

## The life history of Kumasaki Ken'ō, the founder of Chushin-do: the development of his ideas and changes in his life

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In 1928 Kumasaki Ken'ō (1881-1961) founded a fortune-telling association named “Goseikaku”, gaining fame for his original fortune-telling known as “Kumasaki-shiki Seimeigaku”, and later established the religious group Chushin-do (which is now called Chushin-kai). In contrast with the latter part of his life, during his earlier years of his life he devised an original form of stenography known as “Kumasaki-shiki Sokki-jutsu” and worked as a journalist for a newspaper Jijishimpo, making use of his skills in stenography. Although it may appear at first glance that there was an obvious change taking place during these two periods of his life, the connections between the periods, though not obvious are indeed profound. Therefore it is worthwhile to note how he gained an interest in fortune-telling, how he developed his ideas into a religion, and how the later development of these ideas related to his earlier life.

Taking this approach, the following aspects concerning Kumasaki and Chushin-do have been noted:

1. He had a consistent urge to morally educate people. Were the speeches he made in the earlier part of his life connected to the religious pro-military mobilization books he wrote during the latter part of his life?
2. In the Taisho Era, more and more people went on to higher education and wanted to improve their standard of living. Both stenography and fortune-telling ? Seimeigaku - came about as a result of these circumstances. Was the stenography of his earlier life related to the Seimeigaku in his later years?
3. In Goseikaku, methods of fortune-telling were taught and many fortune-tellers participated. How do we evaluate the degree to which Goseikaku has influenced the history of fortune-telling in modern Japan (from the Showa period onwards)?
4. How he grasped what fortune-telling was and what religion was suggests that a boundary existed between religion and things other than religion. Through examining his discourse, we will see his intervention and participation in constructing the modern concept of religion at that time.

While we will continue our studies to further integrate these various aspects, the life of Kumasaki Ken'ō we describe in this paper, written from the point of view mentioned above, is based on Kumasaki's bibliographies, his original journals and books which we found in our original survey of Chushin-kai. Through this process, we try to present his life history, including the latter part of his life which has not been covered in his bibliographies.