

VISITS OF THE KAMI TO THE IZUMO SHRINE, JAPAN

Tom Bender

Located near a small bay on the west side of Honshu Island across from Hiroshima is the Izumo Shrine, the most ancient Shinto shrine in Japan. This shrine has been venerated continually for well over a thousand years. Every year in late fall the kami, or earth spirits, of Japan leave their normal homes throughout the country and gather for a week at the shrine. During this period, the Shrine is also visited by thousands of pilgrims who have come to celebrate the visit of the *kami*. This gathering of the spirits even has a special name in the Japanese language - the period of the visit is known as *kami-arizuke* (period with the gods) at Izumo, and *kannazuki* (period without gods) in all other parts of Japan.

At the time of the 1998 visit of the kami we performed an experiment in remote dowsing to see if the visit caused any change in the chi energy of the Shrine's site. Dowzers Sig Lonegrin in Europe; Joey Korn and James Sullivan in North America; and Hitomi Horiuchi in eastern Japan dowsed a map of the shrine precincts before, during, and after the visit of the *kami*.

All found a major change in the energy of the site during the visit, and a return to the earlier energy state after the departure of the spirits. One dowser registered confusion because his reading first showed an energy node at one shrine building. Rechecking later, he found it at a different building. On a hunch, I emailed Hitomi in Japan. She picked up the phone and called the Shrine and got a schedule of events during the week. The schedule showed that a welcoming ceremony had been held at the first building at the time of the first reading; and later the spirits moved to the second building for another ceremony!

In spite of the Westernization of Japan, the Japanese still acknowledge the existence of the *kami* and continue their annual visits to the Shrine to honor them, as they have for probably more than a thousand years. The presence of the spirits is still perceptible to visitors, and people gather from around the world to celebrate and honor them.

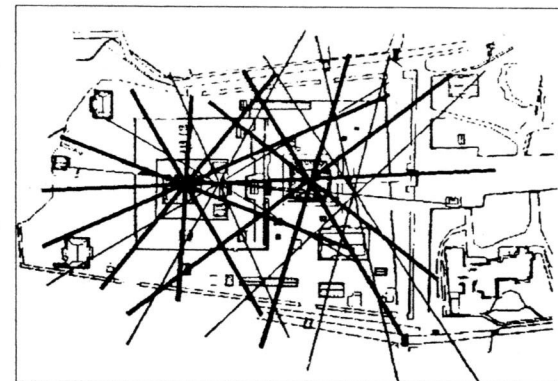
Excerpted from a chapter on how different traditional cultures have worked with energy in their surroundings, from Benderts most recent book, *Building with the Breath of Life*. It and its companion volume, *Silence, Song & Shadows*, both published by Fire River Press in 2000, give the intuitive principles, theory, practical how-to, exercises, and resources for working with life-force energy in our surroundings. Both books are available from ama-

zon.com, powells.com, barnes&noble.com, or direct from the publisher at 503-368-6294. Bender can be reached at <TBENDER@NEHALEMTEL.NET>

The Honden, or main shrine building, at the Izumo Taisha, repeatedly rebuilt in the ancient Shinto style.



Diagrams by dowser Joey Korn showing multiple crossings of energy lines on the main shrine buildings while the kami were in residence. Light lines are "echoes" of opposite energy resulting from the abrupt shift in energy.



Contrast the above with the energy lines on the site before and after kami visit, as shown here.

