Structural Analysis of the Dance Within the Odaidai Ceremony of Kawaguchi Asama Shrine: Choreography, Music, and Meaning

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AKIKO HIRAI

Introduction

Dance performances are common to many religious ceremonies in Japan. Those preceded by music during Shinto events are typically called *kagura* 神楽. Despite the religio-ritual importance of *kagura*, much of the current musicological research focuses only on its sonic properties separate from its ritual significance. *Kagura*, in short, is ritual entertainment within a Shinto "ritual" (or "ceremony"). Its specific characteristics are different in each case—sometimes it is performed for ritual purposes and at other times it functions as entertainment based on religious stories. It can be considered a series of ritual actions or a ritual technique. This research aims to examine the religio-ritual connotations of *kagura* dance through choreographical-musical analysis of the function of sounds. The article focuses on a particular *kagura* dance performed during the Hōshachinsai 奉謝鎮祭, an annual Shinto ceremony held at Kawaguchi Asama Jinja (shrine) 河口浅間神社 in Fujikawaguchiko-machi 富士河口湖町, Yamanashi Prefecture. The name Hōshachinsai is hardly used; instead, the ceremony is usually referred to as Odaidai お太々, and this is the name used here. Odaidai is the name of a ceremony; the dance performed within it will be referred to as the "Odaidai *kagura*" or "Odaidai dance" or the "dance within Odaidai" even though conceptually and practically speaking it is not inappropriate to refer to the dance itself as Odaidai.

The academic classification of *kagura* was created by one of the founders of Japanese folkloric studies, Honda Yasuji 本田安次 (1906–2001), but his classification implies that various factors such as style, the nature of the pieces, and the different genres, are all equal.[1] In Honda's classification, dance pieces are sometimes distinguished by their ritual characteristics and at other times by the characters in the pieces. For example, if a female character is played by a male dancer, he classifies it as *onnamai* 女舞 (*onna*, meaning woman, and *mai*, meaning dance); however, if young female dancers wear priestess costumes, the piece is classified as a ritual dance. His system, therefore, is based on several arbitrary factors. Despite the system's shortcomings, it is still commonly used.

Several contemporary specialists discussed the nature of *kagura*, including Honda's classification system and its drawbacks, at a 2014 symposium entitled "Kagura's Nature and Acculturation."[2] The symposium,

1 Honda, *Zuroku: Nihon no minzoku geinō*, p. 7.

2 The symposium included specialists such as Misumi Haruo 三隅治雄, Hyōki Satoru 俵木悟, and Honda Yoriko 本田より子; for details, see Minzoku Geinō Gakkai, *Minzoku geinō*.

however, did not reach an adequate conclusion regarding a more appropriate method of classifying *kagura* within existing systems of folklore studies. Part of the difficulty of defining *kagura* is that it serves both ritualistic and entertainment functions. In addition, the objective of the *kagura* performance differs according to the "spectator"—whether deities or humans. Significantly, however, no classification mentions human viewers.

Kagura encompasses several performing arts that usually take place during Shinto events. It includes both lyrical and instrumental songs. In some ceremonies only a dance piece is performed as *kagura*, but other ceremonies also employ alternative medieval theatrical genres. The most significant example is the series of three ritualistic pieces, *shikisanban* 式三番, that are performed today in *noh* 能. During the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, actor, playwright, and theater director Kan'ami 観阿弥 (1333–1384) and his son and successor—who was also an actor, playwright, and theater director—Zeami 世阿弥 (1363–1443), added entertainment pieces to *sarugaku* 猿楽, a genre of popular theater involving juggling, mime, and ritual dance pieces practiced from the ancient to the medieval period, and systematized it as a performing art. Noh theater was patronized by aristocrats in the capital of Kyoto, but in other areas ritual pieces of *sarugaku* were performed by officiants of popular ceremonies, such as practitioners of Shugendō 修験道 (Japanese mountain asceticism, worship, and other practices at sacred mountains). Thus, certain types of *kagura* descended from *sarugaku*, and these have *shikisanban* pieces in their repertory. The *shikisanban* series is also performed in other theatrical genres, such as *kabuki* 歌舞伎 (a form of Japanese traditional dance and drama that began in the early eighteenth century, and developed during the Edo 江戸 period [1600–1868]) and *bunraku* 文楽 (Japanese marionette theater which began during the Edo period), which demonstrates clearly that *kagura* cannot be defined solely nor precisely by its entertainment characteristics. Furthermore, sometimes *kagura* has little ritualistic meaning but at other times it has significant meaning.

Terence Lancashire defines *kagura* as "a combination of song, dance, and/or theater, usually performed on the site of a Shinto shrine."[3] *Kagura* is generally performed on a special stage (*kaguraden* 神楽殿), and many Shinto shrines have made permanent structures for rituals and entertainment that must be specially prepared by officiants or worshippers. I make a distinction here between Shinto priests and officiants of religious ceremonies. Officiants are usually local parishioners who take on this role, but in some cases, officiants are professionals commissioned by local parishioners to direct both dance and ritual performances, such as purifications, divinations (including trance and possession), and prayers, along with dance and theatrical pieces. Such performances are often classified by musicologists and folklorists as a folkloric performing art and treated as music. All these variations make it difficult to explain *kagura* simply. As for its music, it is impossible to classify the music of *kagura* by its melodic or rhythmical character because each piece has different melodies and rhythm patterns for the dance accompaniment.

At the beginning of the Meiji 明治 period (1868–1912), the government promulgated two acts: Prohibitions Against Spirit Possession (Kamigakari Kinshi Rei 神懸り禁止令) and Prohibitions Against Dance Performances for Shinto Priests (Shinshoku Enbu Kinshi Rei 神職演舞禁止令). To construct a modern theocratic state under an emperor, the Meiji government utilized religion as a political tool. In 1868 (Keiō 慶応 4), the government issued an edict to unify religion and politics, and because divination was considered unsuitable for a modern state, *kagura* performances were forbidden during Shinto ceremonies. It is not my intention to discuss the history of Kokka Shintō 国家神道 (State Shinto) in detail here, nor its relationship to the development of *kagura*; rather, I will focus on musical analysis, noting historical context where relevant.

After the Meiji reforms, dancers and musicians in *kagura* performances changed from officiants to villagers, largely because of the prohibitions of certain musical/dance practices stated in the two acts mentioned above. Specifically, divinations were removed from *kagura* rites. Although removed from most Japanese traditions, the act of divination maintains a very important role in religious ceremonies because the series of preparations for divination, including purification of the officiant's body, purification of the ritual space, and possession, are necessary to communicate with the deities. Therefore, I believe that one of the most essential functions of *kagura* is as a tool for divination, possession, or receiving the deity's message in a much more "abstract" way. Although today *kagura* may seem to be

3 Lancashire, "Music for the Gods," p. 87.

devoid of spiritual significance and understood to be a form of entertainment, during my fieldwork, I noticed that although dancers and musicians had no particular religious belief in the local divinity to whom they dedicate the dance performance, and did not understand the meanings behind their movements and gestures, worshippers considered the ceremony to be religiously effective. This led me to two main questions: What are the religious connotations of *kagura*, and under what conditions may the dance be considered effective?

To answer these questions, I conducted choreographical-musical analysis to examine the function of sounds in *kagura*. I then compared the results of the analyses with existing definitions of *kagura* dance. In this article I use this methodology to analyze *kagura* performed in the context of the Odaidai ceremony. To find movements imbued with religio-ritualistic meaning in the choreography, it is useful to closely analyze the dance piece. I have chosen to examine the Odaidai ceremony for several reasons. Unlike many other *kagura*, the dance pieces of the Odaidai ceremony are not based on a specific historical or mythical text. Additionally, the dance scenes tend to be more repetitious, making it easier to delineate sections and gestures. Most important for the purposes of this article, however, is that the performance of the Odaidai serves an important ritual purpose—the prevention of the eruption of Mt. Fuji—that has perpetuated its local transmission over generations.

Fieldwork Rubric and Participants

My first visit to Kawaguchi Asama Shrine was on 28 July 2011. Before my visit, I contacted the Kawaguchi Tourism branch of Fujikawaguchiko-machi to request access to the ceremony, talk with priests, dancers, and musicians, and to record and film the dance. On site, I was able to have a short conversation with the priest Nakata Susumu 中田進, musicians Miyashita Takeharu 宮下武治, Nakamura Yoshio 中村義朗, Takahashi Noriyoshi 高橋徳義, Miyashita Genki 宮下元気, and the dance teacher that year, Miyashita Emiko 宮下恵美子. I returned to the site again in 2012 and 2015. By my second visit on 28 July 2012, my structural analysis of the music was already complete. Hence, I concentrated on noting the structure of each piece performed during the day. I carefully listened to the musicians and noted the order of all of the motifs. In 2015, I was able to have a short interview during the ceremony with the musicians mentioned above, and a one-hour interview with the new dance teacher, Kikuchi Keiko 菊池佳子, who had been a dancer during her childhood. Also, I was able to observe several rehearsals that were held evenings in the week before the ceremony. Mrs. Kikuchi explained to me how important the dance was to the residents of the Kawaguchi 河口 district, from one generation to the next, and that this dance is considered a secret that the inhabitants of other villages are not permitted to see, so that they cannot copy the choreography. For these reasons, she was extremely prudent in explaining the dance to me, and I respect her efforts to keep their traditions secret. This is why I avoid showing both musical and choreographical transcriptions, and mention only the choreography in detail in this article.

The Odaidai and other cultural practices surrounding Mt. Fuji were registered as UNESCO World's Heritage Culture in 2013 as part of the UNESCO designation "Fujisan, sacred place and source of artistic inspiration."[4] The dance performance of the Odaidai was registered as *Kawaguchi no chigo no mai* 河口の稚児の舞, literally "Kawaguchi's Dance of the Young," as it is locally called on Japan's National Intangible Heritage list, in 2017. The dance is today—and was often in the past—performed before Fujikō 富士講, *kō* 講 being in this case members of an association or group who climb Mt. Fuji for religious purposes. Today, many tourists also gather to see the ceremony.

The Odaidai Ceremony

This section explores the Odaidai ceremony performed at Kawaguchi Asama Shrine and its associated *kagura* dance.[5]

The map of Japan pictured in figure 1 includes an enlarged section showing the location of the shrine. The shrine is located north of Mt. Fuji and south of Lake Kawaguchi 河口湖. Mt. Fuji, the largest mountain in Japan and also a very active volcano, lies at the center of

4 UNESCO World Heritage List, "Fujisan, sacred place and source of artistic inspiration." For the Nomination file, Advisory Board Evaluation, and Map, see the UNESCO World Heritage List online: https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1418/.

5 This data is drawn from my fieldwork during the summers of 2011 and 2012.

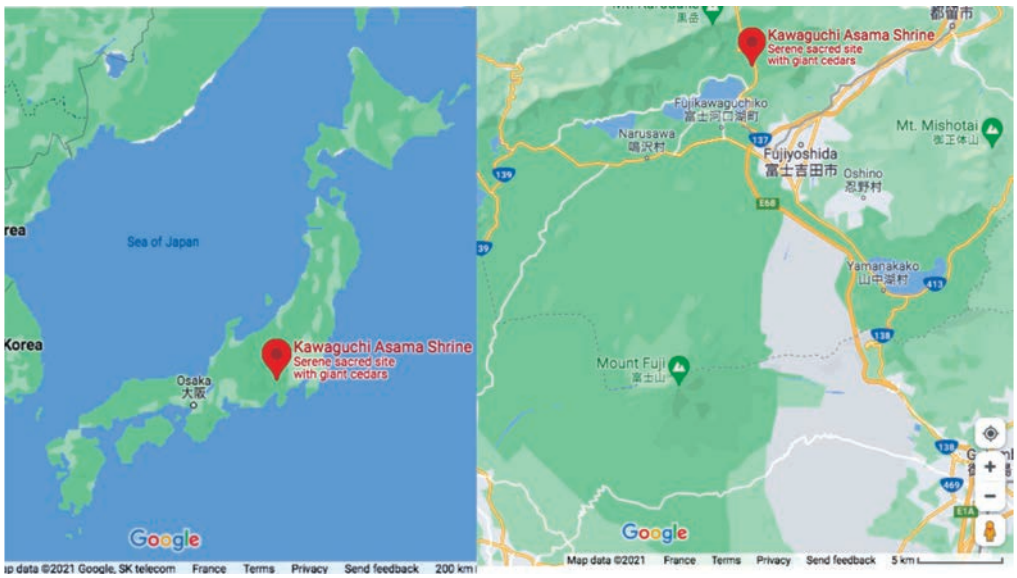

Figure 1. Maps showing Kawaguchi Asama Shrine, the right in detail. From Google Maps.

the largest island, Honshu. Lake Kawaguchi is situated between the mountain and the village, providing a natural barrier from lava flows.[6] Because of this, the lake is perceived as a sign of supernatural protection by a divine guardian, the goddess of Mt. Fuji. The residents believe that they must worship the Mt. Fuji goddess so that she will continue to protect them. Traditionally, people in Japan have looked to divine beings for protection from natural disasters. Hence, there are several historical shrines near Mt. Fuji that are dedicated to certain divine beings believed to provide protection from eruptions and other natural occurrences. In order to communicate with these divine beings, ceremonies have developed in which people dedicate various ritual dance performances to local deities, such as the one that inhabits Mt. Fuji. The ceremony is intended to appease the deity of Mt. Fuji.

The dance is performed by youths, known as *chigomai* 稚児舞; here it is a dance performed by local girls around the ages of 8 to 12. In this article, however, I refer to it as the Odaidai for two reasons. First, the appellation *chigomai* is confusing because it can refer to both a boy's or girl's dance. Considering that the dancers wear priestess costumes, it is, perhaps, more correct to refer to it as a *mikomai* 巫女舞, or dance of priestesses, a distinction made in the Honda classification system. Second, this dance, which is actually comprised of five pieces, is just one part of the larger ceremony, so as noted in the introduction, it can be understood as part of an ensemble of ritual actions.

The Odaidai ceremony is held annually on 28 July at Kawaguchi Asama Shrine. It is performed only at this shrine, and it has historically been transmitted by descendants of the families of low-ranking priests called *oshi* 御師. *Oshi* were officiants and tour guides who supported pilgrims visiting Mt. Fuji by offering them accommodation and food, and by assisting them with prayers. When worshippers visited the shrine, they requested a dance performance. This was the most important *oshi* activity, in no small part because it earned them a significant portion of their income. For that reason the priests kept the Odaidai choreography secret by only teaching it to *oshi* descendants and the *oshi* families guarded the dissemination of its music and choreography to outsiders. The *oshi* were abolished by law in 1871 (Meiji 4) during the reforms of the era.

The local deity is associated with Princess Konohanasakuya Hime no Mikoto 木花開耶姫命, a character featured in the *Kojiki.* According to the tale, the princess became pregnant after just one night of marriage, and her fidelity to her husband, Ninigi no Mikoto 瓊瓊杵命, was called into question. To prove her fidelity, she performed a test. While in labor, she set fire to

6 Asama Shrine is not a unique name and several shrines with this name exist around Mt. Fuji. "Asama" means "volcano" in ancient Japanese, so Asama shrines relate to the worship of Mt. Fuji. Asama can also be read as *sengen*.

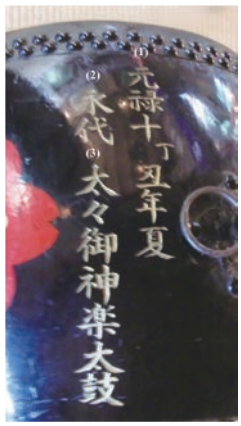

Figure 2. Detail of figure 6. Inscriptions engraved on the body of an *ōdaiko* (large wooden drum), meaning: (1) "Genroku 10, year of the fire ox, summer"; (2) "For all eternity"; (3) "Drum of Daidai [Odaidai] *kagura*." Photograph by author.

the birthing room, and then gave birth to three gods in the fire. She proved her innocence by performing a miracle that demonstrated her divine presence. Because of this myth, people believed that she would protect them from the eruptions of Mt. Fuji.

Historical Background

According to legend, a dance ceremony was performed in 865 AD, but we have no proof that it was the same dance that is performed during the Odaidai ceremony today. In the Japanese imperial official history, *Nihon sandai jitsuroku* 日本三代実録, it is written that Mt. Fuji erupted in 864 AD and that a shrine was constructed the following year after a divination by the local priest, Tomo no Naosada 伴直真 of Kai 甲斐 Province, the ancient name of Yamanashi Prefecture.[7] There is no evidence to support the legend; the cinnabar red shrine that can be seen at the back of the hall of worship is the main shrine. A wooden plaque on the main shrine in the main hall of Kawaguchi Asama Shrine bears the calligraphy "Omoto-dama" 大元霊 (primordial soul) handwritten by Emperor Daigo 醍醐天皇 (r. 897–930). It is designated as a tangible cultual property of Fujikawaguchiko-machi along with the main shrine.

In the fifteenth century the shrine and the *oshi* priests were patronized by local lords. Throughout the Edo period, and especially during the seventeenth century, the shrine was a popular pilgrimage site, as Mt. Fuji was considered a sacred place. A large drum (*ōdaiko* 大太鼓) was dedicated to the shrine in 1698 (Genroku 元禄 10).[8] Figure 2 shows the inscription on the body of the drum (see figure 6 for an image of the whole drum).

The first evidence of an Odaidai ritual dance ceremony appears in an official record dated 1759 (Hōreki 宝暦 9).[9] It records litigation wherein a number of elders sued newcomers over the right to perform *kagura*. It is possible that since, as stated previously, *kagura* performances were a major source of income for *oshi*, this litigation was one impetus for the continuing secrecy surrounding its performance.

Regardless of the secrecy surrounding the ceremony, the Odaidai has undergone significant changes. In 2013, it was registered with UNESCO as mentioned above, and in 2016 an academic report entitled *Kawaguchi no chigo no mai: Kuni kiroku sentaku mukei minzoku bunkazai chōsa hōkokusho* 河口の稚児の舞: 国記録選択無形民俗文化財調査報告書 included a DVD that featured all the dance pieces.[10] Since the ritual's registration under UNESCO, there has been an increase in both Japanese and foreign tourists visiting the shrine to see the dance, with many images and videos now online. The dance can no longer be hidden. It is now public in a way that goes against the wishes of certain worshippers because the dance risks losing its religio-ritual meaning and significance as its main performance transitions into entertainment for tourists. This is a common effect for UNESCO cultural heritage designations.[11]

7 Kyoto Daigaku Kichō Shiryō Dejitaru Ākaibu, *Sandai jitsuroku*.

8 This date was confirmed during my fieldwork on 28 July 2011.

9 Nishida, "Kawaguchimura ni okeru Fujisan oshi," pp. 81–91.

10 Fujikawaguchiko-machi Kyōiku linkai, *Kawaguchi no chigo no mai*.

11 Brumann and Berliner, *World Heritage on the Ground,* and Labadi, *UNESCO, Cultural Heritage, and Outstanding Universal Value*.

Ritual Components

▪ Participants

The participants can be classified into five groups according to their roles: priests, delegates of villager groups, two villager groups, dancers, and musicians.

Group 1 (priests): There are three to five priests who participate in the ceremony and all of them are from only one licensed village family. In 2011, I observed only two priests. In the following years, the number of priests was increased because of the campaign for UNESCO registration.

Group 2 (delegates): There are eight delegates of villagers, generally called *ujiko sōdai* 氏子総代. Three groups of parishioners choose two delegates each for a total of eight. Serving delegates choose two more members from former members, totaling eight delegates. These delegates oversee the administrative work, organization, preparation, selection of dancers, and communication with the city. They also work with all the groups and facilitate communications between them.

Group 3 (villagers): This group consists of the rest of the villagers. All residents, except those who identify as belonging to a different religion, are automatically counted as worshippers and they are divided into four groups according to where they live. The participants from each group support all material preparation under the delegates. Each of the four groups is further divided into men and women. The women mainly work in the kitchen in the shrine office (*shamusho* 社務所) to prepare the meals for participants. They do not participate in any of the rites, which are held in the worship hall (*haiden* 拝殿). The men mainly work outdoors—decorating, cleaning the site of the shrine, and participating in certain rites.

Group 4 (dancers): The dancers are selected by the eight delegates of group 2. To be a dancer, girls must meet certain conditions. These include having married parents who are still alive, not being in mourning, not having experienced their first menstruation, and hailing from one of the "superior families" (defined in local Japanese as *ii ie* 良い家) of the village. Once selected, a dancer can continue until the age of twelve, as long as these conditions are met. Most of these conditions are to assure the dancer's ritual purity. Blood, death, and sickness are considered impurities; there also used to be religious abstinences required of the musicians, such as purifying themselves with sacred water before the ceremony. According to the musicians, nowadays no religious abstinence is officially performed. However, some of them voluntarily do not eat meat for one week before the ceremony. Regarding the girl dancers, it is thought that deities appear in the form of children, so children disguised as officiants or mediums have been worshipped. In the case of the Odaidai, local people used to call dancers *oichīsan* オイチーサン. Now they call dancers *ochigosan* お稚児さん, which means "youth" with an honorific "o" and "san," and they take the role of officiant-dancers in folkloric ceremonies and are considered a medium of the deities.[12] There seems to be confusion between the ancient local appellation *oichīsan* and the general appellation *ochigosan*. The phoneme *ichi* of *oichīsan* means priestess, possibly transcribed as お市さん, while the "chigo" of *ochigosan* means children. Both words imply a pure presence, into which the deity prefers to incarnate.

Group 5 (musicians): There are few official conditions for the musicians. The main one is that the role of the musician can only be passed on to the first son of certain families. When the current musician dies, however, the son is prohibited from participating during the mourning period.

There are three official rites within the program: purification, the precautionary rite of fire, and the rite of offerings. The dance pieces are performed between these rites, and the ceremony lasts all day.

▪ Official Rites

Purification: Purification is accomplished by a lower-level priest. After the incantation of ritualized texts for purification (*harae kotoba* 祓詞), the priest publicly purifies all dance accessories, all participants, and the audience.

Precautionary rite of fire: The precautionary rite of fire, *hibuse no shinji* 火伏せの神事, is held separately from the other rites, outside of the shrine. A lower-ranking priest directs this rite with or without the participation of guests and/or other priests. According to the priest, the rite is historically held in a small court between the main hall (*honden* 本殿) and the worship hall (*haiden*). Currently, it is held outside in front of the worship hall for security reasons. The area for the rite is defined by

12 Minzokugaku Kenkyūjo, *Minzokugaku jiten*, p. 366; Nakai, *Minzoku geinō jiten*, pp. 285–86.

four bamboo posts located in the four corners connected by sacred straw cords and zigzag white folded papers (*shide* 紙垂). After reading the ritualized text, the priests make a fire in front of the sacred area.

Rite of Offerings: These are performed with the participation of all of the priests (group 1), delegates (group 2), the chief of the groups of neighbors (*tonari gumi* 隣組, from group 3), and guests. The participants are all men, and women can only participate if officially invited by the town. This rite is private, although tourists can watch it from outside of the worship hall. It is the chief priest who directs this rite. First, lower-level priests present all of the offerings, then the head priest reads a ritualized text, which is specially written by him. Thus, the text is different every time. Later, all delegates (group 2), and one delegate from the three local groups (group 3), and all the guests offer sacred *sakaki* 榊 branches and chant prayers, one by one, in front of the altar.[13]

Sharing divine food: This is a public event where all participants and visitors can take part. This moment constitutes a break for the dancers and musicians. During this time, a woman from group 3 distributes rice balls to everyone. This action is not exclusive to this ceremony and can be found in many Japanese religious events. It is believed that to share divine food is to distribute divine power to humans. Those who eat a rice ball will have good health for one year. The purpose of this ritual in Shinto ceremonies is often to bring people material benefits.

Feast (*naorai* 直会): This is a private feast held for the main participants, namely the dancers, delegates, priests, and musicians. The purpose of *naorai* is to return to secular time. While this ritual event is not part of the official ritual program, I include it here because it divides the ceremony into sacred and secular time.

Dance: Dance performances occur between these rites, except during the rite of *hibuse no shinji* (precautionary rite of fire), which is held at the same time as the dance performance. The beginning and the end of the ceremony are announced by the large drum's accelerated tremolo rhythm.

13 Apart from *ujiko sōdai* delegates, members of local groups participate in this ritual. All *ujiko sōdai* offer *sakaki* (*cleyera japonica*) branches, a sacred type of tree in Shinto rites. Also, one additional member from the local groups represents all the other members and offers *sakaki*. During the ceremony, delegates and local groups are physically separated and distinguished from each other by different costumes and by performing different tasks. Thus, even if the delegates are from local groups, they do not act as representatives of the local group when performing the rituals.

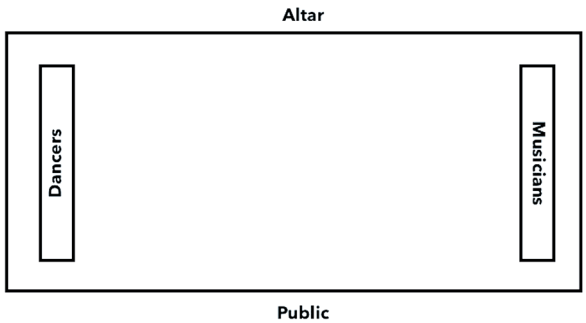

Figure 3. Position of dancers and musicians at the center of the hall of worship (*haiden*) where they perform. When a dancer begins, she faces the altar and the public sees her back. Created by author.

Shitakata: Instrumental Ensemble

Before beginning my musical analysis, I will introduce the musical instruments used for the Odaidai. The musical ensemble for Odaidai is called *shitakata* 下方. As shown in figure 3, musicians take up positions on the left side of the stage proper, and face the dancers on the right side. The seating arrangement from left to right is the *ōdaiko* drummer, *daibyōshi* 大拍子 drummer, chief flutist, and others. An additional drummer who does not play sits behind those who are playing.

The *shitakata* ensemble consists only of men, usually firstborn sons in the family. Although there is no fixed minimum or maximum age required to play, many musicians join the ensemble around the age of twenty. The oldest musician I met during my fieldwork, Miyashita Takeharu, was in his eighties. According to my interview with him, there is neither music notation nor a traditional onomatopoeic song for learning melodies or rhythms (*shōga* 唱歌). The only way for musicians to learn the music is by imitating other musicians.

Shinobue: Bamboo flutes called *shinobue* 篠笛 (figure 4) are also used in the performance; they are commonly used for Japanese traditional popular music at rural events and are also sometimes used for Kabuki theater to musically signify a village setting. *Shinobue* vary in size and the Odaidai musicians use size six (*roppon* 六本).

Older *shinobue* flutes are housed in the Kawaguchi Asama Shrine. According to contemporary flutists, these flutes were used generations ago and are larger than the flutes used today.

Figure 4. Flutist seated on the left of the percussionist. A *shinobue* flute is at the center for *shitakata*. L 50 cm, D of head 2 cm and at end 1.8 cm. Average length of various flutes: L 30 cm to 50 cm. Photograph by author.

Figure 5. *Daibyōshi* drum. D membrane 30 cm, overall D 43 cm. Photograph by author.

Figure 6. *Ōdaiko* drum. L 48 cm × D 41 cm. Stand H 31 cm × W 49 cm. Photograph by author.

Daibyōshi (figure 5) are double-headed drums. The striking heads are stretched taut over a round metal frame. They can be tuned by adjusting the tension of the cords that run between the heads across the barrel. The diameter of this drum is 43 cm and 36 cm in length, and its body is cylindrical and swollen in the center. The drum is struck on both sides with thin wooden sticks. The *daibyōshi* sits on a wooden stand parallel to the player's body. The drummer beats the right side of the drum with the stick in his right hand, and the left side with the stick in his left hand. Two types of sticks may be used—sticks 66.5 cm in length and 0.5 cm in diameter, or 61 cm long and 0.5 cm in diameter.

The *ōdaiko* (figure 6) are large drums with two studded heads. They measure 41 cm in diameter and 48 cm in length and are placed on a base 31 cm high. The body of the drum is barrel-shaped, and the leader heads are studded. They are beaten on one side with a stick called a *bachi* 撥. There are two kinds of sticks. The longer one measures 12.5 cm, with a diameter of 2.2 to 2.5 cm, and the shorter one is 42 cm long and 2.5 cm in diameter. The drum is played by striking only the center of one of its heads. In the Odaidai, only one head is struck. In other contexts, drummers sing or accompany the playing with vocalizations. For the Odaidai, however, the drummer does not vocalize at all.

Accessories and Repertory

The Odaidai also features an instrument that is not considered part of the musical ensemble. The *kagura suzu* 神楽鈴, or simply *suzu* 鈴, are bells held by the dancers and are common accessories for all the dance pieces. According to Yamaji Kōzō 山路興造, *suzu* bells have ritualistic meaning, as they signal the arrival of a divine presence into the body of the dancer.[14] Dancers use *suzu* bells in all Odaidai pieces. The bells may be rung in two ways—either at the end of each piece, where dancers raise their right hand with the *suzu* at the height of their elbow and shake them twice, or during the piece when dancers lower their arms and shake the bells while moving backward. Of the two, the second one seems to have a ritual objective. During my fieldwork, I questioned the new dance teacher about the movement of the bells, but it seems that no oral transmission has been passed down about this gesture. It was stressed, however, that dancers should always shake the bells with prayers in their mind so that the volcano will calm down. During my fieldwork on another dance at the Festival of Flowers (*hana matsuri* 花祭), I was able to observe how the

14 Yamaji, "Nihon geinōshi no naka no kagura," p. 62.

Figure 7. Odaidai accessories. From left, sword (*tsurugi*), bells (*suzu*), fan (*gohei*), another fan (*ōgi*). Photograph by author.

suzu functioned in that ceremony. At the beginning of the piece, the dancers grasped the bells in their hands, thereby muting their sound. Later in the same piece, they held the bells by their wooden handles, allowing the sound to be heard. Although in the Odaidai choreography the dancers hold the bells by their handles, both ways are audible to the divine presence.

Five dance pieces are performed for the Odaidai ceremony. Although the dancers wear the same costume throughout all five dances, they can be distinguished by the different accessories they use for each dance (figure 7). These accessories include swords, fans, and white papers folded into a zig-zag pattern and fastened to wooden sticks (*gohei* 御幣). These are used at Shinto shrines as priest's tools (*ōnusa* 大幣) for purifications, fastened to bamboo to demarcate sacred places (*imidake* 忌竹), and attached to straw cords (*shimenawa* しめ縄) that are also used to denote sacred places. The five dances are performed in the following order. By way of explaining why the "piece" numbers do not correspond to the chronological order, in my analysis, I begin with the simplest and move to those with greater numbers of dancers (sometimes, the greater the number of dancers that perform a piece the more complex the choreography can be).

Piece 1 (performed third): *Tsurugi no mai* 剣の舞, or the Sword Dance. In this piece, all of the dancers take turns performing the dance for a total of seven repetitions. The music consists of repeated phrases. I started my analysis with this piece for the sake of simplicity; this is the only piece in which a single dancer performs. Initially, before I analyzed the choreography, I hypothesized that there is a specific choreographical sequence that is performed the same number of times as the number of dancers performing (eg., two times if two dancers).

Piece 2 (performed first): *Gohei no mai* 御幣の舞, or the Sacred Zig-Zag Paper Dance. All of the Odaidai dance pieces are based on this one. It is normally performed three times by groups of two or three dancers.

Piece 3 (performed second): *Ōgi no mai* 扇の舞, or the Fan Dance.

The above three pieces collectively are called *torimonomai* 採り物舞, meaning dances with ritual accessories. The two remaining pieces are also *torimonomai* but they have different characteristics that necessitate their classification into separate categories.

Piece 4 (performed fourth): *Happō no mai* 八方の舞, or the Dance in Eight Directions, is performed by three groups of two or three dancers, like pieces 2 and 3.

Piece 5 (performed last): *Miyameguri no mai* 宮巡りの舞, or the Dance for Circling Around the Shrine, is performed by all of the dancers together.

Although these last two pieces also feature accessories, their meaning and importance to the overall ceremony is derived more from the position of the dancers than the accessories themselves, unlike the first three pieces. Therefore, my analysis will focus mainly on the first three pieces.

Musical Analysis

For my analysis, I drew upon methods used by Alia Toumi in her analysis of Lebanese music. In her doctoral dissertation, she analyzes cyclic music by depicting repeated sequences in a linear graph. Many ethnomusicological analyses focus primarily on sonic properties and time or rhythm. For a better understanding of sound in ritual, we should add a third element—space. Here, I will try to adapt and further develop Toumi's approach to include choreography. I believe that this approach to musical/choreographic analysis is preferable for this study because it is the only possible approach that can help us confirm the objective of this ceremony—protection from volcanic eruption.[15] Although it is important to be able to provide visual representation of the musical event, to respect the wishes of the practitioners of *kagura* it must not be used for reproduction.

The analytical methodology of the steps are as follows:

Step 1, cutting: After recording, I exported the music into the music editing software, Audacity.[16] As I mentioned previously, *kagura* dance is transmitted orally. Even if musical transcriptions exist, their role is descriptive, not prescriptive. The musicians I interviewed also did not acknowledge the existence of any pedagogical method for learning melodies and rhythms (*shōga*). Therefore, I had to rely on my own transcriptions and field recordings.

Piece 1 features significant musical repetition. The *daibyōshi* drumbeats are constant and steady throughout the entire piece. By marking the breathing points of the flute, the lone melodic instrument, I was able to derive cells of music. From these cells I found eight melodic motifs.

Step 2, numbering: I numbered the motifs from 1 to 8, exported them to Microsoft Excel, and developed a table of motif order.

Step 3, visualization: I created a linear graph so that those with non-musicological training can more easily visualize the musical structure without any knowledge of musical theory.

Step 4, applying steps 1 through 3 to the choreography: In order to adapt this process to dance, I used iMovie for the cutting process. This allowed me to isolate certain movements, add markers, and create and export still images. From these, motifs could be derived and graphed.

Step 5, comparing: In this step, I compared the relationship between the music and the choreography.

The eight motifs that I observed can be placed into the following two groups:

Group 1, the fundamental motifs: 1, 2, 7, 8.

According to the musicians, the music of the Odaidai is based on motif 7 and thus it can be considered the main theme. Motifs 2 and 8 are variations on the theme. The flutists play the melody an octave higher than the other motifs. All motifs of this group are played at particular moments in order to signal the beginning or the end of the whole ceremony, and also to aid the dancers in remembering to change their positions. Each piece begins with motif 1 played by the flutist sitting on the left. This introduction is generally called *fuefukidashi* 笛吹きだし. The other flutists follow.

Group 2, the subsidiary motifs: 3, 4, 5, 6.

These motifs function as random ornamentation to fill in gaps between fundamental (structural) motifs. These motifs begin in different keys, led by the lead flutist who is later joined by the other flutists. Motif 6 appears only after the introduction. The musicians play this motif twice between repetitions of motif 7. Because of its long duration, it is sometimes played only once. These eight motifs constitute the structure of the five Odaidai pieces.

The next section examines the differences between the pieces themselves: Pieces 1–3.

Figure 8 shows the musical evolution of pieces 1 through 3. The X (horizontal) axis shows the evolution of time, and the Y (vertical) axis shows us the order of the motifs. I superimposed three pieces onto one graph. Piece 1 is in blue, piece 2 in red, and piece 3 is in gray. When another piece progresses in the same order as piece 3, the line is gray. As we can see, they are mostly gray. We can observe the common structure in these three pieces: introduction, middle section, and coda. The only differences occur in the middle section. Also, I note that the same sequence appears four times. Analyzing the choreography helps illuminate the reasons for this repetition. The next section analyzes the choreography to understand why the same sequence is repeated.

15 Toumi, "La *dabka*, danse et musique du Liban."

16 Structural analysis for all pieces may be found in Hirai, "Les Sonorité dans le rituel shintoïste," pp. 67–105.

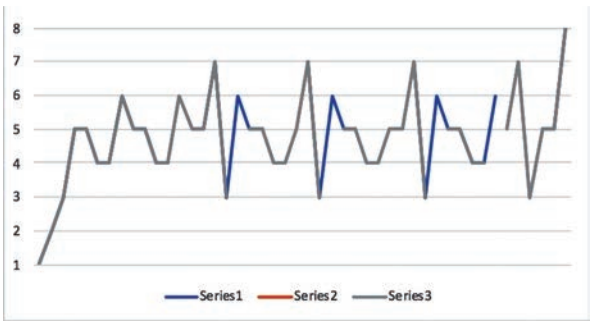

Figure 8. Evolution of the music of pieces 1–3. Created by author.

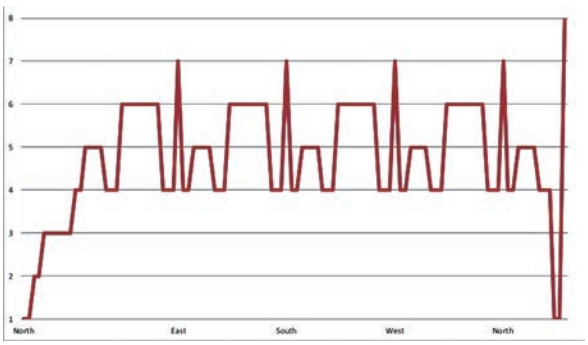

Figure 9. Evolution of the choreography of piece 1. Created by author.

Choreographic Units

As with the musical analysis, I marked the choreographic units using iMovie and created a linear graph with the units on the vertical left side. I observed eight units, such as (1) sitting, (2) standing up, (3) stepping back, (4) remaining still while turning the ritual object, (5) moving forward, (6) moving backward, (7) changing position, and (8) ringing the *suzu* bells. The number of choreographic units and musical motifs is the same but not for any specific reason.

There are three important movements:

Movement 1, prayer: The dancers put their hands together in front of their bodies. According to the Odaidai master dancer, this gesture signifies prayer.

Movement 2: The dancers turn the ritual object with their right hand.

Movement 3, purification of the ground with the ritual object: The dancers shake the ritual object 10–15 cm above the ground. The purification of the ground is signified by shaking the bells.

Next, we see the evolution of the dance with the linear graph. In figure 9, I marked the foot movements, except those at the end of the piece (unit 8). The sound of the bells signifies the end of a piece. Because they signal the musicians, the bells could be considered part of the musical ensemble at this moment. The dancers and musicians then play the same rhythm in unison. Although the bells are often sounded throughout the piece, they are not accompanied by other percussion as they are in the ending section. The rhythmic coincidence of the sound of the bells with the other percussion instruments represents the arrival of the divine beings.

Axis X shows the evolution of time, and axis Y shows us the number of choreographical units. In this graph, we can see that the musical motif does not correspond to the choreographic unit. The dancers change their positions on stage at the peak of the graph (unit 7) and perform the same sequence at four cardinal points. Dancer direction is indicated at the bottom of the graph. The sequence of units 7-4-4-5-5-5-5-4-4-4-6-6-6-6-6-6-6-6-4-4-4 designates movement 3. Every time the dancers step backwards, they ring *suzu* bells. Dancers attach the bells to their costumes during piece 1 in place of swords, which are deemed too dangerous to dance with.

▪ Order of the Dancer's Position on Stage

If the Odaidai ceremony is performed purely for entertainment purposes, it is too repetitive to be entertaining; it repeats exactly the same sequence of choreography four times (in four directions). Does this repetition possess ritual importance? Furthermore, each piece is executed several times so that all dancers perform all pieces; the reason is not to provide entertainment. Folklorists have noted that in *kagura* performances, dancers often execute the *shihō gatame* 四方固め, or "solidifying the four directions technique." This technique delineates a sacred space through repetition of movement in four directions to prepare for the arrival of the divine beings. If the repetition of this Odaidai sequence corresponds to this technique, the implied meaning of the Odaidai ceremony may be revealed.

Figure 10 shows the position for each dancer onstage during piece 1. The numbers in circles allow us to follow the sequence of the dancers' movement and their positions, and the small arrow shows the direction the dancer faces. The large arrow indicates the overall direction of the each dancer's movement, which occurs

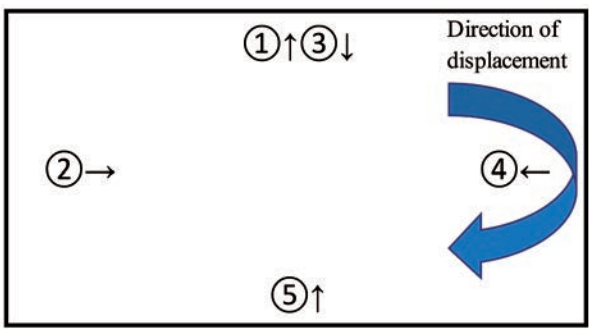

Figure 10. Diagram of Odaidai dance performance: order, direction they face, placement, and movement of the dancers. Created by author.

due to directional rotation during piece 1. The piece is performed multiple times, each time by a different dancer continuously on the same day. Piece 1 is performed in the early afternoon; in 2011 it was performed seven times continuously by seven young female dancers as prescribed.

The dance begins with a prayer at the first position (①) with the dancers facing the altar of the Honden, or main shrine, which is located outside the lines of figure 10, upper center. There, the dancers bow toward the altar and then dance toward the number ② position at the end of the sequence 7-4-4-5-5-5-5-4-4-4-6-6-6-6, each turning 90 degrees during the sequence and moving in a clockwise direction. At ②, they perform the same choreographical sequence, then again turn 90 degrees and move in a clockwise position from position ② to ⑤. At position ⑤ they perform the same sequence back to (①) but without the unit 6 at the end (i.e., 7-4-4-5-5-5-5-4-4-4). Changing directions and repeating choreographic sequences are important in this ceremony.

In Japanese, there are two words for dance: *mau* 舞う and *odoru* 踊る. The difference between these two words is related to the steps the dancers perform. *Mau* describes slow and calm movements, while *odoru* refers to jumping, active movements. This distinction can also be understood as whether one or both of the dancer's feet leave the ground at the same time. In *odoru*, during the jumping motion both feet are in the air. In *mau*, the movements are said to transform the medium (body of the dancer) into a ritual object that the divine spirits can inhabit.[17] Contemporary norms dictate that dancers should try to be more elegant, hence jumping has largely disappeared from similar ritual repertoires. Despite this, the Odaidai ceremony features a subtle hop where both feet momentarily leave the ground simultaneously soon after changing from one direction to another. Musically, changing direction is accompanied by the melody called *takane* 高音 in local terms. This typically means "higher octave." The *takane* melody is played every time the dancers change direction. It corresponds to choreographical unit 7. The sequence from unit 7 (see figure 9) is very important for the Odaidai ceremony. Furthermore, during this movement, the dancers shake the bells while bending slightly at the waist, lowering the bells and looking towards the floor. While normally this would be considered an unnatural movement because of its inelegance, it can have ritual connotations, such as the arrival of the divine spirit. Musical analysis supports this hypothesis. I have noted that the music of the Odaidai is based on motif 7 and the flutist plays an octave higher than during the other motifs when the dancers change direction. The importance of this unnatural physical movement is underscored by the equally unnatural accompanying tune in a higher octave.

Conclusion

Historically, upon the request of worshippers the Odaidai ceremony was dedicated to the goddess of Mt. Fuji. The dance performance of the Odaidai ceremony has developed both commercial character and religio-ritual meaning. Local worshippers still believe that the Odaidai ceremony continues to provide protection from the eruption of Mt. Fuji. Besides the dance, three additional short rites are also part of the Odaidai ceremony. However, those rites alone are not enough to appease the divine spirits. Both dance and music are equally important for ritual purposes. To that end, it can be assumed that the dancers' movements must also embody ritualistic functions and meaning, even if the oral and performative transmission about them are lost.

Odaidai dancers and musicians only transmit their dance orally. The music is comprised of a combination of a theme and its variations. The musical structure of

17 Matsuo, "Girei to Geinō," pp. 256–57.

the dance is also centered around fundamental motifs. The chief flutist plays subsidiary motifs in between the fixed motifs to fill sonic emptiness. Each motif in this group begins with different tunes and thus flutists can play the same motif without prearrangement. My deconstruction of the pieces indicate that Odaidai music and dance are highly systematized and designed in such a way that the musicians and dancers can communicate without the need of a director or notation.

No instrument can be played without dancers, and strict hierarchies exist between the dance and the music of the Odaidai ceremony. However, the music's role is not only an accompaniment to the dance. Both dance and music possess ritual techniques and purposes. A higher octave suggests the arrival of a deity. Even though ritual characteristics are not explained when the choreography is taught, the ritual techniques, like those indicating prayer, remain embedded in the movements and gestures. The master dancer continues to instill the importance of the movements and gestures as necessary for the pacification of the goddess of Mt. Fuji. Thus, despite the rise of *kagura* for entertainment purposes, its ritual meanings continue to live on through its practitioners.

Glossary

Bachi 撥 Sticks for drums
Bunraku 文楽 Marionette theater that began during the Edo period
Chigomai 稚児舞 Dance performed by youths
Daibyōshi 大拍子 A Japanese double-headed drum played with sticks on both sides, traditionally used in *kagura*
Emperor Daigo 醍醐天皇 (r. 897–930 CE)
Fuefukidashi 笛吹きだし Flute melody for the introduction
Gohei 御幣 A zig-zag pattern fastened to wooden sticks
Gohei no mai 御幣の舞 Sacred zig-zag paper dance
Haiden 拝殿 Worship hall of a Shinto shrine
Hana matsuri 花祭 Flower festival. A type of *kagura* practiced in Nagano 長野, Shizuoka 静岡, and Aichi 愛知 prefectures
Happō no mai 八方の舞 The dance of eight directions
Harae kotoba 祓詞 Ritualized texts for purification
Hayashi 囃子 Musical accompaniment
Hibuse no shinji 火伏せの神事 The precautionary rite of fire
Honden 本殿 Main hall of a Shinto shrine
Hōshachinsai 奉謝鎮祭 Another official name of the Odaidai ceremony
Imidake 忌竹 Bamboo to demarcate sacred places
Kabuki 歌舞伎 A form of Japanese traditional dance and drama that began at the beginning of the eighteenth century and developed during the Edo period
Kagura 神楽 Ritual entertainment during Shinto events
Kaguraden 神楽殿 Hall for *kagura* performances at Shinto shrines
Kamigakari kinshi rei 神懸り禁止令 Prohibitions against spirit possession
Kan'ami 観阿弥 (1333–1384). Actor, playwright, and theater director in a form of medieval theater known as *sarugaku* 猿楽. Founder of the Kanzeza 観世座 Company
Kawaguchi no chigo no mai 河口の稚児の舞 Official registered name of dance practices at Kawaguchi Asama Shrine
Kojiki 古事記 *The Records of Ancient Matters*, the earliest collection of myths in Japanese
Kokka Shintō 国家神道 State Shinto
Konohanasakuya Hime no Mikoto 木花開耶姫命 A character featured in a *Kojiki* myth. Considered as a deity of fire.
Mau 舞う To dance in slow and calm movements
Mikomai 巫女舞 Dance of the priestesses
Miyameguri no mai 宮巡りの舞 Dance for circling around the shrine
Naorai 直会 Feast after Shinto ceremony
Nihon sandai jitsuroku 日本三代実録 Chronicles of three reigns. Japanese imperial official history featuring the reigns of emperors Seiwa 清和天皇, Yozei 陽成天皇, and Kōkō 光孝天皇. Compiled in 901
Ninigi no Mikoto 瓊瓊杵命 A character featured in a *Kojiki* myth. A grandson of Amaterasu Ōmikami
Noh 能 A form of Japanese dance-drama
Ochigosan お稚児さん Child dancers
Odaidai お太々 An annual ceremony of Kawaguchi Asama Shrine
Ōdaiko 大太鼓 A large drum with double-nailed membranes
Odoru 踊る To dance while jumping; active movements
Ōgi no mai 扇の舞 Fan dance
Oichi'isan お市さん Appellation of priestess
Oichīsan オイチーサン Local appellation of girl dancers
Onnamai 女舞 A category of dance pieces characterized by a female character
Ōnusa 大幣 Priest's tool for purification
Oshi 御師 Low-ranking priests; officiants and tour guides who supported visiting pilgrims
Sakaki 榊 *Cleyera japonica*, considered to be a sacred tree

Sarugaku 猿楽 A form of Japanese medieval dance during the Heian 平安 to Muromachi 室町 periods; later split into Noh
Shide 紙垂 Zigzag white folded papers
Shihō gatame 四方固め Solidifying the four directions technique
Shikisanban 式三番 Series of three ritualistic pieces: *Okina* 翁, *Chichinojō* 父尉, and *Sanbasō* 三番叟
Shimenawa しめ縄 Sacred straw cords
Shinobue 篠笛 Bamboo flutes often used for Japanese traditional popular music
Shinshoku enbu kinshi rei 神職演舞禁止令 Prohibitions against dance performances for Shinto priests
Shitakata 下方 Local appellation for musical ensemble in Kawaguchi
Shōga 唱歌 Onomatopoeic song for learning melodies or rhythms
Shugendō 修験道 Mountain ascetism of Japan
Takane 高音 The basic melody of a flute for the music of the Odaidai dance in local terms
Tomo no Naosada 伴直真 A local priest of Kai Province, who had an oracle of the god of Mt. Fuji
Tonari gumi 隣組 Groups of neighbors
Torimonomai 採り物舞 Dances with ritual accessories
Tsurugi no mai 剣の舞 The sword dance
Ujiko 氏子 Parishioners of a Shinto shrine
Ujiko sōdai 氏子総代 Parishioner representative
Zeami 世阿弥 (1363–1443). Son of Kan'ami. Actor, director. A playwright who developed Noh performances

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