monobe shrine] of the Yaso District of Tango)

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Inaba	Kōya kami (Kono District), Ōe kami (Yakami District)
Hōki	Shidori kami (Kawamura District), there is a kami of the same name in Kume District), Ōgamiyama kami (Aimi District), Kunisaka kami (Kume District)
Izumo	Kizuki kami (Eminent Shrine, Izumo District), Kumano kami (Eminent Shrine, Ou District), Sakusa kami (Ou District)
Awaji	Iwaya ([Iwayayurami kami] is should be two separate kami, the former of [Iwaya Shrine] in Tsuna District and the latter), Yurami kami (Tsuna District), Kawakami kami (Tsuna District)
Awa	Amanoiwatowake kami (High ranking shrine ( <i>taisha</i> ), Nakata District), Ōasa kami (Eminent Shrine, Ita District [Ōasahiko Shrine]), Inbe kami (Eminent Shrine, Oe District [Inbe Shrine]), Shiratori kami (Not included in the <i>Engijinmyōshiki</i> or official hierarchy of kami)
Sanuki	Ōasa kami (Tado District), Kushinashi (Naka District), Ōminakami kami (Mino District), Tamura kami (Eminent Shrine, Kagawa District)
Iyo	Murayama kami (Eminent Shrine, Uma District), Ōyamamatsu (Eminent Shrine, Ochi District), Noma kami (Eminent Shrine, Noma District)

(B) The 10<sup>th</sup> day of the sixth month in the fifth year of Kowa (1103)

Omi                    Ozu kami (Yasu District), Taga kami (Inugami District, [Taga Shrine]),  
Miwo kami (Eminent Shrine, Takashima District), Tsue kami (Inugami  
District).

Mino                    Tairyō kami (Fuwa District), Iwanonishi kami (Kakami District),  
Iwabuki kami (Fuwa)

Shinano                Hotaka kami (Azumi District), Ochi kami (Takai District)

Kōzuke                Nukisaki kami (Eminent Shrine, Kanra District), Ikaho kami (Eminent  
Shrine, Gunma District), Akagi kami (Eminent Shrine, Seta District)

Shimotsuke            Futara kami (Eminent Shrine, Kawachi District), Miba kami (Nasu  
District)

Mutsu                    Tsutsukowake kami (Eminent Shrine, Shirakawa), Kattami kami  
(Eminent Shrine, Karita District), Taga kami (Natori District),  
Hanafushi kami (Eminent Shrine, Miyagi District), Kashima  
amatariwake kami (Kurokawa District), Azumayano kami (Eminent  
Shrine, Shinobu District), Isasumi kami (Eminent Shrine, Azu  
District), Ōtakayama kami (Eminent Shrine, Shibata), Shiwahime  
(Eminent Shrine, Kurihara District).

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Wakasa	Uwase kami (Eminent Shrine, Mikata District), Tada kami (Onyū District [Tada Shrine]), Tsune kami (Mikata District)
Echizen	Hiraide kami (Nyū District), Ōmushi (Eminent Shrine, Nyū District), Amayo (Nyū District), Shiisaki kami (Tsuruga District)
Kaga	Sugōisobe kami (Enu District), Noma kami (Kaga District), Tada kami (Nomi District)
Noto	Keta kami (Eminent Shrine, Hakui District), Kamishiro kami (Hakui District), Shirahiko kami (Noto District)
Etchu	Takase kami (Tonami District), Hayashi kami (Tonami District), Usaka kami (Nei District), Shiratori kami (Nei District), Hayakawa kami (Imizu District)
Echigo	Ōmiwa kami (Kubiki District), Sakamoto kami (Uonu District), Arakawa kami (Iwafune District [Arakawa Shrine]), Ishii kami (Nutari District)

The names of the *kami* selected here are almost in complete concordance with the names of the *kami* given for the imperial shrines in the *Engijinmyōshiki*. Also, concerning the way the names are represented, they are completely identical to those of the *kami* that appear in the *Engijinmyōshiki*, however, there are instances where shrines not included in the list of official imperial shrines appear.

According to the *Shikigaijinja miura wo awasu shōmon wo susumu* statement submitted by the Jingikan ritual specialist (*miyajī*) Urabe Kanera on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the sixth month in the second year of Kōwa era (1100), as it appears in *Chōyagunsai* (volume six, *Jingikan*), there are several cases in which *kami* that are not listed in *Engjinmyōshiki* were made the subject of the *ōmimanomiura*'s purification. These are the *kami* of Kasuga and Fukawa shrines of Echigo, and of the Kamado and Chōkai shrines of Mutsu which required divination in the twelfth month of the fifth year of Enkyū era (1073). Also, in the sixth month of the sixth year of Enkyū era the *kami* of Ukishima, Shiogama, and Chōkai Shrines of Mutsu Province are listed. Subsequently, this document also mentions the *kami* of Ono shrine of Kii Province in the twelfth month of Jōho era (1075), and Suki of Tango and Shiratori of Awa in the sixth month of the fourth year of Joryaku era (1080) bringing the grand total of entries dealing with unlisted *kami* to four. *Kami* of unlisted shrines also occasionally required divination, “As for *kami* unlisted in *Engjinmyōshiki* that meet the requirements for the *ōmima no miura*, these are the known precedents.” Additionally, “even if the *ōmima no miura* is not required and/or the shrine not given in *Engjinmyōshiki* the divinations will be conducted in the standard fashion and there are regular examples of this.” The *ōmima no miura* was not limited to those *kami* contained in *Engjinmyōshiki* but the actual instances of these unlisted *kami* receiving divination are limited to only a few cases. Also, it remains unknown just how exactly those unlisted shrines were selected. On the other hand, given that there are examples of *kami* from *Engjinmyōshiki* being inducted into the hierarchy of the *kami* (*shinkai*), it is probable that the hierarchy of *kami* was drawn from the *kami* appearing in *Engjinmyōshiki* at the discretion of the Urabe run Department of Divinities.

In the sixth month of the fourth year of Enryaku (785) (A), the names of the previous forty-nine *kami* are given and from this list only two *kami* (four percent of the total number)— Suki *kami* of Tango and Shiratori *kami* of Awa (elevated to Junior Fifth Rank Lower in third year of Jōgan era)—do not appear among the shrines contained in *Engjinmyōshiki* and are understood as extra- *Engjinmyōshiki*

*kami*. The three remaining examples outside of this one are also limited to only a handful of *kami* each and, by the sixth month of the fifth year of Kowa era (B) (1103), all forty-five *kami* are taken from those listed in *Engijinmyōshiki*. From this point on and throughout the middle ages, those *kami* marked as “requiring divination” were limited to those that appear in *Engijinmyōshiki* and, moreover, it is assumed that *kami* were limited one to each province further accelerating the formalization of the *ōmima no miura*.

The various *kami* selected for examination and the *kami* thought to be enacting a curse on the emperor came to be drawn primarily from within the confines of the shrine administration system. In other words, with regard to the way the *kami* of the shrines of *Engijinmyōshiki* are handled, it is possible to see a situation where the Nakatomi and Urabe ritual specialist (*miyajī*)—members of the very inner offices of the Department of Divinities—exclusively managed and administered these methods.

If any indication of a curse was detected, as a response, punishments (*oharae*) were conducted and the Nakatomi and Urabe dispatched to “purify and perform services” as an “emissary of the *ōmima no miura*” (*Chōyagunsai*, volume six, *Ōmima no miura tsukai wo sasu fumi*, 22<sup>nd</sup> day of the twelfth month of the second year of Chōji) to pacify the *kami*.

## Conclusion

Before the end of the Pacific War, historical discussions of the *kami* were dominated by theories of “reverence for the *kami*,” and, following the end of the war, in direct opposition, arguments presenting the *kami* as a state ideology and part of the controlling establishment have taken center stage. However, I have in the cases of the addressed in this discussion proposed a new direction for research in this area. As a third option to the two above, I would like to suggest that what lies in the background of

both the arguments for “revered *kami*” and arguments emphasizing the *kami*’s role in state rule is the theory concerning the “curses of *kami*” (*kamitatari*) directed at the emperor.

The curses of *kami* were central to both the pacification and development of provincial divinities and, accompanying the formation of the state, came to serve an important role in imperial rituals. Beginning with the records of Emperor Sujin and Emperor Chūai as they are presented in *Nihongi*, the early Heian period witnessed a growing number of instances involving curses issuing from *kami*. The systematic establishment of divination for the prediction and identification of curses was linked to the stability of the state and, because of that link, it was necessary to monitor even the *kami* of the provinces and outlying areas in what became a circular and meticulous manner. Initiatives such as the organization of administration into a shrine hierarchy (the national establishment of *kami*) and the bestowing of ranks on the *kami* were viewed as a method to effectively combat curses and to pacify and enhance the beneficial spiritual powers of *kami*.

Divination served as a means capable of isolating and identifying the sources of curses emanating from *kami* closely associated with the state or even those in distant and outlying regions. At the foundation of this situation was an interaction between the *kami*, the emperor and the priests that was held in revolving tension. This situation in which the *kami* of the various regions directly cursed the emperor became an opportunity for the solidification of a state-wide system of rituals and mandated administrators to take hold in every province. This situation also put pressure on provincial authorities by requiring the thorough management of *kami* and, furthermore, it served as impetus for shrine reconstruction and clerical regulation.

In Han and Tang dynasty China, there is evidence that the Chinese emperor and the individuals in his company were subject to curses and these instances of curses were often handled in a similar

fashion. The form that curses originating with provincial *kami* and those affecting the Japanese emperor took compelled the administrators and priests in the various provinces to have increasing levels of reverence for the *kami* which lead to the construction of a ritual system that was circular in both structure and function.

Amidst this situation, the climate in the court in the post-Jōgan years became one dominated by the *kami*. The morning services installed by Emperor Uda, the system of dispatching emissaries to make offerings to great *kami*, the performance of shrine rites under extraordinary circumstances all point to the establishment of a Heian ritual framework which at its heart contained the imperial rites serving as lynch pin in its circular functioning.

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<sup>1</sup> See Ōe, Atsushi. 1994. “Tatari gensho to jingikan no kiboku.” In *Shoku Nihongi no jidai*. Hanawashobō. Nishiyama, Ryōhei. 1995. “Seitai fuyo to tatari.” In *Nihon kodai kokka no tenkai*, vol. 1, ed. Kadowaki Teiji. Shibunkaku. Nishiyama, Ryōhei. 1996. “Kamai onryō sanriku.” In *Amaterasu shinwa no henshin fu*, ed. Seitō Hideki. Shinwasha. Saitō, Hideki. 1996. *Amaterasu no fukami e*. Shinyosha. Satō, Hiroo. 2000. *Amaterasu no henbō*. Hōzōkan. Yamashita, Katsuaki. 2002. “Saigai kiai to tennō.” In *Tennō to Ōken wo kangaeru*, vol. 8. Iwanami. Ōe, Atsushi. 2003. “Onmyōryo to tatari.” In *Bunkashi no shosō*, ed. Ōsumi Kazuo. Yoshikawakōbunkan. etc.

<sup>2</sup> Naoki, Kojiro. 1982. “Mori to yasiro to miya—kami kannen no hensen to shaden no keisei.” In *Kodaishi no mado*. Gakuseisha

<sup>3</sup> Okada, Shōji. 2005. “Heianki no kokushi saishi to shokoku ichi no miya.” In *Chūsei ichi no miya no rekishiteki tenkai*, ed. Iwatashoin.

<sup>4</sup> Saitō, Hideki. 1991. “Takusen norito—tatarigami wo utsushiyaru—norito wo chūshin ni.” In *Setsuwa no koza daini maki setsuwa no gensetsu*. Benseisha.

<sup>5</sup> Yasue, Kazunori. 1979. “Ominomiura ni kansuru ichi kōsatsu.” In *Shintō saishi ronkō*. Shintōshi gakkai.

<sup>6</sup> Iyanaga, Teizō. 1988. “Ōtomo no yakamochi no jicho seru daijokanfu ni tsuite.” In *Nihon kodai no seiji to shiryō*. Kōryōshoten.

<sup>7</sup> Nishioka, Yoshifumi. 2002. “Rikujinchokusen to kanromiura.” In *Oken to jingi*, ed. Imatani, Akira. Shibunkaku.

<sup>8</sup> Yonei, Teruyoshi. 1993. “Kodai nihon no ‘tatari no shisutemu’—ritsuryō kokka no ‘tatari’ no yourei.” In *Tōkyō daigaku shūkyōgaku nenpō*.

———. *Saigai to kiai genshō no shisōshi*. (Dissertation).

<sup>9</sup> See Ogura, Shigeji. 1994. “Hachi kyū seiki ni okeru chihō jinja gyōsei no tenkai.” In *Shigaku zasshi*, vol. 103-3. Nishimiya, Hideki. 2003. “Ritsuryō kokka ni okeru jingishoku.” In *Ritsuryō kokka to jingi saishi seido no kenkyū*. Hanawashobō. Kawahara, Hideo. 1996. “Kokushi to jinja gyōsei.” In *Nihon kodai no kokka to saigi*, ed. Hayashi, Rokuro and Suzuki, Yasutami. Yūzankaku. Yamamoto, Nobuyoshi. 2000. “Jinja shūzō to shashi no seiritsu.” In *Shaji zōei no seijishi*, ed. Yamamoto, Nobuyoshi. Shibunkaku.

<sup>10</sup> See (9) Ogura.

<sup>11</sup> Iyanaga, Teizō. 1988. “Ōtomo no yakamochi no jicho seru daijokanfu ni tsuite.” In *Nihon kodai no seiji to shiryō*. Kōryōshoten.

<sup>12</sup> Nishimoto, Masahiro. “Haseiki no jingonjiki to ominomiura.” In *Shoku nihongi no kenkyū*, vol. 300.

<sup>13</sup> Yasue, Kazunori. 1979. “Kōtei Miyaji hijikuden.” Paper prepared for conference “Shintō saishi ronkō,” Shintōshi gakkai.

<sup>14</sup> Yasue, Kazunori. 1979. “Ominomiura ni kansuru ichi kōsatsu.” In *Shintō saishi ronkō*. Shintōshi gakkai.

Nishimoto, Masahiro. “Haseiki no jingonjiki to ominomiura.” In *Shoku nihongi no kenkyū*, vol. 300. Saitō, Hideki. 1996. “Ominomiura no nazo.” In *Amaterasu no fukami e*. Shinyosha.