Umbrella Floats Connecting the Dead and Living: The First Bon Events of the Nakiri Hamlet in Mie[1]

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Keywords: umbrella floats (*kasahoko*/*kasabuku* 傘鉾), *furyū* 風流, Dainenbutsu 大念仏, venerating the newly deceased, *Kōya hijiri* 高野聖

Author's Statement

Nakiri 波切 is located in the Daiōchō 大王町 area of the city Shima 志摩 in Mie. The umbrella floats (*kasahoko*/*kasabuku* 笠鉾) at the hamlet's Dainenbutsu 大念仏 have usually been described as newly deceased's *yorishiro* 依代 (temporary dwellings of spirits/deities). However, this paper examines how the event is carried out to show that there are other *yorishiro* as well, such as a group memorial lantern (*sōhi* 総碑) and *kiriko* 切子 lanterns. It also argues that the umbrella floats, which are continually passed from one person connected to the deceased to another, serve to memorialize the deceased.

Introduction

Umbrellas are everyday items used to block rain and sun. In Japan, many people run to a convenience store to grab a disposable plastic one during sudden rainstorms.

The word for umbrella in Japanese is *kasa*. Originally in Japan, there were *kasa* 笠 that were hats. Later, umbrellas with a handle meant for holding, written using the character "傘," appeared. Then appeared the long-handled silk umbrellas called *kinugasa* 衣笠, oil-

[1] This paper is a translation of "Shisha to seija o musubu kasabuku: Mieken Shimashi Daiōchō Nakiri no shinbon gyōji kara" 死者と生者を結ぶ傘鉾―三重県志摩市大王町波切の新盆行事から―, *Kokugakuin zasshi* 國學院雑誌 118:4 (2017), pp. 153–170. Translated by Dylan Luers Toda.

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paper umbrellas with bamboo frames called *karakasa* 唐傘, and the black Western-style umbrellas called *kōmorigasa* こうもり傘.

Umbrellas have not only been tools for sheltering from rain and sun. In the *Nihon shoki* 日本書紀, Taokihooi no Kami 手置帆負神, ancestral deity of the Inbe clan from Kii, was ordered to serve Ōmononushi no Kami 大物主神 as "*kasa* maker" (*kasanui* 作笠者) by Takamimusubi no Mikoto 高皇産霊尊. In other words, these hats were used as offerings during Shinto rites.[2]

Also, in "A Waste of Weeds" (*Yomogiu* 蓬生) scene from *The Tale of Genji Picture Scroll* (*Genji mongatari emaki* 源氏物語絵巻; National Treasure) held at the Tokugawa Art Museum, we can see that long-handled umbrellas were symbols of the aristocracy. Therein, an attendant holds an umbrella over Hikaru Genji 光源氏 from behind as he visits the deserted residence of Suetsumuhana 末摘花.

Turning to folklore, *kasa* hats have been seen as tools for curses. In oral literature, for example, invisibility hats are demons' treasures. Umbrellas were also once an essential part of a trousseau in Japan. In the *kasa-watashi* 傘渡し ritual found in Fukui, parents hand an umbrella over to their daughter so that she will be protected.[3] In the Tokushima town of Ichiba 市場, during bridal processions, it was customary to exchange *takarabachi* タカラバチ (umbrellas made of bamboo shoot bark) when passing other processions. This signified good luck, and the older and more torn the umbrella was, the better.[4]

Japanese people of all generations have come across drawings on school blackboards of two people sharing an umbrella, a common visual representation of a romantic relationship. There is also the custom of hanging various items under umbrellas. For example, the umbrella floats that appear during the Dainenbutsu 大念仏 in Nakiri 波切, a hamlet in the Daiōchō 大王町 area of the city Shima 志摩 in Mie. (Umbrella floats are generally called *kasahoko* 傘鉾, but in the context of this event, they are called *kasabuku*). They are prepared by families of people who died in the past twelve months, referred to as the "newly departed" (*shinmō* 新亡). The families attach a white cloth curtain called a *mokō* 帽額 to a *karakasa* and hang the departed's beloved items under it. Every year on the evening of 14 August, people carrying umbrella floats go around in a circle at the Dainenbutsu venue.

While most existing scholarship has examined umbrella floats as *yorishiro* 依代 (temporary dwellings of spirits/deities), or considered the forms of these floats, this paper will reconsider them in light of Nakiri's actual Bon 盆 events for the newly departed, referred to as New Bon (Shinbon 新盆), and examine their functions.

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[2] *Nihon shoki*, p. 153.
[3] Hashimoto, "Kasa no shita no kūkan wa magiremonai bunka," p. 29.
[4] Okada, "Ichibachō no kon'in shūzoku."

1. Umbrella Floats: Literature Review

Existing research on umbrella floats holds that the umbrellas function as seats of the plague deity (*ekijin* 疫神), mainly focusing on the semiotics of form. This scholarship seeks to understand how these floats appeared in the past by examining, for example, the Shijō Kasahoko 四条傘鉾 of Kyoto's Gion Matsuri 祇園祭 and the flower umbrellas (*hanagasa* 花傘) of the Yasurai Matsuri やすらい祭り at Imamiya Jinja 今宮神社.

Orikuchi Shinobu 折口信夫 pioneered this semiotic approach in his 1915 "Higeko no hanashi" 髯籠の話 (Story of the beard-box), arguing that the Gion umbrella floats and the flower hats (*hanagasa* 花笠) of *dengaku* 田楽 dances were deities' *yorishiro*.[5] In the same year, he published "Bon odori to matsuri yatai to" 盆踊りと祭屋台と (Bon Odori and festival stalls). He wrote that the format of dancers wearing flower hats while circling a pole-bearer in the Kiriake 切明 rite at Izumo's Susa Jinja 須佐神社 is "a legacy of the format" of Izanagi イザナギ and Izanami イザナミ "circling the *ame-no-mihashira* 天の御柱 (heavenly pillar)," as well as that the *ondotori* 音頭取り singers standing with an opened umbrella in the Bon Odori 盆踊り dance of Saka no Shita 阪の下 in Ise is, similarly, to be the "deities' vessels." He lists Bon lanterns (*taka tōrō* 高燈籠 and *kiriko tōrō* 切籠燈籠) as similar examples. Orikuchi states that these *yorishiro* are necessary for Bon because ancestral spirits needed signs to guide them to their temporary dwellings.[6]

On the other hand, in the 1931 "Haru kuru oni" 春来る鬼 (The demon that comes in spring), he wrote the following about the umbrellas (called *ransan* 涼傘) installed at a worship spot in Cape Hedo 辺土, the northernmost point in Okinawa: "[They] apparently mean, 'God is under here.' It's like *kinugasa* in Japan. Many umbrellas are standing there. At this Hedo *utaki* 御嶽—an *utaki* is where deities descend—umbrellas stand and a festival begins, and only then do deities come to stay."[7] He suggests that the spaces below *ransan* (and *kinugasa*) are where deities exist.

Ogawa Naoyuki 小川直之, noting that Orikuchi Shinobu's "Higeko no hanashi" is about *yorishiro* that welcome deities from the heavens, argues that such *yorishiro* were derived from *shimeyama* 標山, sites where deities come to stay, as well as that these *shimeyama* sites would develop into the *hyō no yama* 標の山 found at the Daijōsai 大嘗祭 and into seats of deities like the *danjiri* and *yamahoko* 山鉾 floats.[8] Orikuchi probably saw the *ransan* functioning as both *yorishiro* and *shimeyama*.

Ueki Yukinobu 植木行宣, while taking into account Orikuchi's ideas about *yorishiro*, points out that the term *yorishiro* has been interpreted so broadly by later researchers that

[5] Orikuchi, "Higeko no hanashi," pp. 201–2.
[6] Orikuchi, "Bon Odori to matsuri yatai to," pp. 240–43.
[7] Orikuchi, "Haru kuru oni," p. 132.
[8] Ogawa, "Kami kyorai kannen to yorishiroron no saikentō," pp. 371–76.

detailed studies referring to the differences in the form of individual *yorishiro* have been neglected. Ueki attempts to make this clear using the *yamahoko* floats of Kyoto's Gion Matsuri. He concludes that the Gion Matsuri style of *hoko* floats, umbrellas, *tsukuriyama* 作り山 floats, and costumed people moving to a beat, began in the fourteenth century, and that these were so-called *furyū hayashimono* 風流拍子物 ("fancy dances and drumming"). Ueki states that the subsequent popularity of *furyū*, the aim of which was to amaze people, led to a new form of urban festivals in which larger-scale objects, such as *yamahoko* floats, were paraded through the streets.[9] In villages, this developed into a folk performing art called *furyū odori* 風流踊, in which, generally, there were groups of percussion instrument-playing dancers who functioned as the *hayashi* ハヤシ (musician group), as well as creations, such as umbrella floats, made for deities to reside. Particularly in villages, the spirits of the newly departed, which had the potential to become vengeful, began to be entertained with music and seen off, and, in addition to the memorializing carried out at individual houses, Nenbutsu Odori 念仏踊 dances, such as the Ise-Shima Dainenbutsu, became established as local community Bon events.[10] He says that a major characteristic of this *furyū odori* is its concentration in places with Nenbutsu Odori-type practices, and notes that it developed as a group dance inseparable from the local community because it was a performing art that spread with the establishment, from the late middle ages onward, of local communities (towns and hamlets) in the background.[11] Ueki argues that due to the local spread of *furyū hayashimono*, which was rooted in the Gion Matsuri, umbrella floats remained in hamlet folk performing arts, such as the Dainenbutsu.

When discussing the umbrella floats used during Bon in various places, Orikuchi does not mention the umbrellas and *hoko* floats used in the Gion Matsuri, but does say that Bon umbrella floats came from the Ise Odori 伊勢踊. This dance, performed when the Inner Shrine of Ise Jingū 伊勢神宮 was rebuilt and popular from the Muromachi period (1336–1573) onward, features an umbrella float to which a purification box (*mando barai* 万度祓い) was attached.[12] As evidence for this, he cites the appearance of the umbrella float called a *kasabōroku* 傘ぼうろく in the Bon Odori celebratory dance (*shūgi odori* 祝儀踊り) on the island of Niijima 新島 in Izu. He also says that "*nenbutsu* practitioners (*nenbutsu-sha* 念仏者) who used the *monbome* 門ぼめ and *iebome* 家ぼめ styles of banzai" were involved in the propagation of this Ise Odori, and that the traces of their crossing to outlying islands "remain in the dances that bring to mind adolescence."[13]

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[9] Ueki, *Yama, hoko, yatai no matsuri*, pp. 57–102.
[10] Ueki, *Furyū odori to sono tenkai*, p. 34.
[11] Ueki, *Furyū odori to sono tenkai*, p. 11.
[12] Orikuchi, "Nenchū gyōji," p. 65.
[13] Orikuchi, "Kansha su beki shin Tōkyō nenchū gyōji," pp. 472–73.

Danjō Tatsuo 段上達雄 has focused on the possibility that *kinugasa* 蓋 are the source of Japan's umbrella floats and *furyū* umbrellas, and has brought together and examined various examples of them.[14] Although he does not draw a definitive conclusion, from his work it becomes clear that the umbrella is a political and religious symbol of authority, and it cannot be denied that umbrella floats are an extension of this. Exhaustively collecting materials related to *kinugasa*, *kasa* (both 笠 and 傘), and so on is necessary also to capture how people understand umbrella floats. For example, in "Yomogiu" from *The Tale of Genji Picture Scroll*, which I touched on at the beginning of this article, in addition to an attendant holding an umbrella over Hikaru Genji from behind, Fujiwara no Koremitsu 藤原惟光, the son of Genji's nanny, is depicted as playing the role of dew-sweeper (*tsuyuharai* 露払い) in front of Genji. This structure is like the Shijō Kasahoko procession, which also has an umbrella float and dew-sweeper.

Furthermore, Danjō also provides a detailed report on the umbrella floats found at Bon events in various places. The umbrella floats at the memorial Bon dance in the Miyanoura 宮野浦, area of Saiki 佐伯 in Oita consist of umbrellas used by the departed that are covered with the kimono, tied with belts (*heko obi* 兵児帯, *shigoki* しごき, etc.), and attached to the end of bamboo poles. Under the umbrellas, the departed's personal belongings are hung. Before the Bon Odori concludes, the bereaved family members form a circle around the singer's shelf (*ondo dana* 音頭棚) set up in the center. They hold the departed's portraits, memorial tablets, and the umbrella float, and walk slowly to express their grief during the final *kiri ondo* 切り音頭 song. After the dance, they hurry home while supporting the "spirit of the departed riding the umbrella float" by holding it as vertically as possible. Danjō argues that specific spirits are made to inhabit these umbrella floats, and also says that the umbrella floats in the Shima 志摩 region of Mie and on the island of Okinoshima 沖の島 in Sukumo 宿毛, Kochi, which have similar customs, may have been brought by the fishers of Shima.[15]

Keeping these previous studies in mind, below I will consider umbrella floats' meaning while reporting on the New Bon Dainenbutsu in Nakiri, Daiōchō.

2. The Dainenbutsu of the Nakiri Hamlet in Mie

2.1 Nakiri: An Overview

Daiōchō, where the Dainenbutsu is held, is in the southern part of the Shima Peninsula. It is bordered by Agochō 阿児町 to the north and, across the Fukuya Canal (Fukuya Suidō 深谷水道), Shimachō 志摩町 to the southwest. In Daiōchō's

[14] Danjō has multiple articles on umbrella floats, including "Kinugasa 1: Kasahoko to furyūgasa no genryū" and "Kasahoko, furyūgasa no tanjō 1: Shinrei no yadoru kasa."
[15] Danjō, "Bon no kasahoko 1," p. 24.

western part, Tomoyama 登茂山 Peninsula protrudes into Ago 英虞 Bay. Cape Daiō 大王, where the rough Pacific Ocean breaks, is a core feature of its eastern area. It separates the Kumano 熊野 Sea from the Enshū 遠州 Sea, and was a difficult place feared by seafarers ("Ise's Kōzaki, Kuzaki's Yoroi, and Nakiri Daiō—if only they didn't exist"). However, Nakiri was also a busy port of refuge and a wind port between Edo 江戸 and the Kamigata 上方 region. The famous "Nakiri Riot" (Nakiri sōdō 波切騒動) occurred in Tenpō 1 (1830) over a shipwreck, and the names of those who died in the riot are engraved on the pedestal of the Thinking Jizō (Shian jizō 思案地蔵).

Nakiri is the closest hamlet to the Cape Daiō Lighthouse, about twenty minutes by bus from the Kintetsu 近鉄 Line's Ugata 鵜方 Station. Scattered throughout Daiōchō are the hamlets of Nakiri, Azena 畦名, Nata 名田, and Funakoshi 船越. The bus passes through these villages before arriving at the Nakiri stop. Nakiri has forty-five subdivisions (*koaza* 小字).

Looking back in history, we find that "Nakiri" appears in the dictionary *Wamyōshō* 和名抄. It is written using the characters "名錐": "Nakiri, Ago 英虞 District, Shima 志摩 Province." Its name can also be found on *mokkan* 木簡 (a thin wooden strip for writing) from the Heijō 平城 Palace. A *mokkan* from Tenpyō 17 (745) shows that Nakiri paid tribute in the form of items like wakame and abalone. Fishing developed in Nakiri from ancient times, and many kitchens and gardens for Ise Jingū were located here.

The fishing industry in the area can be traced back to the middle of the eighth century. According to village registers of the Tenpō years (1830–1844; *tenpō gōchō* 天保郷帳), the entirety the Ago District's Azena, Nata, Nakiri, and Funakoshi were part of the Toba 鳥羽 Domain. It lists the likes of skipjack, sardines, shrimp, mackerel, and *Gelidiaceae* red algae as marine products. Abalone was also harvested. There is also a record of whaling until the Kyōhō 享保 years (1716–1736), and a round stone that is said to have come from the belly of a caught whale is enshrined in the precincts of Nakiri Jinja 波切神社. Skipjack fishing has been a major industry of Nakiri for a long time. According to an overview of Nakiri (*sashidashi chō* 差出帳) from Kyōhō 11 (1726), there were twenty-four skipjack boats in the village of Nakiri and nine in the village of Funakoshi. According to a Funakoshi skipjack fishing register (*katsuo mizuagechō* 鰹水揚帳) from Ansei 安政 6 (1859), more than 3,000 were caught between the thirteenth day of the fourth month and eighth day of the ninth month, the period when fishing was conducted.[16] The amount caught by Nakiri must have been much greater. With more than ten people riding each boat, everyday relationships probably affected skipjack fishing. Perhaps skipjack fishing was something that tied the people of Nakiri together. A local shared

[16] Daiōchōshi Hensan Iinkai, *Daiōchōshi*, pp. 324–26.

with me that until the 1960s, there were about 200 bonito flake smoking huts. Skipjack supported the economy of Nakiri, but as the catch declined, the fishery also declined, and today only three huts remain.

In present-day Nakiri, the residents are aging, and few people can be seen going up and down the steep roads. However, there is a richness in the background to Nakiri's Dainenbutsu. It is a place that since ancient times has adopted a mindset similar to that of Kyoto, and taken in various cultures as a wind port. The feelings toward the sea that has brought blessings to the people of Nakiri can also be seen in the Waraji Matsuri わらじ祭り, a festival in which a large straw sandal is floated out to sea. Such is the ground upon which the Dainenbutsu, performed by the community as a whole, has been passed down.

2.2 Bon Events and the Dainenbutsu

In this section, I will describe in chronological order the events comprising Nakiri's Bon based on surveys I conducted in 2014 and 2016.

2.2.1 Welcoming the Spirits of the Newly Departed

The newly departed used to be welcomed on the sixth day of the seventh month on the old calendar, but now, on the evening of 6 August, people from the households of the newly departed go to the Nakiri Cemetery with zori to do so. The Nakiri Cemetery, located in the subdivision Suga 須賀, was completed in 1937, and then expanded in 1962 and 1978.

In Nakiri, a double-grave system (*ryōbosei* 両墓制) was in place from the Edo period until around the middle of the Meiji period (1868–1912), but as the number of households increased, the cemetery became too small, and as graves were repeatedly relocated and the cemetery expanded, a single-grave system (*tanbosei* 単墓制) was adopted. However, according to the priest Kaneda Toshiki 金田俊機 of Sen'yūji 仙遊寺, the traces of the double-grave system can still be seen in the individual family grave plots. The tombstone carved with the names of the departed that is farthest from the front of the plot serves as the visitation grave (*mairibaka* 詣り墓), while the natural stone placed in front of it serves as the burial grave (*umebaka* 埋め墓).

In the households of the newly departed, a three to seven-tier special shelf, consisting of thin paper covering a wooden frame, is placed in a tatami room. The departed's memorial tablet (*ihai* 位牌) is installed on top, and *kiriko* 切子 and *chōchin* 提灯 lanterns given by relatives and others are hung on both sides. Turning to the outside of the house, one finds an eave lantern hung from bamboo leaves that are tied in a crisscross pattern and attached to a pole standing at the gate. The lantern, hollowed out in the shape of the sun and moon, identifies the house as one with a newly departed. Nowadays, most

families with a newly departed order these lanterns from the Kosaka 小坂 branch of the Toba-Shima Agricultural Cooperative (Toba-Shima Nōkyō 鳥羽志摩農協) before Bon, as Bon goods are on display there.

2.2.2 Lantern Worship

Beginning on the evening of 7 August, people with ties to the newly departed come to visit the lantern inside the house. In Nakiri, people know where to visit because a list of the year's newly departed is circulated before Bon. In the past, the sounds of the *nenbutsu*, the religious music called *goeika* 御詠歌, bells, and gongs were constant in the households of the newly departed. Today, however, more and more households post signs declining First Bon offerings, and the custom of distributing *botanmochi* 牡丹餅 sweets to relatives and others with ties to the newly departed as a First Bon offering is less common.

2.2.3 The Motoya and Group Memorial Lantern

Nakiri had a *motoya* 元屋 system until 1992. The *motoya* was the household of the oldest male newly departed. On 7 August, a group memorial lantern (*sōhi* 総碑) was placed on the altar of that household. This lantern has all of the posthumous names (*kaimyō* 戒名) of the year's newly departed written around the front center characters *namu amida butsu* 南無阿弥陀仏. After the *motoya* system was done away with, the group memorial lantern came to be enshrined in the *nenbutsu* hut, only on the day of the Dainenbutsu.

2.2.4 The Welcoming of Spirits by Households Without Newly Departed

On the evening of 12 August, each family goes to the Nakiri Cemetery with zori to welcome ancestral spirits. Vegetables and sweets are placed on the household altar, and three meals are offered daily from the 13th to the 15th. It is said that ancestral spirits come on "lotus" leaves (taro leaves). A taro leaf is arranged in a vase on the Buddhist altar and taken to the cemetery when the spirit is seen off.

Some households erect a bamboo pole with a square wooden shelf attached at the outside gate. This is for feeding the hungry ghosts (*gaki* 餓鬼). From the 13th to the 15th, offerings are placed on this shelf.

2.2.5 Feeding Hungry Ghosts

Hungry ghost offerings at temples (*sanmon segaki* 山門施餓鬼), also called *mizumuke* 水向け or "water offerings," are also held: on the 13th at Daijiji 大慈寺, on the 14th at Sen'yūji, and on the 15th at Keishōji 桂昌寺. Each family visits their parishioner temple and takes the provided plank stupa (*tōba* 板塔婆) and five-colored flag to their grave. In the *mizumuke* during prewar times, young fishers would crowd into the main hall, and when the sutra reading began, they would race to the altar on which the water tank was placed, and beat the poured fresh water using branches and leaves of Japanese star anise so much that they would get soaked.

Feeding of new hungry ghosts (the newly departed) is held at individual parishioner households and attended by all relatives.

2.2.6 The Dainenbutsu

On the evening of 14 August, from around 4:30 p.m., the Dainenbutsu is held in the open area in front of Nakiri Port's fish market. It used to be held at the beach Hōmon-no-hama 宝門の浜, but the venue was changed to Nakiri Cemetery's mourning site due to seawall construction and then to the current one because of its large parking lot.

2.2.6.a Organization

Until around 1965, the Dainenbutsu was performed mainly by a group of five older adults called the *toshiyori goninshū* 年寄五人衆. The five also saw to funerals and recited the names of thirteen buddhas and bodhisattvas (referred to as the *jūsan butsu* 十三仏) for the departed's well-being.

Currently, Sen'yuji, Daijiji, and Keishōji take turns assisting with the Dainenbutsu yearly, but are not part of the organization that carries out the event. In 2016, it was Sen'yuji's turn. All three temples are affiliated with the Myōshinji 妙心寺 school of the Rinzai 臨済 sect.

One month before the Dainenbutsu, the first general meeting of the newly departed's households is convened at the temple on duty. Two facilitators are chosen from each temple, and from these six, a representative and a treasurer are also decided upon. At the second general meeting, various roles, such as "name reader," and the budget are decided upon. The musician roles (*gaku* 楽), who beat a large drum and gong, are assigned to an experienced player, and the *nenbutsu* is recited by older women who regularly do so (*nenbutsu bāsan* 念仏婆さん). At Sen'yuji, there are about six such women in the community who meet at the temple regularly.

2.2.6.b "Standards for Carrying out the Dainenbutsu"

The abbot of the on-duty temple is given a letter box containing items related to the Dainenbutsu. Among these is a document titled "Standards for Carrying out the Dainenbutsu" (Dainenbutsu shikkō kijun 大念仏執行基準) bound with a string. It was written by the late Hidemori Tenrei 秀森典嶺 (1914–1997), the previous abbot of Daijiji, so that people would not have trouble running the event in the future. He probably wrote it in 1980; at the end, it says, "Equipment as of 1980."

The document begins, "From times of old, on the 14th day of the month during Bon, the Dainenbutsu has been an event to welcome the spirits of the newly departed followers of the three Nakiri temples and, also including all spirits of the three realms, chant the *nenbutsu* together in large numbers. Households of the newly departed march with an umbrella float and memorialize the spirits." It then lays out rules concerning the event. For example, it says that "the newly departed" means deceased whose funerals were held

at any of the three Nakiri temples from 13 August of the previous year to 12 August of the current year, that people who held a funeral elsewhere but joined one of the temples and will observe First Bon in Nakiri may join the Dainenbutsu, and that even those who do not fall under the above categories may apply to the abbots of the three temples for permission to join the Dainenbutsu but cannot bring an umbrella float and will not be listed on the group memorial lantern.

2.2.6.c Umbrella Floats

The umbrella floats used at the Dainenbutsu are called *kasabuku* 笠鉾, which is sometimes written using the characters "傘仏供" or "傘奉供." These umbrella floats are made of a thin white curtain about 1 *shaku* 尺 wide (40–60 cm), called a *mokō*, hanging around a *karakasa* about 1.4 m in diameter. A piece of paper is attached to the curtain with the departed's posthumous name, their age at death, and their house name (*yagō* 屋号). Nowadays, as with the lanterns, the umbrellas are often rented from the agricultural cooperative, and the items hanging from the umbrellas are readied by funeral homes (**Photo 1**). The items are: (1) *chōchin* lantern, (2) *agemaki* 総角 (a type of tied string; can be seen as a doll), (3) prayer beads (*juzu* 数珠), (4) prayer beads bag, (5) folding fan, (6) razor, (7) nail clipper (tweezers), and (8) Japanese star anise and *mushoage* ムショアゲ (a peach-colored small flower brought to the gravesite), (9) eggplant, cowpeas, etc. In

Photo 1. Lanterns and other items hung from under an umbrella float.

addition to this, for men they include a stiff obi (*kakuobi* 角帯) and inro, and for women, the departed's hair, comb, mirror, Japanese scissors, etc. Including the umbrella, people ensure that the number of items totals thirteen.

At the Dainenbutsu, relatives and acquaintances of the newly departed hold the umbrellas and slowly walk around in a circle. In 2014, there were seventy-five umbrella floats.

2.2.6.d Dainenbutsu Preparations

On the 12th, a *nenbutsu* hut is erected in the open area in front of the Nakiri Fishing Cooperative (Nakiri Gyokyō 波切漁協). From early morning on the 14th, people from the households of the newly departed set up the Dainenbutsu venue. The group memorial lantern is installed in the center of the *nenbutsu* hut, and *kiriko* lanterns are hung on both sides (**Photo 2**). White lanterns with the posthumous names of the newly departed are hung outside the hut. At the entrance to the fishing port, Japanese bamboo is placed and decorated with *hōzuki* 酸漿 lanterns. In front of the *nenbutsu* hut, a white circle is

Photo 2. The group memorial lantern enshrined in the *nenbutsu* hut.

drawn for people with the umbrella floats to go around, and a tower is erected in the circle's center. Next to the tower, a large drum and a bulletin board with pieces of paper displaying the names of the newly departed are set up. A white line is drawn outside the circle dividing the area into sections for the households bringing an umbrella float. Incense stands are placed in front of the *nenbutsu* hut and near the tower. There are also vendors at the venue.

After 4:00 p.m., people from the newly departed's households, dressed in mourning clothes, gather at the venue. They then place the umbrella float, folding chairs, cooler bags, food boxes, and so on in the space for their household.

2.2.6.e The Dainenbutsu's Content

A little after 4:30, the Dainenbutsu begins. First, a representative of the newly departed's households offers their greetings. Then, the closest family member to the departed opens their umbrella float and takes their family members and others with a connection to the departed out to the plaza. The umbrella float is supposed to be held by the man, while woman are supposed to fan it from behind.

People with umbrella floats line up along the white circle, and children holding banners with the departed's names also line up. They are called banner-holders or *hatamochi* ハタモチ. As the drum and gongs are sounded, the circle of umbrella floats and banners slowly begins to move counterclockwise (**Photo 3**). During this time, women are reciting the *nenbutsu* inside the *nenbutsu* hut.

Next to the drum is the "name caller" (*nayobi* 名呼び) who calls out the name of the newly departed. When their family member's name is called, the household goes to the

Photo 3. Umbrella floats and banners parading around the Dainenbutsu venue.

name caller to light incense. For each spirit, the large drum is struck thirty-three times. In the past, the first to be called was the newly departed of the *motoya*, followed by the other newly departed in the order of the date and time of their deaths, but now names are called in the order of death.

Midway through, someone calls out, "Please start the *gacha gacha*." The banner-holding children then gather in the middle of the circle and begin hitting their banners against each other. When the banners' paper is torn up and gone, the banner holders abandon the poles and step out of the circle. In the past, the poles were washed out to sea, but now male event officers collect them and put them together behind the *nenbutsu* hut.

The procession of umbrella floats continues, and friends, acquaintances, family members, business associates, and so on take turns holding them. This is called "umbrella-holding" (*kasamochi* カサモチ). Individuals not from houses with newly departed burn incense and pay their respects at the group memorial lantern. The Dainenbutsu finishes in about three hours.

The newly departed's immediate families and relatives clean up the venue and return home to remove the umbrella float decorations and eat.

2.2.7. Bon Odori

In the past, the Bon Odori was held from the night of the 14th to the night of the 16th, but now it is held from the following day, the 15th. Children start dancing at 7:00 p.m., followed by adult dancers, including women's association members in matching *yukata* 浴衣 and people in costume, who dance to the accompaniment of songs. Finally, the *ondotori* 音頭取り singers climb up to the top of the tower and sing the *odorikudoki* 踊り口説. The *ondo* songs and *hayashi* 囃し music are performed by drummers and *ondotori*. Things end around 11:00 p.m. In the past, *ondo* songs of thirty-three locations in western Japan, as well as *odorikudoki* of Suzuki Mondo 鈴木主水, Shirai Gonpachi 白井権八, Ishidōmaru 石童丸, and other dancers, were sung. In 2016, Naruto of Awa (Awa no Naruto 阿波の鳴門) and other songs were sung, and the two singers were professionals.

2.2.8. Sending Off the Spirits

On the evening of 15 August, the spirits who are not newly departed are sent off. People sending these spirits arrive by car one after another to Nakiri Cemetery. Offerings of *miyage* dumplings (*miyage dango* ミヤゲ団子), rice, and sweets, as well as five-color banners with *namu amidabutsu* written on them, are placed in front of the graves as offerings, and incense is burned. People also burn incense in front of the six Jizō statues and elsewhere in the cemetery, and place offerings of rice and eggplant cut into small pieces in wooden boxes in front of them.

2.2.9. Sending Off the Spirits of the Newly Departed

On the morning of 16 August, all family members and relatives go to the cemetery with the *kiriko* lanterns and other items that had decorated their household lantern. They offer them at the graves. This was done on the 20th until 1943, when it began to be performed by the new calendar.

3. Nakiri's Dainenbutsu and Umbrella Floats: Discussion

Now that we have looked at the Bon events in Nakiri, I want to extract some key points and discuss them here.

3.1 The History of Nakiri's Dainenbutsu

At this time, no historical documents from before the modern period related to the Dainenbutsu have been found, but there is a 1976 text by Hidemori Tenrei on the origins of the Dainenbutsu. It describes how the Dainenbutsu was carried out more than forty years ago.[17] Although somewhat lengthy, I present it here because of its valuable content.

> In Nakiri, until recently, there was a layperson *nenbutsu* group called the *toshiyori goninshū*. Similar to *kōya hijiri* 高野聖, one could say. . . .
>
> For a long time, the people of Nakiri performed the Dainenbutsu at the edge of the waves on the beach Hōmon-no-hama (currently, due to coastal construction, the ceremony is held in the open area of the town-owned cemetery). On the 14th during Bon, to welcome the spirits returning from beyond the sea, two trunks of green bamboo are erected . . . and a net is stretched between them, and households with newly departed hang small white paper lanterns from it for each departed person. The lanterns bear the posthumous name of the newly departed. A hut is constructed and curtained, and a group memorial paper lantern, with the posthumous names of all the newly departed, is placed inside. It looks like the below illustration.
>
> In the morning, the temple holds the feeding of the hungry ghosts, and from around 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon, children holding paper banners with the names of the departed written on them accompany the umbrella floats (a coarse oil-paper umbrella [*bangasa* 番傘] surrounded by a white cloth, inside of which are certain items, such as a lantern, things left by the departed, and offertory fresh vegetables) to the venue. Before World War II, children wore white headbands and white sashes and carried the banners on adults' shoulders. At the venue, the group of five strikes the bell and recites the *nenbutsu*. When the name caller calls out a name, a large drum (called *gaku* 楽) is struck 66 times for each spirit. Previously, there was the cry, "Ya (a)amore, yassa, yassa."

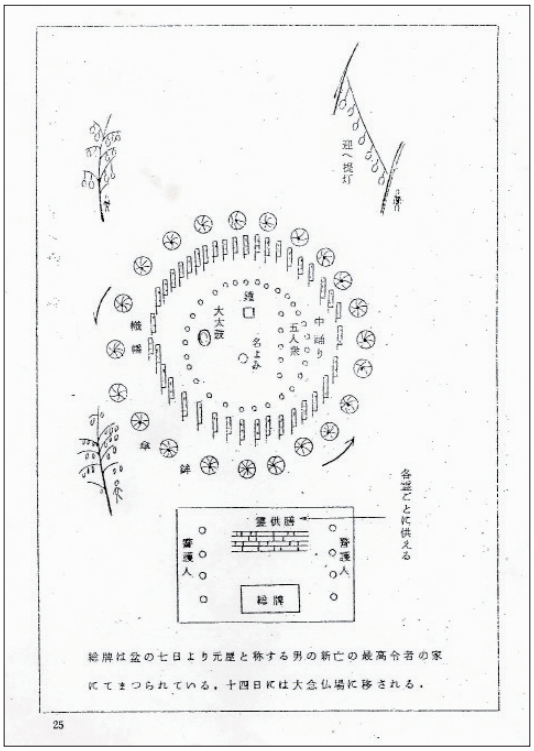
[17] Hidemori, "Dainenbutsu no yurai nitsuite no kōsatsu," pp. 23–24.

The drum sounds like “dentsu, dentsu, kakkaraka”. . . .

The umbrella floats, numbering as many as sixty or seventy, slowly go around leftward to the sound of the drum around the group memorial lantern hut. Inside that [circle of umbrella floats], the children with the banners go around. Also, inside that [circle of children], there used to be the *naka odori* 中踊り (inner dance), in which dancers performing simple movements and people in pilgrimage attire went around.

Things proceed in this fashion, and then partway through, the children begin to hit the banners together, and when they are torn off completely, the children throw them into the sea, ending their duties.

Since it takes a long time, relatives and acquaintances take turns. Cold drinks and such are served by family members. One umbrella float is covered by twenty or thirty people. With people visiting the group memorial lantern and there even being spectators, the venue has a festival-like atmosphere until nightfall. The many lanterns attached to the grass of the tall bamboo of ambitious people also add to the atmosphere. . . . Above all, the Nakiri’s Dainenbutsu has done a good job of surviving the war and the postwar period, and still exists in a grand form.



The above figure is taken from Hidemori, “Dainenbutsu no yurai nitsuite no kōsatsu,” p. 25

Comparing the above with today, several things have changed, the most significant being the disappearance of the group of five. With there no longer being any professional *nenbutsu* reciters, the format was changed to the current one, where women chant the *nenbutsu* in the *nenbutsu* hut. This hut is also referred to in the text as the "group memorial lantern hut." Inside there were guards on either side of the group memorial lantern. It appears to have been treated with more cautious care than today. In any case, it is clear that in Nakiri's rituals for the spirits of the newly departed, the work of the temple and its priests and that of five older adults were carried out in parallel. Regarding this, Hidemori notes that Zen temples in the area date back to the Sengoku period (1467–1615) at the earliest, and that the Bon feeding of the hungry ghosts has been done since then. He speculates that *nenbutsu*, typically considered a practice of Pure Land Buddhism, may have already taken root among the local residents before Zen spread.

The next major change is the banner-holding children. The white headbands and sashes probably signify diligence and pure behavior. Also, before the war, the children did not walk themselves but were carried on adults' shoulders. Not allowing children playing the role of deities to step on the ground can be seen in local festivals, such as the Gion Matsuri's *naginatahoko* 長刀鉾 float children called *chigo* 稚児. Yanagita Kunio 柳田國男 says this is because "the spiritual power of a child playing a sacred role escapes when their feet touch the ground."[18] It seems that the children who hold banners with the new departed's posthumous names are playing a sacred role.

In addition, the call "Ya (a)amore, yassa, yassa" is now lost, and I did not come across the "inner dance," in which people circled inside of the Dainenbutsu in pilgrim clothes, in my research. Who was in charge of that dance? People's pilgrim-like appearances can be thought of as both *furyū* costumes and symbols of the newly departed's spirits.

3.2 Multi-layered Yorishiro

The Nakiri First Bon events are unique in that the act of enshrining the spirits of the newly departed is performed in various settings.

Households with newly departed bring sandals to the graves to welcome the spirits of the newly departed before households without newly departed do so. A special shelf for the newly departed's memorial tablet is set up in people's houses. Around it hang *kiriko* lanterns given by the newly departed's relatives. Eave lanterns are hung from bamboo leaves tied in a crisscross pattern at the gates of the houses of the newly departed, and the feeding of the hungry ghosts ceremony for the newly departed is held at houses, not at temples.

[18] Yanagita, "Kataguruma kō," p. 191.

For the Dainenbutsu, a group memorial lantern is prepared with the names of all of Nakiri's newly departed, and it is placed in the *nenbutsu* hut at the venue. Lanterns with the newly departed's posthumous names are hung in a place with the ocean in the background. When the Dainenbutsu begins, the name of each newly departed is called out, the drum is sounded, and the *nenbutsu* is recited. Then people ready umbrella floats, from which are hung favorite articles of the newly departed, banners with their posthumous names, and other items. These are marched around in a large circle. As for the umbrella floats, people who knew the departed take turns carrying the umbrella.

After these communal events are over, the families and relatives of households with newly departed head to the graves after other households without newly departed and offer *kiriko* lanterns.

In this way, households, temples, and the local community are involved in the First Bon events of Nakiri in a multi-layered manner, and the newly departed's *yorishiro* are not only the Dainenbutsu's umbrella floats. Items that appear to be *yorishiro* of the newly departed—eaves lanterns at houses' gate entrances, the memorial tablets and the special shelves on which the tablets are enshrined, *kiriko* lanterns, the group memorial lantern, banners with the names of the departed—also exist in a multi-layered structure.

Ueki states that newly departed spirits are not dealt with on a household-by-household basis but are entertained and sent off by the entire community because of their potential to become vengeful. This point only stands if we only focus on the Dainenbutsu; there are *yorishiro* of the newly departed outside of those that are entertained and sent off at that event.

While, of course, the emergence of the cautiously respectful way that the community comforts the newly departed at the Dainenbutsu—the group memorial lantern, posthumous name banners, and umbrella floats—is due to a fear of curses, is there not another reason for the other ways in which communal reverence displayed toward the deceased, such as the *motoya* system that reflects community hierarchy, the circulation of a list of the newly departed to have society recognize them, and the relay of the umbrella floats by people connected to the newly departed? Namely, the strong unity that once existed in the area's skipjack fishing industry. The community revering spirits is a prominent part of the Bon events in other coastal villages as well: in Numazu 沼津 in Shizuoka, where I am from, villagers light torches to welcome and send off the spirits of the dead during Bon, and in the Kōgasaki 甲ケ崎 area of Obama 小浜 in Fukui, where I have done survey work, large straw boats carry households' plank stupas out to sea.

3.3 Interaction Between the Dead and the Living

Nakiri's Dainenbutsu is the community sending off the newly departed's spirits. This can be seen in the placing of the group memorial lantern at the center of the venue.

While the umbrella floats, brought from the households of the newly departed, are paraded around in a circle, one by one the names of the newly departed are called out, and a drum is sounded and the *nenbutsu* recited for each of them.

During this procession, the *gacha gacha*, in which children hit posthumous name banners against each other, takes place. This act of hitting until the banners are in tatters and putting the poles that remain into the ocean probably signified a farewell that prevents the newly departed from remaining in this world.

Nearby in the Shimotsuura 下津浦 area of Nanseichō 南勢町, the *yassa yassa* pole toppling performed by people at the First Bon is for driving away misfortune. It is said failure to do so will lead to the spread of infectious disease in the year.[19] In the Anori 安乗 area of Agochō 阿児町 as well, about fifteen children used to clash with bamboo sticks wrapped in cloth. This was called *kariyai* カリヤイ.[20] In the Goza 御座 area of Shimachō 志摩町, children read off posthumous names written on heavy paper and then tear it up. This is called "receiving the *nenbutsu*" (*nenbutsu o morau* 念仏をもらう).[21] This can be seen as guiding the departed to enlightenment.

The Japanese view of children can be seen in the fact that in the Dainenbutsu ceremony, the children guide the deceased, which is usually performed by priests at funerals and other such occasions. Only children were allowed to commit violent acts against Sainokami サイノカミ and Jizō, and children have played the role of priests in such Shinto and Buddhist rituals.[22] A similar feature can be seen in the children's *gacha gacha*.

However, even after such parting rituals are over, people continue passing around the umbrella floats for some time. When a person comes across an umbrella float for a newly departed with whom they had ties, the person approaches it and takes over holding the umbrella. In the funeral rites that immediately follow death, rituals with the two opposing elements of adoring and parting ways have been performed without any incongruity. In *gacha gacha* and the passing of the umbrella floats as well, such opposing elements exist.

I heard about a certain person who, upon learning that an estranged friend had passed away, said, "I used to fight with him, but now he's a newly departed, so I gotta go hold his umbrella." The umbrella floats of the Dainenbutsu are not only *yorishiro* for the spirits of the dead, but also function to create spaces where the dead and the living can interact.

In the Bon Dance of the island of Manabeshima 真鍋島 in Okayama, dancers cover their faces with a cloth or a *sugegasa* すげ笠 hat to symbolize the spirits of the departed, and to show that the people memorializing the deceased are simultaneously spirits

[19] Nanseichōshi Hensan Iinkai, *Nanseichōshi*, p. 533.
[20] Mieken, *Miekenshi*, p. 449.
[21] Shimachōshi Hensan Iinkai, *Shimachōshi*, p. 558.
[22] Hattori, *Kodomo shūdan to minzoku shakai*.

receiving offerings.[23] Umbrella floats unite the living and the dead in this sense.

There are other examples of the dead and the living interacting or becoming one when spirits are sent off. In the city of Sakaide's 坂出 island of Yoshima 与島 in Kagawa, there is a dance in which families marking the First Bon carry memorial tablets of the departed on their backs. This is referred to as the Tōro Odori 灯籠踊り (Lantern dance) or Hotoke Odori 仏踊り (Buddha dance). *Kiriko* lanterns, which are said to represent the spirits of the newly departed, are hung from the tower from which the Bon Odori *ondodashi* 音頭出し singers hang off, and when the memorial tablets of the First Bon families are lined up on the table in front of the tower, the Bon Odori begins. From the tower, the Tōrō Odori song continues to be sung while the personal name and family name of each person that died in the past year is called out (for example, "Let's summon Nishida-san, may [Nishida] Tadashi-san rest in peace"). In the slow-moving clockwise Bon Odori circle, there is a dancer carrying the memorial tablet of the newly departed, wrapped in cloth, on their back. The island of Hitsuishijima 櫃石島 has a dance in which the newly departed's lanterns are displayed in a seaside area and their family members dance while carrying memorial tablets on their back. The dance is called the Shinrei Odori 心霊踊り (New spirits dance). There is no song that calls out the names of the newly deceased, but the *ondotori* sings the *odorikudoki* to the accompaniment of a large drum. People dance while taking turns with the memorial tablet on their back, and it is said that when a person who had applied water to the deceased person's lips after death (*shinimizu o toru* 死に水を取る) does so, they feel warmth on their back.[24]

Furukawa Shūhei 古川周平, who has written about this, says that the memorial tablets carried on the dancers' backs make visible the spirits of the newly departed, and that dancing with these tablets on the back expresses that the spirits of the dead are alive and moving in unison with the dancers' bodies.

In the Bon Odori of the islands of Ōsakikamijima 大崎上島 in Hiroshima and Hotojima 保戸島 in Oita, people dance with the portrait of the departed on their backs. It appears that people used to do so with memorial tablets until recently.[25]

Conclusion

This paper has considered umbrella floats in light of New Bon events in Nakiri. As has been noted in previous scholarship, there is no doubt that the umbrella floats of Nakiri's

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[23] Okayamakenshi Hensan Iinkai, *Okayamakenshi*, p. 197.

[24] Furukawa, "Shiryō no sōsō girei to shite no bon odori."

[25] According to Kagawaken, *Kagawakenshi*, p. 521, people from households with newly departed danced with memorial tablets on their backs during the Bon Odori on the island of Teshima 手島 in Marugame 丸亀 as well. When considering the transmission of such customs, it is interesting to note that many of the local servants (*hōkōnin* 奉公人) came from the Okayama islands of Kitagishima 北木島 and Manabeshima.

Dainenbutsu play the role of the newly departed's *yorishiro*, as they appear when spirits are sent off by the community. However, this a conclusion that only takes into account the Dainenbutsu, and is not a comprehensive explanation of the various *yorishiro* found in Nakiri's Bon events. In addition to the umbrella floats, *yorishiro* of the newly departed exist in a multi-layered fashion. These include, of course, the Dainenbutsu group memorial lantern and posthumous name banners, as well as the memorial tablets and *kiriko* lanterns enshrined in houses.

This means that the places enshrining the newly departed also exist in a multi-layered fashion. These places were created on top of the human relationships that spread out like a web within the local community.

The ties between people in the community are well illustrated by the umbrella floats being passed around to people with ties to the newly departed during the Dainenbutsu. Umbrella floats are community tools that connect and unite the dead and the living, as well as the living with each other.

Currently, the increase in family-only funerals and graves being dismantled (*haka jimai* 墓じまい) is a societal issue. In Nakiri as well, the aging of the population is making it difficult to carry on these events. As people say, "The elderly can't walk around with those umbrellas." If this trend accelerates, death will become even more abstract as the relationship between the dead and the living diminishes. Nakiri umbrella floats bring into relief a certain view of life and death precisely because we live in such an era. Who do I want to hold my umbrella float after my death? Whose umbrella float do I yearn to hold? . . . Asking ourselves these questions reminds us of how we should live our lives amidst relationships with others.

Future tasks for research include investigating and building a body of data about the distribution of umbrella floats throughout Japan. For example, I once conducted a survey of the Shōnai 庄内 region's *kasafuku* 傘福, umbrellas with *chirimen* 縮緬 handicrafts in the shape of lucky charms, such as monkeys, peaches, and shrimp. While some say that their origin can be traced back to the turtle umbrella float (*kame kasahoko* 亀傘鉾), that Honma Mitsuoka 本間光丘 had a Kyoto doll maker construct for the Sannō Matsuri 山王祭 in Sakata 酒田, the *kasafuku* made by common people have been offered to temples and shrines to pray for safe childbirth, children's growth, and improvement in needlework skills. The umbrella floats at the Sakata temple Kaikōji's 海向寺 Kannondō 観音堂 have been offered to pray for easy childbirth and healing of women's illnesses.[26] At Shōryūji 青竜寺 in Tsuruoka 鶴岡, on 24 March and 24 August (or the last Sunday in August), the youngest wives of each household gathered at the temple to make and present umbrella

[26] Hattori, "Shōnai chihō ni okeru hina matsuri no kazarimono."

floats to pray for safe childbirth and children's growth.[27] In addition, during the Edo period at the Gion Matsuri of Hiromine Jinja 広峯神社 in Obama, there were umbrella floats strongly influenced by Kyoto's Gion Matsuri. However, it is said that after entering the modern period, these floats were dropped, leaving only rod wielders (*bōfuri* 棒振り) and a large drum.[28] I plan to engage in local research by extracting various folkloric elements from the specific forms of umbrella floats handed down in various places and clarifying which elements played a strong role in the localization of umbrella floats.

(Translated by Dylan Luers Toda)

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[28] Kakitō, "Obama Gion Matsuri no hoko," pp. 15–28.

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