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On the Shinto-Priests at Usa-Hachimangū 宇佐八幡宮

By Tsutae SASHI

It is believed that the Usa-Hachimangū had long been enshrined as a native god in the Usa district, though it was only during the 8th century that people began to deify him as a national god.

In the year 725 the Shrine was built for the first time, for previously they had only had the primitive megalithic form of worship.

There are two kinds of gods, male and female, in the Hachiman God, Of the two, the Goddess had been worshipped from much older times than the male God by the Ōgas 大神氏 in the Izumo circle 出雲系 and the Karashimas 辛島氏 who were naturalized Japanese. The male God was worshipped by the Usas 宇佐氏, a powerful family in Usa district. In the later period, those Gods and Goddesses were generally called the Usa-Hachiman-Shin.

The Ōgas and the Karashimas were both Shamans and accordingly, the Usa-Hachiman's primitive form was Shamanism. It was propagated to the central part of Japan soon afterward through those Shamans who communicated oracles to the people which gave considerable influences upon them.

Finally the Hachiman-Shin from being a mere local god came to be worshipped by all the people, including the Emperors, as the National God.

A Study of the Neolithic Shell Mounds in the Kuriyama Valley, Chiba Prefecture

—An Interim Report—

Junzō SHIMIZU

It seems to the writer that much progress has been made in the study of the neolithic age (Jōmon Period) in Japan, but the details of the cultural features and changes in each small region have not yet been fully