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On Cognitive Aspects of Rhetorical Time Reckoning

Metaphor and Image-Schema in Calendrical Divination in Okinawa

Abstract

In calendrical divination in Okinawa, people appropriate a familiar spatial concept, including its social-relational implications, for creating a meaningful arrangement of days and years. The layout of a typical Okinawan hamlet is structured by descent relations: ancestors at the back and offspring in front. "A child nestling in the embrace of its parent" is an expression of such living space, where dwellers are said to receive spiritual protection from their forebears. My field observations reveal that the same structure is also related to the context of calendrical divination. The Chinese zodiac signs, which stand not only for cardinal directions but also for temporal units, enable this structural transfer and thereby facilitate analogies between space, time, and people. By applying a theory of image-schema, this article tries to illuminate the cognitive process involved in the use of metaphor for interpreting days and years in Okinawan village life.

Keywords: metaphor—schema theory—calendrical divination—anthropology of time—Okinawa

THIS ARTICLE ADDRESSES a system of calendrical divination, called *p'yuri-tui* (J. *hi yori tori* 日和取り), which was widely observed in the islands of Okinawa until quite recently and continues to be familiar to elder islanders.[1] This divination is conducted with extensive reference to *jūni-shi* 十二支 (the twelve Chinese zodiac signs), a cycle which is widely used for the indication of calendar days, years, and the cardinal directions in Okinawa.[2] Common application of this system makes it possible to establish links between otherwise separate categories. In fact, there is a local method of conceptualization, called *kadu-ati* (J. *kado ate* 角当て), which not only designates suitable dates and directions for engaging in a particular activity but also prescribes desirable social relations. When people choose certain days and years in preference to others, a Taoist calendar is certain to be consulted. However, besides this Chinese tradition, *p'yuri-tui* consists mainly of *kadu-ati*, which seems indigenous to Okinawa.

Matsui Takeshi, who made a distinctive contribution to Okinawan ethnography with his introduction of a cognitive-anthropological approach, made the following observation:

> The fact that the twelve zodiac signs commonly serve as the basic frame of reference both for the spatial classification of the cardinal directions and for the temporal classification of years or days…seems to have developed into a social formula for rendering the correspondence between these different domains culturally meaningful (MATSUI 1989, 196).

This observation suggests potential for interesting research, but the potential is somewhat diminished by his illustration. To demonstrate the correspondence between the spatial classification and the temporal classification, Matsui cites the taboo of going in the direction of "monkey" on the day of "monkey" (MATSUI 1989, 196–99). However, as he points out elsewhere, it is important to take into consideration the zodiac sign of the year in which

the person concerned was born (MATSUI 1989, 194). In fact, my friends in the Miyako Islands said that judgment about good or bad timing without reference to birth-year signs like the taboo mentioned above was too trivial to be followed by action.[3] This unbalanced attention was probably caused by Matsui's strong interest in folk taxonomy. Being understood as an ethno-scientific system of classification which conceptualizes the external world, folk taxonomy is a kind of objective knowledge. In contrast to this, the reference to a birth-year sign opens a subjective dimension in divinational knowledge in the sense that years, days, and the cardinal directions are thereby conceptualized as a particular environment into which a particular person is inseparably embedded. It seems to me that Matsui's remark can be developed into fruitful research when it is read as referring to this epistemological subjectivity rather than in relation to an alternative system of classification concerning space and time.

Watanabe Yoshio, another prominent specialist in Okinawan ethnography, reports in detail on calendrical divination concerning the construction of houses and tombs (WATANABE 1994, 522–23, 366–67). Based on his interviews with geomancers as well as carpenters, Watanabe notes, for example, that people avoid building a house in the year of the same zodiac sign as the birth-year sign of the head of the household, and that they avoid building a tomb with its gate facing the direction of the same zodiac sign as the birth-year sign of its owner. Unfortunately, Watanabe's report is exclusively concerned with traditional architecture. To his credit, this narrow focus was reasonable for an ethnographer whose main interest was in the diffusion and local variation of Chinese geomantic knowledge (feng shui; J. *hūsui* 風水). Nevertheless, I suspect that an even wider focus would not advance our understanding of calendrical divination. As long as researchers are satisfied with knowing the preferences and avoidances predetermined by ritual specialists, their research will simply expand a list of taboo-like rules. Watanabe observed that the verbalized rules, which supposedly govern calendrical divination, often differ from one ritual specialist to another. Unless we follow a different approach, we will simply be confused by these complications.

A theory of metaphorical categorization may be helpful in overcoming the insufficiency of the previous research. In the early 1980s, linguist George Lakoff and philosopher Mark Johnson developed the theory that most abstract concepts are formed by the metaphorical extension of concrete ones (LAKOFF AND JOHNSON 1980, LAKOFF 1990, JOHNSON 1992). They argued that there are a small number of concepts which emerge directly from our bodily or other basic experiences. These concepts are appropriated for giving consistent structure to essentially intangible experiences, such as "love," "anger," or "argument," thereby rendering abstract concepts more intelligi-

ble. This theory has positive implications for the study of calendrical divination. The passage of time has no discernible structure of its own. Calendrical divination superimposes a form onto this amorphic experience to construct a meaningful arrangement of days and years. By adopting this view, we can develop a clear research plan for (1) identifying the source from which to offer an interpretative schema in a particular divination system, and (2) investigating the empirical ways in which this schema is metaphorically extended to temporal experience. Lakoff and Johnson's theory seems also helpful when dealing with epistemological subjectivity. As long as the source of metaphor has an experiential base, metaphorical categorization will go beyond a purely intelligent analysis of objective categories and include the subjectivity of a sentient being.

The first half of this article deals with the theory of metaphorical categorization. Reviewing an influential theory of metaphor, I propose that metaphor can be better understood as the categorization of internal attitudes rather than as that of objects in an external reality. I then introduce Lakoff and Johnson's idea of image-schema. This idea not only plays a key role in their theory but can support what may be called the "attitude view of metaphor." By using these analytical concepts, I give an account of the notion of linear time, which has largely been left unanalyzed by anthropologists.

The second half of this article is specifically concerned with calendrical divination in Okinawa. First, I demonstrate that the frequent use of the twelve zodiac signs allows local people to construct a parallel between life, death, and initiation. This parallel provides conceptual resources for interpreting days and years in divination. Second, I focus on a local term, *kushati*, which describes the layout of a typical Okinawan hamlet as a spatial expression of ancestral protection. I then illustrate how this vernacular concept serves as an image-schema when it is superimposed onto the twelve zodiac signs. This superimposition enables *kushati* to extend to different contexts and to form a metaphorical category. Lastly, I explain a particular class of divination cases as one of the contexts to which that interpretive schema can be applied.

THE ATTITUDE VIEW OF METAPHOR

Since the time of Aristotle metaphor has been thought of as a kind of rhetoric that highlights a resemblance between a principal subject and a subsidiary subject that together constitute a metaphorical sentence. Max Black systematically refuted this popular view (BLACK 1962). His argument that metaphor creates similarity rather than articulating a similarity that already exists has been influential. However, this "interaction view," as he calls it,

seems to still contain an arguable point. Critically reading Black's argument, I will suggest a third view, which defines metaphor as a categorization deriving from an internal attitude of its users.

According to Aristotle's comparison view, a metaphor is nothing but an elliptical simile. The statement, "the man is a wolf," can be paraphrased as "the man is like a wolf," in being fierce, carnivorous, and treacherous, for instance. This view presupposes resemblances between a man and a wolf in mind-independent reality. It follows that metaphor is a mere decoration for that which can also be described literally. On the other hand, Black's interaction view substitutes a "system of associated commonplaces" (BLACK 1962), or "implicative complex" (BLACK 1993), of a subsidiary subject for the subsidiary subject as such. Ethologically correct information about wolves bears no relation to calling a man a wolf. The matter concerned is "a set of standard beliefs about wolves that are the common possession of the members of some speech community" (BLACK 1962, 40). Ethologists might describe wolves as prudent rather than fierce. Wolves can be faithful to their companions, though they appear to be treacherous to their human owners. In short, Black argues that a subsidiary subject is an imagined or created one. I would like to emphasize that a subsidiary subject is thought of as something belonging to the outside world even if it is not completely independent of the mind.

In contrast to these existing views of metaphor, a third view defines a subsidiary subject in terms of the internal attitudes of metaphor users. This view can be deduced from a careful reading of the following remark by Black:

> Nor must we neglect *the shifts in attitude* that regularly result from the use of metaphorical language. A wolf is (conventionally) a hateful and alarming object; so, to call a man a wolf is to imply that he too is hateful and alarming (and thus to *support and reinforce dyslogistic attitudes*) (BLACK 1962, 42; my italics).

In a later essay, Black describes this attitudinal dimension as "the ambience of the subsidiary subject," or as "the suggestions and valuations that...suffuse the receiver's perception" (BLACK 1993, 29). While in the two preexisting views a subsidiary subject is thought of as the external feature of an object under observation, in this third view it is thought of as the observer's internal attitudes towards the object. In other words, the difference is whether the criterion exists outside the body or inside it. I provisionally refer to this third view as the "attitude view" of metaphor.[4]

This attitude view has greater explanatory value than the interaction

view. John Searle notes that there is a class of metaphors that appear to have no association between a principal subject and a subsidiary subject (SEARLE 1993, 96–99, 105). One of his examples is the metaphor "Sally is a block of ice." He argues that such a metaphor invalidates not only the comparison view but also the interaction view for the following reason:

> If we were to enumerate quite literally the various distinctive qualities of blocks of ice, none of them would be true of Sally. Even if we were to throw in the various beliefs that people have about blocks of ice, they still would not be literally true of Sally (SEARLE 1993, 96).

In short, no relation can be found between an unemotional woman and a hard, cold substance, even though they are equated by a "be" verb. The attitude view assumes that an observer's attitude towards a subsidiary subject is identical, or similar at least, to his/her attitude towards a principal subject. The metaphor in question can be explained in terms of someone assuming the same attitude towards an unemotional woman as towards a block of ice.[5] The attitude view does not contradict the interaction view. However, only the attitude view can explain both "Sally is a block of ice" and "the man is a wolf." In other words, the range of metaphors explicable by the interaction view is subsumed under the range of metaphors which can be explained by the attitude view.

Another disadvantage of the interaction view is related to its avoidable complexity. In a concise description of his interaction view, Black argues that the interaction consists of the following three stages whereby the presence of the principal subject

1. incites the hearer to select some of the subsidiary subject's properties;

2. invites the hearer to construct a parallel implicative complex that can fit the principal subject;

3. reciprocally induces parallel changes in the subsidiary subject (BLACK 1993, 28).

An "implicative complex" is used, in stage 2, in order to substitute a plain aggregate of the subsidiary subject's properties selected in stage 1. Since Black's "implicative complex" is a holistic system, it cannot be reduced into its constitutive parts (JOHNSON 1992, 69–71). Moreover, his "implicative complex" is an ideological construct, which is subject to change and variety and is, thereby, qualitatively different from the subsidiary subject's properties which are supposed to exist in the single, unchangeable objective reali-

ty. These characteristics seem to lead Black to suggest the reciprocal change of the subsidiary subject in stage 3. Referring to the metaphor "the man is a wolf," he argues that "the metaphor makes the wolf seem more human than he otherwise would" (BLACK 1962, 44). Mary Hesse agrees with Black on this point:

> Wolves become more human after the metaphor is used: "bestial" for instance becomes a term of abuse for beasts as well as men (HESSE 1983, 32).

Thus, these notable theorists of metaphor argue that the use of metaphor is accompanied by the semantic transformation in which metaphorical creativity lies.

However, does it not sound ridiculous to say that "the wolf is a man," whether the metaphor is present or not? Does not the assumption of parallel implicative complexes require a difficult extra explanation as to how these complexes differ while holding to their parallelism? The attitude view is free from these problems. Instead of parallel implicative complexes, it assumes that a principal subject is to a subsidiary subject as a categorized referent is to an index of that category. The metaphor "the man is a wolf" simply means that the man belongs to the same category as a wolf when both subjects are understood as something about which metaphor users have opinions or feelings. A metaphor user's attitude towards wolves distinguishes the members of this category (for example, the man) from its non-members (for example, a little girl). However, this category is open-ended since we can always take that particular attitude towards other objects just as we have taken a new attitude towards the man. Metaphorical creativity lies in this attitudinal novelty. It is also worth noting that a wolf is not simply a member of this category but also represents the category as a whole. In other words, a wolf serves as the category's prototype. Understood in this way, the subject-predicate relation of the sentence "the man is a wolf" differs little from ordinary definitional statements, like "the man is a mammal." The absurdity of the reverse expression can be understood as a simple logical mistake.

IMAGE-SCHEMA AND METAPHOR AS ITS EXTENSION
Although this attitude view of metaphor is independently established, it fits well with Lakoff and Johnson's theory of metaphorical categorization. Among its componential ideas, the concept of image-schema is significant for understanding this congruous relationship. Image-schema is defined as a recurring structure for organizing human experience. This structure, as an

experiential gestalt, enables us to comprehend the very experience itself. For instance, the following various experiences are said to share a PATH schema: walking from one place to another, throwing a ball to your sister, punching your brother, and giving your mother a present. The PATH schema recurring in these examples is an abstract framework consisting of the following three parts: (1) a source, or starting point, (2) a goal, or end point, and (3) a sequence of continuous locations connecting the source with the goal (JOHNSON 1992, 28–30).

Human cognition is said to have three distinct levels corresponding to the following three kinds of mental representation: (1) mental pictures, (2) propositions, and (3) image-schemata. Because of this distinction an image-schema can be substituted neither with mental pictures nor propositions (JOHNSON 1992, 23–28; JOHNSON-LAIRD 1983, 146–66). Flexibility coming from its abstract nature differentiates an image-schema from concrete mental pictures. Every experience taken as an example of a PATH schema implies its own concrete pictures in the mind. Moreover, there are actually an infinite number of mental pictures even only of the first example, walking from one place to another, that vary depending on the persons walking and the pairs of places between which they move. On the other hand, image-schemata differ from propositions in that image-schemata have no definite truth-value (JOHNSON 1992, 23). We cannot judge whether the application of an image-schema is right or wrong but can only feel its naturalness. This naturalness becomes particularly evident in the analysis of polysemy (LAKOFF 1990, 106–109, 440–44). Compare each pair of underlined words below:

A road <u>ran</u> into the woods. / A man <u>ran</u> into the woods.
The road goes <u>through</u> the woods. / He walks <u>through</u> the woods.

If these pairs of words are propositionally defined, that is, one pair being defined in relation to a trajectory and the other to a moving object, the words in each pair will be understood as homonyms. It is evident, however, that there is a natural connection between a moving object and its trajectory. Propositional semantics cannot give an account of this natural connection (LAKOFF 1990, 106; JOHNSON 1992, 25–26).

Previous to Lakoff and Johnson's work, there was already much scholarly attention to the fact that metaphor is a way of understanding the abstract by use of the concrete. For instance, James Fernandez put this into a formulation in the 1970s:

In general, the semantic movement accomplished by metaphor is from the abstract, and inchoate in the subject to the more concrete, ostensi-

ble and easily graspable in the metaphoric predicate (FERNANDEZ 1977, 104).

In the theory of image-schema, this tendency is explained as a motivated direction into which image-schemata are extended. The theory assumes that an actual path (that is, walking from one place to another) is the original experience from which the PATH schema is induced. Then, the PATH schema is extended to the other cases (for example, throwing a ball, punching someone, and giving a present). This extension can go further to the cases in which it is impossible to delineate any tangible correlate to the three parts of the structure of the PATH schema:

Ice has melted into water.
She's just starting out to make her fortune (JOHNSON 1992, 28, 115).

In the first example, the PATH schema is extended to the physical change of a substance (water) from its solid state to its liquid state. In the second one, the same schema is extended to the non-physical change, that is, a woman's life course.

Although schemata were initially defined as the static structure of experience, recent schema theory focuses more attention on the dynamics of schema (compare D'ANDRADE 1995, 122–43). In other words, schemata began to be regarded as a cognitive processor that is flexible, mutable, and plastic. This theoretical shift underlines the significance of studying the act of schematizing. What does this general shift suggest to the discussion of image-schema? Image-schemata emerge from the human physical constitution or its bodily movements. If we turn our attention to the process side, schematizing will be regarded as a kind of physical exercise, rather than as a mental operation, because schematizing is the activation of somatic configuration.

A simple illustration can make this abstract point clearer. When someone regards a certain type of prose as "heavy," the person can be said to schematize the prose through the HEAVINESS schema. In this schematization, the person's bodily reaction to that prose changes into the same reaction produced by a physically (that is, literally) heavy thing. For instance, the vigorous drive to read heavy prose seems to be identical to the drive to lift a heavy stone. Some people might even roll up their sleeves when they begin to read heavy prose. There may be practical reasons for such rolled-up sleeves in the case of the garden work of carrying a heavy stone. There is no practical reason for rolled-up sleeves, however, in the case of the library work of reading heavy prose. Moreover, these people might draw a sigh of accom-

plishment when they finish the reading. The sigh is not different from one
following the lifting of a heavy stone. Contrary to these striking similarities
in physical reactions, mental operation plays only a minor role in the use of
this metaphor. A mental operation is usually assumed to distinguish features
of the objects under comparison and to judge their similarity. There is, how-
ever, no discernable feature that is common to both a piece of heavy prose
and a heavy stone. Therefore, the heavy prose can be said to be made per-
ceivable as heavy by its reader's changing physical posture towards it.

   Johnson and Lakoff assume that an image-schema has a structure, but
it is difficult to identify such a structure in the HEAVINESS schema. It is
even more difficult to formulate it as clearly as Johnson and Lakoff delineate
the components and their interrelations in the PATH schema. Therefore, I
shall refrain from claiming that image-schemata and internal attitudes are
parallel interpretations of an essentially identical concept. However, it can
safely be said that no image-schema is separable from internal attitudes
towards that which is schematized.

THE CONCEPT OF LINEAR TIME

The idea of image-schema has positive implications for the anthropological
study of temporal concepts. Anthropologists traditionally explored the con-
cept of time in non-Western societies and thereby cast serious doubt on the
popular belief that linear time was universal. However, these cultural rela-
tivists often failed to discriminate their claim from a denial of temporal
objectivity. Already in the 1970s, Maurice Bloch discerned this problem and
criticized the Durkheimian social determinism of knowledge (BLOCH 1977).
Recent reviewers of anthropological time-studies similarly suggest that we
should explicate the familiar concept of linear time before we investigate the
ethnographically peculiar categories of temporality (GELL 1992, MUNN
1992, ADAM 1994). However, except for Alfred Gell's highly theoretical
model, there have been few anthropological attempts to bring either linear
time, or its counterparts in non-Western societies, into systematic analysis. In
this situation, Lakoff and Johnson's argument deserves serious attention.
They argue that the concept of linear time derives from the schematization
by the PATH schema (compare LAKOFF AND JOHNSON 1980, 41–45, 58–59;
JOHNSON 1992, 113–14). By reducing a concept into the image-schema
involved in its formation, we can establish a foundation on which a variety
of temporal concepts can be conveniently compared.

   It is easy to criticize linear time for spatializing temporality. Some
anthropologists simply dismiss a straight line segment merely as representa-
tion (for example, HOWE 1981). Careful writers prefer to use "duration"
rather than "time" in ethnographic contexts in order to avoid the latter's con-

fusing implications (for example, TURTON AND RUGGLES 1978). A notable philosopher actually considered duration to be the fundamental aspect of time (BERGSON 1993). However, this kind of criticism lacks insight into what it is that allows a straight line to represent temporality. A straight line as such has no attribute that inevitably develops into the concept of time.

It may be easy to realize that this representation is founded on image-schematic transformation. As a long and thin object can naturally be regarded as a trajectory, a straight line is interchangeable, in the mind, with a straight-moving object. Thus, a flying arrow, a river, and a traveller are often used in literature to convey a sense of the passage of time. However, time is evidently not a moving object. There is nothing that flies, flows, creeps along, passes by or comes up, although we say time does all of these things. If what moves is not time as such, why is time considered to be a moving object? Lakoff and Johnson answer that a moving object serves as a temporal representation on grounds of their correlation with time in our perceptual experience; when an object moves towards us it takes *time* to get to us (LAKOFF AND JOHNSON 1980, 19–21, 56–60).

Yet, this answer is not entirely satisfactory because we can still ask what *time* means in the above sentence. A possible answer to this would be that it is a correlation between separate experiences of change. For instance, we see an archer, a bow, and a background just after an arrow has been fired, but our view becomes quite different when we see the arrow about to hit a mark. This visual-perceptual change is correlated with the physical movement of the arrow and can naturally be represented by its motion. This is a one-to-one correlation, but such correlation usually happens in multi-lateral directions. When we travel somewhere, changes will occur in almost all aspects of our experience—not only in terms of sight but also in terms of hearing, smell, touch, and taste. Our emotions as well as these senses continuously alter during the journey. Many different kinds of changes are mutually correlated in travel experience, which can then offer a basis for regarding these changes as a whole as a traveller. What is called "duration" can be understood as referring to these disparate changes, which occur multi-directionally but can be linked together in experience.[6]

Why, then, does the PATH schema receive overwhelming preference in organizing duration into a temporal concept? No experiential change stands alone. Every change simultaneously exists with other changes. Therefore, any change can theoretically represent the category of time. However, it seems empirically difficult to deny that "path" representation (for example, a traveller, not feelings or senses during a journey) is predominant. According to Lakoff, this predominance comes from the plainness, recurrence, and pervasiveness of the image-schema (LAKOFF 1990, 278). The

PATH schema is conceptually plain. A physical movement is easier to ana-
lyze than an intangible case of change. It is easy to measure exactly how far
someone has driven. It is difficult, however, to identify the exact point at
which a certain feeling has faded away and been replaced with another. The
PATH schema is also familiar due to its recurrence and pervasiveness in the
living environment. When a straight line is used as a temporal representa-
tion, it is more likely to be horizontal than vertical or oblique. This tenden-
cy seems to be conditioned by human existence in a gravity field where an
object moving upwards soon falls and an object moving downwards soon
reaches the ground. The distance in which animals, like humans, can move
vertically is much shorter than the distance in which they can move hori-
zontally. They make horizontal movements far more frequently than verti-
cal ones.

Considering this universal conditioning, the concept of linear time may
seem unaffected by social boundaries. As all the members of the human race
have the same physical constitution and make movements within their lim-
its, they all have the PATH schema at their disposal. This does not mean,
however, that linear time is recognized everywhere to the same degree. For
instance, Pierre Bourdieu argues that Algerian peasants do not accept the
idea of the possible future and only concern themselves with the potential
future. The possible future is the future only accessible by being mediated by
"path" representation, whereas the potential future is the future inherent in
a subjective being in the present (BOURDIEU 1963). However, if these people
were to totally reject "path" representation, they could use neither clock nor
calendar. Criticizing Bourdieu for making this contrast, Gell proposes to
seek the source of difference in the "qualitative characteristics of representa-
tion of time" (GELL 1992, 286–93). Actually, some characteristics of linear
time are peculiar to a modern lifestyle. "Path" representation allows or forces
some people to believe in the existence of the scheduled future and the fixed
past, to be irritated or surprised at the velocity of time, and to ponder about
the alternative temporal directions. However, many other people who also
use clock and calendar are unfamiliar with these notions.

One of the sources of this difference is the difference in the environ-
ment in which image-scemata are conceived. The environment means not
simply the physically perceived surroundings but in fact the habitually
imagined world. This can clearly be evidenced by the idea of "a temporal
point."[7] We can easily think of some motion occuring at a particular point in
time. However, no real experience can happen in a temporal point that has
no extension. Such experience is not just imperceptible but even unimagin-
able if we try to think of it without any assumption. Obviously, a temporal
point is a transformation of its spatial counterpart. We have, since Euclid,

been familiar with the concept of a point in space that has no extension. Nevertheless, even this spatial point is not perceptible. The only reason we can assume that the spatial point exists is that our frequent use of the concept makes it ontologically stronger. In other words, a point in space begins to "exist" even if it has no direct grounds in the physical environment. We are accustomed to consider a tip of a pen, a corner of a desk, or a crossroads on a map as a point that has no extension. This routine renders the zero-extension point cognitively real. The fact that superimposition can change the environment implies that an image-schema's recurrence and pervasiveness, and perhaps its plainness too, are quite variable among people even though these three conditions may seem common to everyone.

The PATH schema is cognitively powerful because it is rooted in the human physical constitution and a limited set of its movements. However, it is merely one possibility. Various image-schemata can also be constructed on the same bodily basis. The point is that, whatever image-schema is used in a temporal concept, this shared basis guarantees its commensurability with linear time; a requirement that remains to be met in many cultural-relativist accounts. Thus, it seems promising to explain a culturally peculiar temporal concept with reference to a specific image-schema which enjoys currency in a different socio-cultural environment.

The rest of this article turns the focus back to Okinawan calendrical divination. I will demonstrate that a particular image-schema, which is abstracted from an experience called *kushati* in the vernacular, plays a key role in creating a meaningful arrangement of the days and years indicated by the twelve Chinese zodiac signs.

THE RITES OF PASSAGE

There is much evidence that elderly Okinawans are familiar with the reckoning of time using the twelve zodiac signs. Although many public events are nowadays planned according to the Western calendar, traditional ceremonies are still fixed on the days of particular zodiac signs. I often observed people counting, with the help of their fingers, the number of days left before the next ceremony, one by one mumbling the name of the twelve signs. Such frequent use of the zodiac signs seems to render certain numbers "neater" (that is, more orderly) than the others. For instance, the numbers seven, twelve, thirty-seven, and forty-nine are recurrently used as the prescribed number of items to be offered to deities revered in shrines or other sanctuaries. A few ritual-specialists told me that each of these numbers stood for specific things, but most people had no idea or did not care for those interpretations. Nevertheless, an aesthetic account seems possible. The number seven is the correct middle point of one complete sequence of the

twelve zodiac signs. The numbers thirty-seven and forty-nine amount to the beginning of the third and fourth cycles, respectively. From the perspective of the decimal system, these numbers may look unrelated to one another and constitute only an arbitrary collection. However, people consider these numbers as good round numbers after they have become accustomed to reckoning by the twelve signs. In fact, these numbers are also brought into focus in a more notable context, that of the rites of passage.

Okinawans celebrate the growth of their children at four specific times during their adolescence: in the third, fifth, seventh, and thirteenth years after they are born. Since an individual is counted as one year old at birth, the thirteenth year means that one entire sequence of the twelve signs has been completed in returning to the zodiac sign of his/her birth year. This threshold is marked by the thirteenth year celebration (*jūsan matsuri* 十三祭り).[8] Thereafter, every return of one's birth-year sign is celebrated. In other words, celebrations are held at the ages of twenty-five, thirty-seven, forty-nine, and sixty-one years old. The sixty-first year means not only the return of one cycle of the twelve zodiac signs but also the return of the Taoist sexagenary permutations.[9] Communal feasts celebrating this birth year are marked by larger attendance. Thanks to ever-increasing longevity, nowadays we can observe the seventy-third, eighty-fifth, and even ninety-seventh year celebrations as well.[10]

On Miyako Island, located in the southern part of Okinawa, the cycle of the twelve signs is also pertinent to memorial services for the dead, membership rites in local cult groups, and the "ageing" of newly-built houses. Memorial services are held in the second, third, seventh, thirteenth, and twenty-fifth years after a funeral. It has also become popular to hold a service in the thirty-third year. However, local elders note that this custom was only recently introduced by people who had temporarily lived on mainland Japan. In other words, this service is still thought of as something foreign. Herman Ooms observed the parallel between "way to adulthood" and "way to ancestorhood" in mainland Japan and called attention to its symbolism (Ooms 1976, 71–73). In Okinawa, this parallel seems closer or stronger due to the exclusive use of the zodiac signs. It is also more developed or wider in contexts. A similar set of intervals divides the period of membership in local groups which have regular ceremonies for worshipping communal ancestors. Each member offers a special prayer at home for these ancestors in the third, seventh, thirteenth, and twenty-fifth year after his/her initiation. Prayers in the thirty-seventh year are anticipated but rarely occurring events since people usually join cult groups after reaching middle age and do not live to see that occasion. Lastly, newly-built houses also receive the "rites of passage" at similar intervals. A shaman is invited to offer a protective prayer

against fire in the third, seventh, thirteenth, and twenty-fifth years after a house is constructed.

Thus, the concurrence of the rites of passage and the cycle of the twelve zodiac signs is peculiar to Okinawa, especially to Miyako. In every instance, rites are performed in the third, fifth, seventh years, and thereafter at each recurrence of the zodiac sign of the starting year. This formal parallelism creates meaningful analogies between the different domains of experience. For instance, there are two taboos to be observed during the first three years. It is not until three years have passed after the funeral of one's relatives or the construction of one's house that one is allowed to participate in regular ceremonial activities in local shrines. Cult adherents are prohibited from eating animal meat for three years after their initiation. These taboos bear a resemblance to the custom that the corpses of children under three years old are buried separately from those of grown-ups. A Miyakoan shaman assertively explained that the spirits of new cult-adherents, new houses, the recently deceased, or newborns remain unstable for the initial three years. In other words, it takes three years for these spirits to firmly settle into their new status. The taboos are meant to tame these uncontrollable forces or to avoid potential danger. Whether or not this account is satisfactory to other islanders, it is important for our later discussion to note that they appreciate the analogy between life, death, and initiation.

THE IDEA OF *KUSHATI*

A casual remark made by a Miyakoan friend led me to notice that a vernacular concept *kushati* (J. *koshi ate* 腰当て) plays a key role in calendrical divination. My friend (an old woman born in 1911) asked me for a lift to a thread wholesaler in town. She wanted to sell a bundle of hemp thread, which she had spun herself at home. After waiting for quite a while outside the door, the deal was unexpectedly refused. The friend complained but had no choice. On our way back, she suggested dropping in at her friend's house. She wanted to get back the money that she had lent to this friend several months before. After a two-hour-long negotiation, she was again unsuccessful. We came home in vain. Immediately, she checked an almanac and said that we should have made this trip the day before. In response to my asking why, she said, "Because it was a great deity's *kushati* yesterday." I asked again what she meant by this vernacular word. Instead of answering verbally, she motioned to her hips and gently touched them with her hands a few times.

Kushati literally means "propped hips." For instance, this term describes a little child nestled in the bosom of its mother (or a senior relative as her substitute), who is sitting on the ground, in a way that the child is supported in her lap (see Figure 1). When the friend checked the almanac, she was trying to find

FIGURE 1. *Kushati*: a little boy nestled in his great-grand-mother's bosom in a way that he is supported in her lap. Shinzato hamlet, Miyako island, Okinawa, 13 March 1992. Photo by author.

out the zodiac sign of that day. The day on which we could have made a fruitful move would have been the day of the "dog." The day on which we actually made an unfruitful move was the day of the "boar." "Boar" was also the zodiac sign of the year in which my friend was born. Why, then, is the zodiac sign appearing immediately before one's birth-year sign called *kushati* and why is its day auspicious? Before answering these questions, we have to know how familiar local people are with the idea of *kushati*.

There is a certain layout common to many Okinawan hamlets. It is displayed by the location of the hamlet as a whole as well as the arrangement of the houses within it.

In his human-geographic analysis of Okinawan hamlets, Nakamatsu Yashu explains:

> In Okinawa, a monsoonal area, many hamlets are backed by hills in the north that provide protection against winter wind, and recline on their southern slopes to receive summer wind and sunshine (NAKAMATSU 1990, 20).

This positioning is based on a feng shui plan. Jan de Groot, in the earliest academic study of feng shui, defines it as:

> a quasi-scientific system, supposed to teach men where and how to build graves, temples and dwellings, in order that the dead, the gods and the living may be located therein exclusively, or as far as possible, under the auspicious influences of Nature (quoted in Walters 1989, 13).

Based on this system, the best location has the following two features: (1) a mountain slope flanked by two ridges forking out from it and affording a rather wide view in front, and (2) water flowing down from either or both sides,

passing gently along the front, and finding its outlet in a lateral direction (WALTERS 1989, 18, 22). The cardinal directions can then be combined with these topographical conditions; the front flow of water is linked with the south whereas the back mountain is linked with the north (FEUCHTWANG 1974, 152). In fact, Watanabe Yoshio finds that nearly all the old hamlets on the eastern coast of the northern part of Okinawa Island are surrounded by mountains along their northern boundaries and face the Pacific Ocean to the south (WATANABE 1990, 60). Recent philological research in Okinawa proved that such feng shui knowledge was widely disseminated in local society on the occasion of a large land-development project in the seventeenth century (TSUZUKI 1994, 97).

Inside Okinawan hamlets, houses are arranged in a distinctive pattern in accordance with their dwellers' social relations. Houses are usually built in close proximity to each other and divided by stony fences into small square house-yards. Each house is occupied by no more than one married couple for each generation and is inherited on the basis of primogeniture. It is undesirable for offspring other than the eldest son to remain in their father's house after marriage. Rather, each of the younger sons is expected to build a new house of his own. This house would then be described as a "branch" of the "stem" house that belongs to his father or elder brother. These branch houses are almost always built in "front" of or "below" the stem house in the sense that "front" is roughly south of the natal house while "below" is to its west.

This unique consideration of the cardinal directions was drawn into a symbolic-anthropological debate by Mabuchi Tōichi and other specialists in Okinawan ethnography (for example, MABUCHI 1968, 1980; MURATAKE 1964–1965, WATANABE 1985, KASAHARA 1974). The purpose of the debate was to substantiate the existence of a dualistic worldview that could provide a consistent explanation of the geographical patterns of Okinawan dwellings. Called "Ryūkyūan cosmology," this ideology was also expected to explain the order of rooms in relation to their different uses, the location of altars in a house yard as well as a house building, and the spatial divisions within a hamlet that divide residents into groups during festivals. In these various contexts, Mabuchi and others discovered those dichotomies with which anthropologists are familiar elsewhere, that is, male/female, right/left, above/below, sea/land, and so on (compare NEEDHAM 1973). They then argued that these dichotomies could be integrated into the master opposition of "the northeast positively valued/the southwest negatively valued."

Comments of the local people can certainly be included in this master opposition, but cognition would undergo a qualitative change were they to be translated into geographical language. The assumption about homoge-

neous space and abstract geometrical dimensions is implicitly brought into the analyses of an experiential environment where that assumption is actually untenable. As a result, a summarizing formula for a local sense of the cardinal directions is not helpful in understanding local people's interpretation in practice. For instance, by positive and negative values cosmologists mean associations with sanctity and impurity, respectively. However, at least in Miyako, deities are assumed to reside not only in the northeast but also in every cardinal direction including the southwest. Many local deities are actually enshrined at various sites in a hamlet territory.

Staying with vernacular categories seems to be a more productive approach. According to Nakamatsu hills behind hamlets are called "*kushati* hills" and are recognized as the sanctuary of communal ancestors. He regarded this as a spatial expression of the popular notion that warm-hearted ancestors give protection to their descendants. As the position of such a hamlet to its ancestral sanctuary was comparable with branch houses in front of their stem house, he speculated that contemporary sanctuaries had actually been the sites of residences in the remote past (NAKAMATSU 1990). At one point, he offers the following observations:

1. Branch houses are built not simply in the "front" or "below" direction of their stem house but also within its visible range in these directions, and

2. A branch house is allowed to be built in the "back" or "above" directions when it is so remote that it cannot be seen from its stem house (NAKAMATSU 1990, 256).

This invisibility specification does not make sense in terms of the formula for "Ryūkyūan cosmology." A possible explanation for this would be difficulty in schematization. When a stem house and its branch house do not come into view at the same time, their relative location will be unlikely to be the subject for interpretation.

It seems reasonable to assume that what may be called the KUSHATI schema exists in the following way: the KUSHATI schema has a simple structure, which consists of two components and their relation, one being in front with the other in back. The KUSHATI schema is inseparable from one's internal attitudes which are typically formed when, as a child, one is held by one's mother on her lap. If the interior pattern of a hamlet, as well as its exterior pattern, is regarded as a spatial expression of *kushati*, the KUSHATI schema can be said to be pervasively experienced in Okinawan village life. When local people visually perceive or imagine the features of

their hamlet, they repeatedly activate the KUSHATI schema. We can perhaps speculate that their hamlet is a place suffused with a particular kind of comfortable ambience, similar to that which a child feels when nestled in his/her mother's lap.

KUSHATI SCHEMA SUPERIMPOSED ONTO THE TWELVE ZODIAC SIGNS

Due to the particular experiential environment discussed above, *kushati* is one of the most familiar and intelligible concepts that enjoy currency in Okinawan village life. As a result, the KUSHATI schema can provide a feasible gestalt to otherwise unstructured situations and render them decipherable. In fact, the KUSHATI schema well demonstrates this interpretative power when superimposed onto the twelve zodiac signs. As I mentioned in the beginning, these signs provide a local frame of reference for temporal, spatial, and social relations. The superimposition of the KUSHATI schema enables people to give comprehensible structure to these relations and to put an interpretation on them. I learned of the following five cases during a stay on Miyako island (see Figure 2).

1. Kushati deity:

    It is said that every person has a "birth deity" in the direction of the birth-year sign. This deity is offered a special prayer at home at the beginning of every year. On the same occasion, people pray also to another deity called Kushati deity (*kushati gam* 腰当神). Kushati deity is said to reside somewhere in the opposite direction to one's birth-deity and to nurture this person . For example, if one's birth year is the "snake," this person will build two temporary altars for the annual prayer: one in the direction of the "snake," and the other towards the "boar."

2. Master shamans:

    In order to become a shaman, one has to serve an apprenticeship under the supervision of a senior shaman. This master-novice relationship is metaphorically described as "birds' brooding," expressed in an idiomatic phrase "*sudati-n-nma, sudati-n-fa* 巣立の母, 巣立の子 (brooding mother and her child breaking out from an egg)." The same relationship is also observable in the context of initiation into cult groups. Although ordinary cult group members are not able to go into possession, they are thought to be endowed with a little supernatural power. Anyone who decides to be a member has to consult a shaman, who can properly initiate the person into religious life. In both cases, becoming a professional shaman and

becoming a cult group member it is preferable to consult a shaman of the opposite birth-year sign, meaning that the shaman's birth-year sign faces one's own birth-year sign in the spatialized diagram of the twelve zodiac signs. In other words, the best consultant in this context is a shaman whose birth-year sign is the seventh zodiac sign counted up from the initiate's birth-year sign. In the case where an initiate is a "snake," the best "brooding mother" would be a "boar" shaman.

3. Fictive parents:
   When a baby has a weak constitution or cries too often, these problems are diagnosed as a consequence of spiritual incompatibility between a parent and the child. Consequently, a fictive parent is chosen among those neighbors who have the ideal birth-year sign for a parent of the troubled child. In this case, the most desirable is the zodiac sign immediately before the child's birth-year sign. For example, a "snake" boy would ideally have a "dragon" fictive parent. It is reasonable to infer that the reverse order of the birth-year signs between a real parent and his/her child alone becomes a sufficient condition to require a fictive parent—this, in fact, actually happens. If one of the parents of a "snake" boy has a "horse" as his birth-year sign, this boy will need a fictive parent irrespective of his health condition.

4. Ritual ablution:
   The same preference is observed on the occasion of a funeral in which a person who bathes the corpse is chosen from among those neighbors whose birth-year sign is immediately before the dead person's birth-year sign. It is helpful for interpreting this ablution to recall the parallel between the rites of passage in one's life course and the memorial services to the dead. The implicit proposition is that birth into human life is analogous with death into afterlife. In fact, the ablution of a newborn is similar to the ablution at a funeral. In the past when a local woman gave birth at home, one of her neighbors was asked to draw the "birth water" from a natural spring nearby. Such a person would be chosen from among those neighbors whose birth-year sign is the sign of the year before the birth. If someone is a "snake," a "dragon" neighbor will bathe him/her at birth, and he/she will be bathed by another "dragon" neighbor at death.

5. Ceremonial dates:
   In Shinzato, an old hamlet in the southern part of Miyako Island, in particular, this expression of parent-child relations can also be pointed
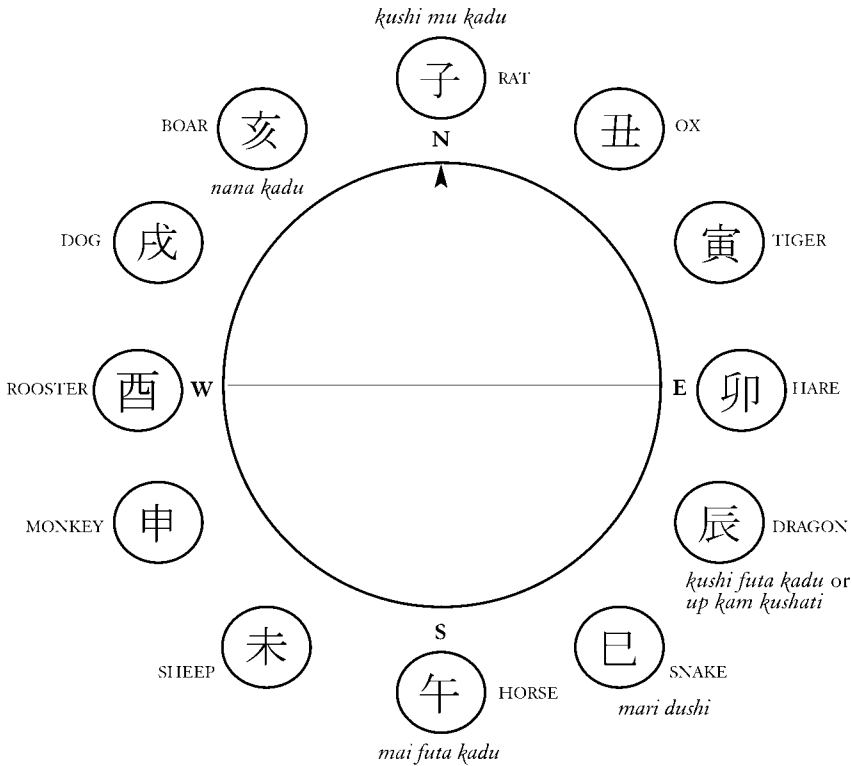
FIGURE 2. The twelve Chinese zodiac signs and their names in *kadu* reckoned from the "snake."

out in filiations among deities. These deities are assumed to be connected with each other by kinship or other kinds of relations closely resembling human society. For example, they are said to form couples, have children, establish "branch houses," that is, shrines, from their "stem house," adopt a son to inherit a shrine, and keep concubines elsewhere. A basic set of regular ceremonies is common to most of their shrines. The ceremonies are separately organized at different shrines but in the same month. Each shrine has its own zodiac sign, indicating the days on which ceremonies should be held therein. In regard to this date, the largest shrine is prioritized; it is not until a ceremony has been finished in this shrine that ceremonies of the same kind can be started in the other shrines. The only exception is a shrine where the "parents" of the deities of the largest shrine are said to reside. The ceremonial date of the largest shrine is any

"tiger" day while that of the "parental" shrine is the "ox" day imme-
diately preceding "tiger" day.

The term *kushati* appears in explanatory comments about these cases.
For instance, if an anthropologist were to ask, "why do cult-group initiates
prefer to consult a shaman of the seventh zodiac sign," local people would
reply, "because such a shaman forms *kushati*." If an anthropologist were to
ask, "who is supposed to bathe the corpse before a funeral," local people
would answer, "it should be done by a neighbor who forms *kushati*." To
make sense of such an explanation as an answer, it may be helpful to have
the following supplementary interpretations:

1. The seventh zodiac sign, used in the cases of Kushati deity and mas-
   ter shamans, forms *kushati* in that this sign stands in a front-back
   relation to one's birth-year sign in a spatialized diagram of the twelve
   zodiac signs, notably, their application to the cardinal directions.

2. The second zodiac sign in the backward direction, used in the cases
   of fictive parents and ritual ablution, forms *kushati* in that this before-
   after relation in the sequential order of the twelve zodiac signs can
   also be seen as a front-back relation from a different perspective.

However, this detached reasoning is insufficient since it does not explain a
natural association between Kushati deity, master shamans, fictive parents
and the neighbors in charge of ablution.

The single term "*kushati*" describes one's (social) relations in these dif-
ferent contexts. This suggests that these contexts form a single category. It is
a metaphorical category whose prototype is *kushati* as the bodily experience
of sitting on a parent's lap. To use Max Black's terminology, *kushati* is
accompanied by an "implicative complex" which comprises nurturing, edu-
cation, and protection. The attitude view of metaphor goes even further to
suggest that people consistently take a dependent's trusting posture towards
Kushati deity, master shamans, fictive parents, and bathing neighbors. The
extent to which a person finds the explanation "because it forms *kushati*"
convincing depends on the level of emotional skills they have cultivated for
perceiving these as reliable and trustworthy caregivers.

INITIATION DATES
As metaphorical categorization is a subjective task, its resultant category is
open to new members. The *kushati* category is no exception. In this final sec-
tion I examine, as a case of such category extension, divination for figuring

out the appropriate year for initiation into cult groups. In rural areas of Okinawa, such as Miyako, each hamlet has several shrines. A locally formed group is attached to each of these shrines and regularly offers prayers. Membership is handed down from bilateral kin, but the actual affiliation is deliberately determined under the influence of patrilineal descent. As a result, it is common to belong to two or three cult groups including the father's group.[11] Chronic disorders, a wane in physical strength, and even lingering fatigue can be interpreted as a divine message to invite people to religious life. People then begin to consult shamans about the proper date for their initiation rite.

In regard to such scheduling, the following two points need attention. Firstly, any date is theoretically controversial. It seems that there is no definite rule that actually governs a choice. Kitamura Tadashi, who made research trips to Shinzato hamlet in the early 1980s, reported that the prescribed zodiac signs to be used for the date of initiation were any of the front (that is, coming) zodiac signs except for the odd numbers (KITAMURA 1982, 134); in other words, the second, the fourth, and the sixth signs counted from one's birth-year sign. For example, "horse," "monkey," or "dog" years will be recommended to the person who was born in the year of the "snake." However, as I will demonstrate below, the actual choices people made did not follow this rule. Secondly, not only shamans but also their clients involve themselves in the decision process. Clients may appear merely to submit themselves to the authority of religious professionals. However, even renowned shamans can be slandered, especially when their expensive ritual brings no beneficial effect. Whenever a client is not fully satisfied with the first suggestion about the date of initiation, the client is free to consult another shaman. Ironically, the more consultants one has, the more difficult it is to obtain a consensus. Thus, the ultimate decision will in fact depend on the clients' agreement. In this sense, such calendrical divination seems to be better understood as public appreciation than an imperative deduced from esoteric knowledge.

Keeping these points in mind, let us look at the choices actually made by the residents of Shinzato hamlet. Table 1 shows the relations between the birth-year signs of twenty-nine male members of various cult groups and the years of their initiation. In Shinzato and several other hamlets located in the southern part of Miyako Island, each male member of a cult group possesses a manuscript about traditional divination. These manuscripts are successively copied, at the time of initiation, from those in the possession of relatives. My calculation is based on the dates indicated on the front pages of these manuscripts and their owners' birth years recorded in the official census registration. Obviously there is a preference for three signs (the second sign in the forward

direction, the second and sixth signs in the backward direction) and an avoid-
ance of two (one's birth-year sign and the seventh sign).

These results can be explained in the following way (see Figure 2).

1. The second sign in the backward direction (*kushi futa kadu* 後二角 or
   up kam kushati 大神腰当て):
   This sign forms *kushati* with one's birth-year sign. Therefore, the
   year of *kushi futa kadu* supports and protects the person just as a
   mother holding her child supports and protects that child. This is
   the plainest form of *kushati* in the sequential order of the twelve
   zodiac signs. Consequently, the days and years of *kushi futa kadu* are
   regarded as a favorable period for almost any kind of action. We can
   infer this generality from the fact that *kushi futa kadu* has another
   special name, *up kam kushati*, that literally means "the great deity's
   kushati."

2. The second sign in the forward direction (*mai futa kadu* 前二角):
   An idiomatic phrase, "*mata umari, umari kāri* 復生まれ，生まれ変り
   (a second birth, a renewed life)," is a helpful hint. It refers to initia-
   tion, with the implication that being a cult adherent is like living a
   second life. This idea echoes the parallelism between the rites of
   passage in maturation and those in the promotion of membership
   in cult groups. As I mentioned earlier, both secular maturation and
   religious promotion are articulated by rituals arranged at mutually
   similar intervals. *Mai futa kadu* is favorable for initiation on the
   ground that its position to the birth-year sign is isomorphic with the
   temporal position of a second, religious life to the first, secular life.
   In this interpretation, two zodiac signs adjacent to each other
   express a before-after relation. This may appear inconsistent with
   the idea of *kushati*, which is defined by a front-back relation.

TABLE 1: The relations between a birth-year sign and the year of
initiation of local cult groups.

counted in the backward direction	6th *kushi mu kadu*	5th	4th	3rd	2nd *kushi futa kadu*	birth year *mari dushi*
	7	0	2	2	4	0
counted in the forward direction	2nd *mai futa kadu*	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th *nana kadu*
	8	1	2	1	2	0

However, there is coherence provided by the implicative complex of *kushati*. *Kushati* includes the idea that two components arranged in front and back are child and mother, respectively. A novice is considered a baby. Thus, the experiential association between a newborn and a renewed life renders *mai futa kadu* coherent with the idea of *kushati*.

3. The sixth sign in the backward direction (*kushi mu kadu* 後六角):
   The ideal shamans to be consulted about an initiation rite are those who were born in the years of the seventh zodiac sign counted from an initiate's own birth-year sign. As a result, an initiate's *kushi mu kadu* is often identical to his/her consultant's *mai futa kadu*, that is, the second sign in the forward direction counted from a shaman's birth-year sign. In other words, an initiate's *kushi mu kadu* forms *kushati* with a shaman's birth-year sign in the way that the former is positioned in front and the latter in back. It is helpful to recall that a master shaman's relationship to her novice is said to be a brooding mother-bird to her child-bird. The years of *kushi mu kadu* provide the opportunities for master shamans to produce their "child birds" with the best protection and full support.

4. The birth-year sign (*mari dushi* 生まれ年) and the seventh sign (*nana kadu* 七角):
   It is said to be undesirable to start any important project in a *mari dushi* year. As I mentioned earlier, people avoid building a house in the *mari dushi* year of its owner. It may seem that *mari dushi* is considered generally inauspicious, but this is actually wrong because the long-life celebration in *mari dushi* is by no means inauspicious. Yet, it can safely be said that each *mari dushi* year is a period during which people should avoid any radical change in life. Its arrival every twelve years is considered a segment of life course, which alone will be a sufficiently risky critical moment. This quality is also attributed to the seventh year counted from one's birth-year sign. As I mentioned earlier, *nana kadu* stands in the same line as the twelve-year-cycle of *mari dushi* in the parallelism of the rite of passage concerning growth and ageing, memorial services for the dead, the promotion of membership in cult groups, and the "ageing" of house buildings. This link gives *nana kadu* the same implications as *mari dushi*.

These explanations only tell how I, as an observer, can make sense of the observed cases of preference and avoidance concerning initiation years.

However, I expect that these will not sound totally strange to local people. As long as the explanations are based on the shared assumptions about initiation and are built up with reference to the associated use of the zodiac signs, these will not be unfamiliar to local people. My explanations may well receive objections from some people, but this does not mean that these are incomprehensible to them; it means that there is room for discussion on how appropriate my explanations are. Such discussion is held between local people. I would also like to stress that the above explanations are not empty. Certainly it will not be difficult to justify any choice of initiation year. For instance, the choice of any sign in the backward direction can be justified as an extended case of "the great deity's *kushati*." The choice of any sign in the forward direction can be justified by thinking of it as "a second birth." Instead of being equated with *mari dushi*, the seventh sign is a component of *kushati*-form in the annual worship for Kushati deity. In fact, similar remarks excused the decisions of local people who had been initiated into cult groups in these "exceptional" years. However, the point to be made clear here is whether there is any "exception" in the first place.

Exceptions presuppose the rules. According to Kitamura's report, one should hold an initiation rite in the year of the front signs of even numbers counted from one's birth-year sign. However, my data proved that this rule was actually not followed by the suggested actions. Nevertheless, Kitamura goes further to abstract the "general principles" from this and other rules of calendrical divination. According to him, the six zodiac signs in front of one's birth-year sign are connected with auspicious matters while the six signs at its back are concerned with inauspicious affairs. This principle is combined with a second one that defines even numbers and odd numbers as auspicious and inauspicious respectively. However, it is difficult to divide the subjects of calendrical divination between "auspicious" and "inauspicious." This pair of concepts should be understood as local categories to be analyzed rather than as cross-cultural categories for analyzing something local. Moreover, Kitamura's principles ignore one's own birth-year sign as well as the ever-important seventh sign. Finally, his principles render the cases of *kushati* as exceptions and thereby trivialize this popular concept (KITAMURA 1982, 133–35).[12]

Studying the architecture of traditional houses and tombs in some other places in Okinawa, Watanabe Yoshio prudently avoids abstracting the "general principles" of calendrical divination. Various rules, which he presents with little systematization, seem to be credible to that extent although I have no material to judge whether these were in fact followed by the suggested actions. However, his report provides no answer to the fundamental question: what is the point in choosing particular dates when almost any choice

can be justified? If we assume that people follow certain rules, will the div-ination be simply much ado about nothing? To consider these questions, it will be sensible to wonder how much influence a researcher's prejudice has upon ethnographic description in which calendrical divination is almost always reduced to a list of preferable and avoidable dates on prescribed selection criteria. If a researcher asks such a question as, "during which year should one have an initiation rite?," people may well answer with fixed statements. However, there is no guarantee that divinational knowledge is stored, communicated, and transmitted in this manner. It seems certain, at least, that divination has a distinct aspect which makes it more than a rule-governed practice.

I have proposed that calendrical divination can be understood as a case of metaphorical categorization. Metaphor is not a statement to be analyzed by the cool reason of detached intelligence. Metaphor gives us, as sentient beings, the incentive to take on a new attitude towards things in the environment. This involvement of a living being is inevitably accompanied by its sensation and sentiment. In calendrical divination, people do not judge a choice of a date as being right or wrong but rather feel it to be either neat or untidy. To appreciate this practice, we need aesthetic acumen rather than dispassionate erudition. In this sense, it can even be said that "divination is an art form" (PARKIN 1991, 185). The dates of rituals chosen by calendrical divination are called *kagi pikkazu* (J. *kage hikazu* 景日数) in Miyakoan ver-nacular. There will be no need for any extra analysis to explain the fact that this word literally means "a beautiful day."

CONCLUSION
I have identified *kushati* as a popular interpretative schema in Okinawa. *Kushati* originally means a particular form of physical contact with one's caretaker. This serves as the prototype of a metaphorical category which covers various contexts of experience in which the twelve zodiac signs are used as a frame of reference. This common framework helps people not only to superimpose the KUSHATI schema onto calendrical days and years but also to design ideal social relations by regarding one's birth-year sign as the per-son as such. *Kushati* actually finds its most abundant implications in this last context.

The first point to be recognized is that subjectivity inevitably enters the environment configured by the KUSHATI schema. One has to take the spa-tially or temporally expressed position of "child" or "offspring" in order to receive protection and support from "parents" or "ancestors." Thus, the use of KUSHATI schema is quite different from classification of the external world. In attempting to discern a folkloristic spatio-temporal classification

on an islet in Miyako, Matsui Takeshi not only lacks insight into this episte-mological subjectivity but also does not properly distinguish between the objective categories of space and time, and an experiential environment in which the categorizing subject is inextricably embedded. A second point is that the schematic quality of *kushati* cannot be grasped by propositional rep-resentation. In parallel, the predetermined preference and avoidance cannot explain the practice of calendrical divination. This does not mean that no rules exist. There are in fact some verbalized or even written instructions about how one should determine appropriate days and years to take partic-ular actions. Watanabe Yoshio describes this procedure step by step but does not touch the cognitive aspect of divination. This style of research can pro-duce an accurate manual as to how to conduct divination, but does that kind of knowledge exhaust what an anthropologist should learn from Okinawan calendrical divination? I have no intention, by any means, of claiming to have achieved a comprehensive account of this ethnographically local issue. Rather, I would like my discussions in this article to be assessed according to whether they successfully suggest a possible approach to the cross-cultural study of temporal concepts.

NOTES

1. This article has its origin in my diploma thesis submitted to the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, in May 1996. I would like to acknowledge the encouragement of David Parkin. I am also grateful to Maurice Bloch and R. H. Barnes for their valuable com-ments on this earlier draft.

2. The twelve signs are arranged in the following order: "rat," "ox," "tiger," "hare," "drag-on," "snake," "horse," "sheep," "monkey," "rooster," "dog," and "boar." This cycle indicates days and years in a private lunar-solar calendar, which is concurrently used with the official Gregorian calendar. "Rat," "hare," "horse," and "rooster" indicate the north, the east, the south, and the west respectively. See Figure 2 for their illustration.

3. Matsui's discussion is based on his observation on Kurima, one of the islets constitut-ing the Miyako Islands that are located some three hundred kilometers southwest of the main island of Okinawa. The ethnographic data analyzed in the present article were gathered while I stayed in Miyako for seven months in 1992 and a full year beginning in September 1997.

4. Although I deduced this view from Black's remark, he has rather occupied himself in elaborating the interaction view. In formulating the attitude view of metaphor, I owed the ini-tial insight to Amagasaki Akira, who reviewed cognitive scientists' works to delve into the power of rhetoric in poetry. He argues that the recognition of "similarity" is not that of an object's properties but that of the mind and body that are feeling it (AMAGASAKI 1990, 118).

5. Searle himself explains this metaphor by assuming that certain metaphorical associa-tions are so deeply embedded in our whole mode of sensibility that we tend to think of simi-larity where it does not exist (SEARLE 1993, 99). However, this explanation will, in turn, be unreasonable for explaining those metaphors in which we can easily point out a similarity between a principal subject and a subsidiary subject.

6. These primordial changes are probably what Heraclitus meant by *panta rhei* (all things flow) (compare ŌMORI 1994, 45).

7. The following discussion on a temporal point and a spatial point derives from Ōmori Shōzō's philosophical essay (ŌMORI 1994, 17–95).

8. The *jūsan matsuri* is especially important in the case of girls. It was conventionally regarded as a girl's final celebration in her natal home since she usually married and left home before the age of twenty-five.

9. Taoist tradition defines "wood," "fire," "the earth," "metal," and "water" as the five elements of the universe. When being used as the indication of calendrical days and years, each of the five elements is sub-divided into an "elder" one and a "junior" one to form a cycle of ten signs, which begins with "elder wood" and ends with "junior water." These ten signs permute the twelve zodiac signs to construct a sexagenary enumerative system, which begins with "elder-wood rat" and ends with "junior-water boar."

10. It is worth noting that there is another long-life celebration though this seems unconnected to the others . This *tokachi* celebration is held when people become eighty-eight years old, and has no recognizable association with the cycle of the twelve signs. *Tokachi* is fixed on the eighth day of the eighth month in the lunar-solar calendar, whereas the dates of the other celebrations change depending on the birth year of the person concerned. These celebrations are held preferably on the day of one's birth-year sign in the first month of a lunar-solar calendar year. In *tokachi*, attendants are provided with a unique ornament, which is not prepared in the other celebrations of long life.

11. MABUCHI (1974, 1976) pioneered the anthropological study of these cult groups. Following his approach, KITAMURA (1986) describes such groups in Shinzato in particular.

12. Kitamura mentioned that the second sign counted from a baby's birth-year sign in the backward direction is "auspicious because [the person of] this sign holds the baby at its back" (KITAMURA 1982, 133). However, he seems not to know the local term *kushati* let alone recognize a much wider range of its application.

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