They aren't just entertainment.
Don't be fooled.
They are all we have, you see,
all we have to fight off
illness and death.

What the intellect must accept as inevitable, the story—together with its token, the omamori, and its drama, the festival—protects against. What rational intelligence deems inescapable is transposed by the *fonction fabulatrice* into hope. Fear changes into trust. Uncertainty is softened by promise. Thus the story and its token enrich and give meaning to the totality of life.

SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS*

In the West it has been the custom of churchmen to label and stigmatize as superstition or magic those popular folk beliefs and practices they do not approve of. This has been particularly pronounced in Protestant culture in recent history. This chronic tension is due to the fact that while folk religious beliefs are immanental, God is characteristically monotheistic and rational.

Such assaults on folk religious practices from the churches, however, have not always been successful, because many of those " superstitious " practices have endured, often in new symbols or artifacts (see Pope 1965). For example, Elzey (1975) documents the proliferation of what he calls " popular Protestantism " in the United States today. The fact that popular Protestantism tends to make nearly everything sacred—for example, Jesus watches, key chains, religious comic books, bumper stickers, velvet pictures of Jesus, plaques proclaiming " God Bless Our Home," and the like—suggests that churches have, in fact, little control over folk religious practices. Furthermore, he suggests that sociologically at least these items perform some significant functions that help bridge the often wide gap between religious principles and everyday needs.

In Japan, official religion (Shintoism and Buddhism) has made no deliberate efforts to de-legitimatize omamori. Both Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples have shown their positive support for the dissemination of omamori as long as they have control over the ritual aspects of

* By K. Peter Takayama, who would like to express gratitude to Memphis State University for faculty leave, and to Eugene R. Swanger.

their production.

There are two major reasons for the relatively peaceful coexistence of the official religion and omamori. First, both the traditional religion (especially Shinto) and omamori are characteristically immanental and inclusive. Second, omamori—which operate beneath the official religion—supplement religious practices in terms of concrete day-to-day needs. This is not to deny the fact that there have been tensions among some Buddhist sects regarding the use of omamori.

Responding to our question, " Do you believe in the efficacy of omamori," a prominent Buddhist monk, who is also a professor of ethnology, said, " I myself don't believe in the efficacy of omamori, but we are happy to supply them to anybody as long as people have a desire for them." This reply seems to represent the attitude of many religious professionals. While they deny a private need for omamori, they recognize that the public needs them.

New religious movements such as Sōkagakkai are said to exhibit a sectarian or exlcusive character; what are their attitudes towards omamori? Comparative examinations of official positions and personal attitudes of members of several different religious groups (including traditional ones) yield many interesting results. The members of new religious groups continue to use omamori, but they do not expect to find much value in them. Omamori are chiefly situated in the " low " culture, but their structural and functional dependencies on the institutional religions should be carefully investigated.

Omamori persist in highly industrialized and secularized Japan for two probable reasons. First, omamori are apparently able to provide people with the religious assurance needed to withstand moral and psychological uncertainties and anxieties in everyday life. The official religions can offer eventual and total release from the world of suffering but give little comfort and guidance for the here and now. Omamori work because they focus on immediate, practical and, above all, personal problems. Most Japanese, if they are religious at all, are religious in a practical and personal sense. Although less rationalized, the omamori perform many of the same functions as traditional Shinto, perhaps for different people and in different ways. Those who carry omamori have no difficulty in seeing themselves as being engaged in the more personalized Shinto practices.

Second, the omamori help to order the world morally, and particularly help sustain the normative principles involved in kinship organization. To receive an omamori from his relatives will help remind a person of love, obligations and the solidarity of the family to which he belongs. This is the latent, and not the manifest, function of oma-

mori. I would suggest that the role of the omamori cannot be understood apart from the social structure of family and kinship. Social boundaries and contexts in which the omamori are exchanged should be examined. It appears that a person seldom buys an omamori for himself, but nearly always obtains it for others, such as a child, spouse, classmate, a brother who will be taking a trip and so forth. I believe that the giving of the omamori on special occasions reaffirms love and obligations within the family and the broader social context and provides a measure of assurance and confidence to family members who need support.

Another issue that needs examination is the question of how to account for the increased use of the omamori. I would suggest that this increase is likely to occur where uncertainty or risk taking social action has increased, examples being omamori for car safety or success in college entrance exams. This hypothesis can easily be proven empirically. I believe that omamori are hardly the source of social change, but that social change as it occurs is likely to express itself through omamori.

NOTES

1. See Nishitani 1967: 28. Given this perception, the terms "natural" and "supernatural" are not applicable.

2. Most omamori are obtained from temples and shrines, but there are also a large number of omamori available from shops. Some of these have been taken to the priests for special rites and prayers and others have not but are nonetheless identified as omamori by the shopkeepers and the people. The priests deny that they are. Some innkeepers give *kōtsū anzen* to their departing guests, but in at least one case the omamori had not received any special rites.

3. *Kaiun* refers to the opening of the doors of the inner sanctuary and the subsequent coming of the kami. It is best read to mean "to induce good luck."

4. Interview with Ogaki Toyotaka at Ise. During the Tokugawa period (1600–1868) more than three hundred shrines and temples arose in the region around Ise Shrine which did meet the demands of the people for omamori from Ise. Herbert notes that "it often happens" that people will uproot a small sakaki tree or take home a stone from the shrine, and Lafcadio Hearn records that Izumo Shrine had to wrap mats around trees to prevent people from taking pieces of bark for omamori.

5. Questionnaire completed by the chief priest at Aso Jinja.

6. Interview with chief priest Nishitakatsuji at Dazaifu.

7. Interview with PL Kyōdan officials.

8. Interviews at Ise, Dazaifu and Kōganji. In my initial field study I was unable to locate the companies which are manufacturing the omamori. This tendency will probably result in the standardization of omamori and the wide variety presently available will probably diminish in time. Already certain common "factory forms" are found throughout Japan.

9. Interview with Maeda Takashi, a sociologist at Kansai University. Accord-

ing to Maeda this omamori, called *nejiri*, evolved from the centerpost of the early Japanese houses and it was into this centerpost that *tama* (souls) were invited to protect the household.

10. There are many homophones in the Japanese language, and examples of homeopathic magic also abound. For example, *kaeru* means both "to return" and "frog," so one puts a frog in one's purse to guarantee its return if lost. People go to Hirota Shrine in Nishinomiya to "pick up happiness" (*hiro*=wide and *hirota* [*hirotta*] means "picked up."). A pregnant woman should visit the shrine on the day of the dog because dogs give birth easily. The basic notion running through all instances is that like influences like.

11. Colors, especially red and gold, have significance for omamori. Seldom does one find an omamori without the gold color. Both colors are associated with life, power, fecundity and the sacred.

12. Clement (1907: 25) observes that an antidote for smallpox was to keep on one's person a photograph of the Honorable Inouye Kakugoro, M.P. "The idea in this case seems to be that, as Mr. Inouye is such a noted orator, the very sight of his face would overwhelm the smallpox kami."

13. Perhaps because of the notion of *utsubo*, or the magical power of enclosed places, omamori have often been placed in dark closed places: the hem around the collar, inside a bamboo tube, and more recently inside a silk bag. If the bag is opened the omamori is said to lose its power. Omamori made of a ginko or a peach seed with a gold image of a deity inside also illustrate the *utsubo* principle.

14. Motoori Norinaga kept a large number of suzu in his home, which he rang in the morning and the evening to brighten and clear his mind. Today students journey to his home, which he named Suzunoya, to obtain suzu for assistance in their examinations. Iizawa and Yasude (1978: 17–19) note that suzu attached to *ema* 絵馬 enhance their effectiveness and suzu attached to war horses protected the horses and enabled their riders to conquor.

15. Interview with priest at Fushimi Inari Shrine. For a discussion of the word "magic" see Geertz 1975: 71–89 and Hammond 1970: 1349–1356.

16. Bergson 1954: 108 ff. The term *fonction fabulatrice* has been translated as "myth making power," which is too restrictive and misleading.

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