

IT GOES WITHOUT  
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FURTHER STUDY  
SHOULD BE  
CONDUCTED  
ON MPD  
IN JAPAN

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First of all, I would like to thank the distinguished researchers on MPD for their detailed commentaries, from which I have learned much about this intriguing disorder.

I myself realize that my research has many points to be improved. Hopefully, it will be understood that this is the first report on MPD in Japan to be published in the English language. I intend to inform researchers in the world of our current understanding of MPD in Japan, exchange opinions on this point with them, and try to understand why there is a difference, if indeed there is any, in the incidence of MPD in different cultures.

The following experience made me become interested in dissociative disorders (Takahashi, 1988, 1989). There is a forest at the foot of Mt. Fuji which is notorious as a suicide site. A young man tried to commit suicide in the forest, but fortunately he was rescued. He lost all memory of his personal history. According to his family, his plan of marrying his girl friend was opposed by his father and he became suicidal. When he was rescued by the police, he had forgotten all of his own memory but he firmly believed that his girl friend's name was his own. He was diagnosed as suffering from psychogenic fugue. The commentators have the right to argue that the patient suffered from MPD.

This was the very beginning of my interest in dissociative disorders. Hoping to learn more about the phenomena, I searched psychiatric literature written in Japanese and tried to meet Japanese psychiatrists who had seen MPD patients. However, there seemed to be lack of information and some of the concepts described in the reports did not agree with my clinical impression. There was even a great deal of disbelief among Japanese psychiatrists that MPD actually existed. Therefore I made up my mind to find out current overseas situation about this topic. I was impressed with numerous reports on MPD especially in North America.

At that time, I was granted an opportunity by Fulbright Committee to stay at University of California Los Angeles to study progressed suicide prevention programs in the United States. I tried to find time to look for abundant literature on MPD in the United States and participate in a workshop on MPD in the APA annual meeting.

I do believe that MPD is a legitimate clinical entity which has been reported in psychiatry for a long period of time, and I hope to encounter such patients. Although I appreciated all comments of the researchers, I was rather surprised (and disappointed) at commentaries such as "Do Takahashi's psy-

chiatrists share that clinical skepticism of MPD?" Where can I start the research?

It goes without saying that further study should be conducted to answer all comments given to me. I would like to appreciate once again this opportunity for publishing the first report on MPD in Japan in the English language. I hope that researchers in the world will do cross-cultural research based on the same data base, they will visit Japan to enlighten Japanese psychotherapists on MPD, and they will actually see Japanese patients themselves. Of course, I would be more than happy to be a translator when they interview Japanese patients. ■

#### REFERENCES

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