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EAST ASIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE REVIEW

National Agendas and Local Realities: Festive Material and Ritual Culture, Nationalism, and Modernity in the Chita Region of Japan

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Abstract

The reworking of religious space in modern Japan encompassed the reinvention of the spatial, material, and ritual culture of *matsuri* 祭り (festivals). After a period of relative official disfavor, festivals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were reinvigorated by changes in ritual process and spatial scope, as well as by shifts in the architecture and sculpture of *dashi* 山車 (wheeled festival floats). The incorporation of *matsuri* into broader discourses of national cultural identity was driven by the affective potential of their supposed cultural authenticity. This reinvention of festivity is evident in the Tokoname Matsuri of Tokoname City, Aichi Prefecture, where after the 1905 Russo-Japanese conflict several Edo-period shrine festivals were merged into a *shōkonsai* 招魂祭 (festival for the war dead). The spatial scope and ritual process, as well as the architecture and sculptural iconography, of the six *dashi* built for the new Tokoname Matsuri tied this regional city into national discourses of cultural authenticity, racial purity, and martial valor. The ideological resonance in prewar Japan of the Tokoname Matsuri and other festivals with nationalist imagery sprang from their indelibly local origins; *matsuri* were not controlled entirely from the top down, but rather were mediated at multiple levels.

The interplay between local and national agendas in the reworking of religious spaces and practices in modern Japan encompassed not only the making of new buildings for worship but also the reinvention of the spatial, material, and ritual culture of *matsuri* 祭り (Shintō shrine festivals). Many festivals throughout Japan share a culture of display embodied by the procession of heavily ornamented, wheeled floats referred to by terms such as *yama*, *yatai*, *danjiri*, *hoko*, *yamahoko*, and *kuruma* (figure 1). Although the soaring *yamahoko* floats of the Gion Festival in Kyoto are the most famous and venerable examples of mobile festival architecture in Japan, the area around the Tokugawa power base of Nagoya became an important center of festival float development during the Edo period (1600–1868). Influenced by festival traditions in Nagoya, *matsuri* on the Chita Peninsula in Aichi Prefecture are famous for elaborately sculpted, wheeled

festival floats called *dashi* (山車), more than one hundred of which appear in annual shrine and municipal festivals referred to colloquially as *dashimatsuri* (figure 2).

Figure 1. Miyamotoguruma, *dashi* of Asaiyama-gumi, Okkawa, Handa City, entering the grounds of Hachiman Shrine during the 2001 Okkawa Festival, a shrine festival in the Okkawa District, Handa City, Aichi Prefecture. Source: Author photo.



Figure 2. Handa City's thirty-one *dashi* lined up during the 2001 Handa *dashimatsuri*, a municipal festival in Handa City, Aichi Prefecture. Source: Author photo.



Although these vehicles are commonly seen as unchanging relics of Edo-period popular culture, spatial and ritual shifts in dashimatsuri, as well as changes in the architectural form and sculptural iconography of dashi, both reflected and influenced broader ideological and social transformations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The modern reinvention of dashimatsuri included the standardization of architectural form, shifts in sculptural iconography toward nationalist themes based on Japanese mythology (*Nihon shinwa*), and the intrusion of state agendas into the ritual process and spatial scope of local matsuri.

The shifting fortunes of dashimatsuri were inextricably bound up with Japan's late nineteenth-century encounter with modernity and the challenge of the expansionist Euro-North American powers. Despite the simplified view of rapid "modernization" that once permeated discussions of the socioeconomic and political changes of the Meiji period (1868–1912), Japan's self-identification and outside designation as a "non-Western" culture raised deeply contentious questions that still haunt popular and scholarly discourse today (Morris-Suzuki 1995). As in other modernizing nations, centralized industrialization and militarization necessitated administrative and juridical changes, as well as the ideological and affective mobilization of common citizens. The ritual, visual, and material transformation of Chita dashimatsuri in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries both mirrored and shaped these broader debates over cultural identity and the place of putatively "traditional" practices and material culture in modern life. The number, as well as the visual and ritual diversity, of shrine festivals declined under Meiji policies of fiscal austerity, ritual standardization, and shrine consolidation. Although late nineteenth-century ideologues decried the uncouth and wasteful aspects of matsuri offerings, such as dashi, festivals in general were reinvigorated by the early twentieth-century reexamination of "traditional" aesthetic and cultural practices, and the localized festive expression of popular nationalism.

This paper traces two intersecting axes of change in dashimatsuri. First, after a period of struggle against official suppression and relative local neglect, mobile festival architecture underwent a blossoming and resurgence in the Taishō and early Shōwa eras (1912–ca. 1945). Second, this blossoming coincided with and was closely related to a solidification of the symbols and meanings displayed in the mobile festival space. This reinvention included the construction, restoration, and embellishment of numerous dashi; ritual and organizational standardization to accord with State Shintō prescriptions; and the incorporation of popular nationalist iconography

into all aspects of the festival. I argue that these visual and performative changes reflected a fundamental reimagining of dashimatsuri by participants, organizers, and spectators. The ritual, iconographic, and architectural diversity of Chita dashimatsuri narrowed in the early twentieth century to performative and visual repertoires more attuned to the prevailing ethos of cultural nationalism. During the Taishō and early Shōwa periods, Chita festivals increasingly came to be imagined by participants and observers as markers of a national cultural identity rooted in notions of historical continuity, racial purity, and ethnocultural superiority.

This reinvention and incorporation into national narratives of festivity is evident in the numerous *shōkonsai* 招魂祭 (festivals for the war dead) that were founded during the early twentieth century. In the city of Tokoname, Aichi Prefecture, several Edo-period shrine festivals were merged into a larger municipal festival to venerate the casualties of the Russo-Japanese conflict. Six new dashi were constructed in Edo-period architectural styles and adorned with sculptures whose finish and iconography accorded with prevailing notions of Japanese cultural exceptionalism. The spatial scope, ritual process, and sculptural iconography of the new festival tied the small city of Tokoname into broader national discourses of cultural authenticity, racial purity, and martial valor.

In this revised form, festival ritual and material culture reflected and reinforced discourses of national cultural identity and Japanese exceptionalism. Like other efforts by the state to control local practices, the performative and ideological disciplining of dashimatsuri was not simply a top-down process but rather one that occurred at a variety of levels and in myriad ways (Gluck 1985; Ketelaar 1990). Local practices such as dashimatsuri were ideologically recast as part of a greater national imaginary that was itself constantly under construction. At the same time that official pronouncements and ceremonies drew from and evoked the vast iconographic and performative repertoire of folk belief and imagery to craft affectively and visually compelling enactments of ideology, so local practices fell under the discursive, visual, and performative sway of national ideology and state ritual (Thal 2005). Amid the crushing of local autonomy by governmental policies of consolidation and standardization, the early twentieth-century efflorescence of dashimatsuri testifies to both the resilience of local practices and the alacrity with which they were visually and performatively adapted to shifting official initiatives and the broader social and cultural context of nationalism.

***Kokka Shintō*: Disciplining the Rites and Sites of Religion**

The Meiji state's effort to regulate religious belief and practice through the creation of *Kokka Shintō* (State Shintō) profoundly affected the modern history of dashimatsuri. This effort involved the initial persecution and later cooptation of existing Buddhist sects to state agendas, as well as an equally persistent and thoroughgoing disciplining of approved “Shintō” doctrines and ritual procedures.¹

Drawing in part upon the intellectual heritage of Edo-period scholars, such as the nativist scholar Hirata Atsutane (1776–1843), Meiji officials portrayed Buddhism as a foreign, polluting influence that had perverted an originally pure “Japanese” mentality (Hardacre 1989, 16; Ketelaar 1990, 14–42, 46–54; Thal 2005, esp. 127–146). The powerful influence of nativist ideologues, especially followers of the Hirata school of Shintō, was evident in the implementation in 1868 of a policy to separate Shintō and Buddhism (*shinbutsu bunri*) through a series of separation edicts (*bunri rei*) issued by the Jingikan, or Office of Rites (Hardacre 1989, 29–31; Ketelaar 1990, 9, 88; Thal 2005). These orders decreed the removal of all Buddhist personnel from Shintō shrines, the exclusive fulfillment of Shintō ritual and administrative duties by Shintō priests, and bans on Buddhist names for Shintō *kami* [deities] and the presence of Buddhist statuary in Shintō shrines, even if used to represent a Shintō figure (Hardacre 1989, 27–28; Ketelaar 1990, 64–67; Thal 2005, 6–7). The enormity of this task in the face of the doctrinal, visual, ritual, and spatial interpenetration fostered by centuries of syncretic Shintō-Buddhist religious practice did not deter the initial efforts at enforcement; over the following two years enforcement of the separation edicts by nativist proponents to “destroy the Buddha, kill Sakyamuni” (*haibutsu kishaku*) led to the closing or destruction of over forty thousand temples and countless artifacts and the forced return to lay life of thousands of priests (Collcutt 1986). Although the Meiji government was careful to characterize particularly outrageous incidents as “private” actions rather than officially sanctioned policy, its unspoken support wavered only after a number of confrontational peasant uprisings in the early 1870s (Ketelaar 1990, 43–86).

The Meiji ideologues that directed the persecution of Buddhism in favor of State Shintō envisioned a return to the Unity of Rite and Rule (*saisei itchi*), a principle claimed in the promulgation of the Restoration to date to ancient times in Japan (Ketelaar 1990, 91–92). In 1870 Meiji officials instituted a ranked hierarchy of imperial and national Shintō shrines, official rituals for each of these levels, and grades for Shintō priests. In the first two years of the new

regime, the Ministry of Rites (Jingikan) appointed and trained “proselytizers” (*senkyōshi*) to present the official rendition of an all-encompassing “Great Teaching” (*taikyō*) to the public. The newly established Ministry of Doctrine (Kyōbusho) in 1872 replaced the *senkyōshi* with “doctrinal instructors” (*kyōdōshoku*) trained to educate the public about the *kokkyō*, or national doctrine (Ketelaar 1990, 96–99). These government propagandists made up the public face of the Great Promulgation Campaign (*taikyō senpu undō*) to restore a unified national creed reflective of the notion of the Unity of Rule and Doctrine (*seikyō itchi*), which persisted with varying forms of official support from 1870 to 1884. This only partially successful campaign strengthened public perception of the distinctions between Shintō and Buddhist doctrines and practices, while promoting an orderly shrine hierarchy and standardized notions of Shintō ritual.² As Sarah Thal notes in her study of the pilgrimage site of Mount Konpira in Shikoku, the incorporation of local shrines into a national administrative and ritual hierarchy was part of a broader initiative “to foster a sense of shrine-focused patriotism in people throughout Japan” (2005, 176). The official devaluation of Buddhism and regulation of Shintō ritual practices inadvertently set the stage for popular reengagement with dashimatsuri.

The alignment of Shintō with state agendas rather than private religious observation was formalized in the 1879 governmental decree of mandatory shrine affiliation for every Japanese citizen, based on civic duty rather than religious belief (Hardacre 1989, 83–84; Thal 2005, esp. 203–219). In the early 1880s, foreign pressure for guarantees of religious freedom and official concern over the espousal by some *kyōdōshoku* of sectarian teachings inimical to official ideology spurred the codification of the separation of religion and politics (*seikyō bunri*) (Picken 1994, 37; Thal 2005, 205–208). The official distinction made in 1882 between Shrine (*jinja*) and Sect (*kyōha*) Shintō. Shintō assigned to the thirteen officially recognized “new sects” of the latter all “religious” functions, such as Shintō funeral rites and moral or religious education (Fridell 1973, 2; Thal 2005, 203–219). This official distinction between the religious and civic functions of shrines set the stage for changes in dashimatsuri that included their cooptation into national ideological campaigns.

Many of the new national ceremonies, such as the commemoration of the coronation of the legendary Jimmu Tennō 神武天皇 (Emperor Jimmu, r. 660–585 BCE), had previously been observed by the imperial house, but had not hitherto been a part of popular consciousness.

Through the newly instituted *yōhaishiki* (“worship from afar ceremony”), citizens at any graded shrine could participate in these national ceremonies established by the new Meiji ritual calendar (Ketelaar 1990, 61; Thal 2005, 203–219). The State Shintō ritual calendar included approved versions of Shintō ritual invocations (*norito*) laced with particular pleas for the health and long reign of the emperor, as well as the continuity of the imperial house (Hardacre 1989, 71–72; Thal 2005, 205–211). The standardization of ritual subordinated local doctrines and practices to official ideological agendas.

Formally trained ritual officiants were needed to implement the State Shintō ritual calendar. In 1900 the Shintō priesthood was organized on a national level, with branches in each prefecture. Although priests at the publicly unsubsidized “ungraded shrines” (*mukakusha*) were not strictly bound by new regulations, their counterparts at graded shrines were compelled to undertake formal government training and to follow officially approved forms of ritual practice. With the assistance of central government funding, Shintō universities such as Kokugakuin and Kōgakkan turned out graduates with a level of education equal to that of their Buddhist counterparts (Hardacre 1989, 14–15). Since all priests holding at least a second-grade ranking were licensed to teach in public schools, they played a significant role in implementing the daily veneration of the imperial portrait, the reading of the Imperial Rescript on Education, and the promotion of official colonial and imperialist policies.

All Shintō shrines were declared national institutions in 1871, giving the state precedence over existing familial relationships in determining institutional control.³ The Ise Grand Shrines, site of the imperial cult of Amaterasu, were placed at the top of this hierarchy. By 1879, almost all shrines were classified as either “government shrines” (*kansha*), funded by the central government, or “civic shrines” (*minsha*), supported by public monies drawn from more local sources. A small but growing number of shrines fell into the category of “special shrines” (*bekakusha*), dedicated to the posthumous commemoration of the war dead and national heroes.⁴

The government regulation of shrine ranks and obligatory rituals trespassed most egregiously upon local autonomy in the implementation of a shrine merger program that reached its peak in the decade following the 1905 Russo-Japanese War (Fridell 1973). To minimize public spending on shrines and eliminate those seen as too humble to represent the civic aims of an emerging global power, the Meiji government instituted a policy of limiting each village to a

single shrine (*isson issha*) (Hardacre 1989, 98). Prefectural governments urged or compelled smaller, less financially stable shrines to be merged into larger ones. In this unequal exchange, the surviving institution received all proceeds from the sale of land, buildings, ritual implements, and festival equipment of the merged shrine. The *shintai* 神体 (literally, “god-body”), a sacred object representing the tutelary deity (*ujigami*) of the merged shrine was carried by parishioners to a new, and often humiliatingly subsidiary, location within the precincts of the larger shrine. Nationwide, over eighty-three thousand shrines were merged between 1905 and 1929, including up to 89 percent of shrines in Mie Prefecture (Fridell, 1973, 22; Hardacre 1989, 98). Ironically, this culling of shrines and festivals coincided with the Taishō-period renaissance in dashimatsuri.

Dashimatsuri and the Cultural Landscape of Modernity

The shrine merger policy coincided with changes in the urban cultural landscape that were inimical to dashi processions. Many of these changes were driven in large part by the Meiji government’s efforts to establish a modern national transportation and communication infrastructure. The telegraph lines that laced major urban thoroughfares in the Meiji and Taishō periods rendered many previously used festival routes impassable to dashi. In other areas, the construction of paved roads and railroad lines changed the routes of dashi festivals or destroyed the close connection between place and population base that had undergirded local sponsorship of festivals (Sakumi 1994, 261). The confluence between persistent, moralistic condemnations of profligate festival spending and modern agendas of industrial and infrastructure development effectively erased the concerns of local festival organizers from the agendas of state-sponsored infrastructure and urban planning projects in the Meiji period.

The consolidation of shrines eliminated many local festivals and modified or replaced diverse, local practices with standardized state rituals. As mentioned above, the deities of merged shrines were enshrined at the surviving shrine in a ritual procession that transferred the *shintai* of the *ujigami* to a subsidiary shrine within the precincts of the new institution. The annual festivals for such transferred *ujigami* rarely survived a merger. In fact, the governor of Mie Prefecture, the most successful by far in implementing the shrine merger policy, saw the elimination of festivals as socially desirable:

Shrine mergers are not only for the sake of the shrines, but are also exceedingly important for strengthening the solidarity of the towns and villages. That is to say it is because each village neighborhood [*aza*] performs its own separate shrine ceremonies that the feelings of the people are fragmented, which in turn affects the unity of self-governing bodies. (Fridell 1973, 52)

In the face of the Meiji consolidation of local governments into larger and more cost-effective administrative units, the diversity of *ujigami* and associated *matsuri* was perceived as regressive and potentially disruptive of social order.

The elimination of local festivals through shrine consolidation also played into discourses of “thrift and diligence” (*boshin*) promulgated in the Boshin Imperial Rescript of 1908. For example, a local official in Mie Prefecture admitted that “one reason the government promoted shrine mergers was to reduce the number of local festivals. Repeated festivals . . . took the people from their jobs and diverted much money to amusements and entertainment” (Fridell 1973, 48). These comments suggest that official agendas of administrative consolidation and cost reduction dovetailed with the state’s ideological push to suppress competing, local claims unconnected to nationalistic agendas. The confluence between ideological principles and administrative efficiency created a potent combination for altering the sculptural iconography and ritual process of modern festivals.

Some major festivals of the Edo period persisted in modified form. In the waning days of the Tokugawa bakufu, the Tenka Matsuri of Edo finally withered—not because of the shogunal proscriptions of the early 1840s, but because of the combination of financial instability and popular antipathy toward the Tokugawa, who in their political senescence were still the titular sponsors of Edo’s preeminent *matsuri* (Sakumi 1994, 260). Both the Kanda Matsuri and the Sannō Matsuri were revived in 1877 with new, taller *dashi* styles unconstrained by the need to pass under the roofed gates of Edo castle. However, with the exception of a massive procession of over one hundred *dashi* to celebrate the promulgation of the Meiji constitution in 1889, the two festivals declined markedly in the last two decades of the nineteenth century (Sakumi 1994, 261–262). In the first decade of the twentieth century, the introduction of telegraph lines interfered with the procession of tall *dashi*, and the construction of the streetcar system further narrowed festive access to the urban streets (Sakumi 1994, 261). With the introduction to both festivals in 1909 of *mikoshi* [palanquin used to transport Shintō kami], *dashi* were sold to outlying towns or simply disassembled and placed in storage. American firebombing in the final

year of the Second World War destroyed almost all of the remaining dashi in Tokyo. Most residents of modern Tokyo assume that their festivals have always been characterized by the use of *mikoshi*, but the sudden disappearance of dashi from the festivals of the capital underlines the delicate balance of public support, official approval, and urban infrastructure needed to support their use.

Although no systematic nationwide study of the number of dashi appearing in annual celebrations in the early years of Meiji exists, municipal and regional bans on dashi as well as a broader array of prohibitions against excessive festival expenditures suggest that dashimatsuri did not fare well during this time. Bans on dashimatsuri and the regulation of festivity and urban space in the early decades of the new regime reflected Meiji policies of fiscal restraint and discouragement of local practices not attuned to state agendas.

However, state regulation of festivals also reflected both official fear of the potentially subversive aspects of popular festivity and a disapproval of the carnivalesque that drew upon the language of Edo-period condemnations of matsuri waste and moral debauchery. The autonomy of the festive realm, exemplified in the frenzied, uncontrollable *ee ja nai ka* (typically translated as “anything goes”) celebrations that showcased the declining legitimacy of the Tokugawa bakufu in the mid-nineteenth century, was frighteningly clear to both shogunal and Restoration leaders. The Meiji regulation of festivity directly attacked the subversive potential of dashimatsuri. Under the Tokugawa legal code, festival transgressions were treated as “outside the law” (*hōgai*), or subject to settlement by negotiation between the parties involved, rather than adjudication by government officials (Takeuchi 1994, 385).

This conceptual and juridical distinction between the regulated realm of ordinary society and the more permissive, temporary milieu of the festival evokes familiar conceptions of the carnivalesque in European festivals. The Bakhtinian notion of the carnivalesque implies a liminal space for the staging of behaviors and voicing of thoughts at odds with officially decreed visions of reality (Bakhtin 1984, 196–277). The Meiji disciplining of both Buddhism and Shintō entailed the “structuring of popular festivals and practices after (or simultaneous to) the removal of “inappropriate” or “false” elements (Ketelaar 1990, 52). James Ketelaar points out the broad range of “irregular” activities and observances banned by the early Meiji state:

Catalpa bow diviners [*azusa miko*], mediums [*ichiko*], exorcists [*tsuki gitō*], the removal of fox spirits [*kitsune sage*], divination [*tama uranai*], and All Souls' Day [Urabon] were variously and collectively banned in the early Meiji era under threats of fines and/or punishments. In addition to Shūgendō, the more radical and politically sensitive Fujū Fuse sect was also banned. These “religious” targets were, however, frequently included in the *same* lists issued by various government offices that banned gambling, prostitution, drama shows, carnivals, dramatic lampoons [*kyōgen*], blind balladeers [*biwa hōshi*], and blind women minstrels [*goze*]. In other words, within the same orders banning the more blatantly “religious” or “Buddhist” practices such as priestly begging or pilgrimages based on the Sixty-Six Divisions of the Lotus Sutra, we also find, at both the local and the national level, bannings of public nudity, mixed bathing, tattoos, erotic literature [*shunga*], amateur sumō wrestling, and stand-up comics. (1990, 51)

Meiji bans on dashi were part of this local and national effort to regulate the carnivalesque world of popular festivity. Local officials in a number of districts in Kobe City, Hyōgo Prefecture, issued bans on dashi, but the language of the decrees does not indicate whether they were locally generated or a response to the periodic admonitions from the central government against extravagance in festival expenditures (Ketelaar 1990, 50–54, 61–63). In Kobe's Nishi District, local magistrates in 1907 forbade the construction or use of *danjiri* だんじり (the local term for wheeled festival floats). Like many other districts faced with the same dilemma, the Nishi group sold its float to a *kumi* [sponsoring group or association] in an area in which *danjiri* were legal. With the lifting of the ban in 1923, the *chikuyakuinkai* 地区役委員会 (district council) swiftly commissioned a new *danjiri* (Honda 1999, 7). The *murayakuba* (village council) of nearby Chaya District also outlawed *danjiri* during the same period. These local bans may have been a response to the Meiji government's decree of austerity measures in the aftermath of the ruinously expensive Russo-Japanese War, won by Japan but unrewarded by the expected huge indemnity. Meiji official condemnation of wasteful festival expenditures resonated with regional officials searching for ways to direct local funds toward projects mandated by the central government (Fridell 1973, 47).

Because a central if usually unspoken Meiji governmental aim in shrine consolidation was the elimination of excessive spending on local festivals, there is no doubt that dashi, as the most expensive of all festival equipment, were viewed negatively by official opponents of “extravagance.” Ironically, the shrine merger policy indirectly enabled the sponsorship of dashi by shrines bolstered by the added resources and parishioners of merged shrines. Some shrines

were able to acquire dashi for the first time because bans in nearby areas made used vehicles widely available at cheap rates. Because possession of a dashi visibly signaled the financial health of the sponsoring shrine, making it less likely to be designated for elimination, it is also possible that dashi were seen by some buyers as an investment in institutional survival. Because the early twentieth-century boom in dashi construction coincided with the end of the most vigorous enforcement of the shrine merger policy, the increased financial viability of the surviving shrines may have made dashi sponsorship more feasible. In some cases, consolidation contributed to the sponsorship of multiple dashi by a single shrine, as the dashi of merged shrines became the property of the surviving shrine.

In spite of the disheartening example of the Tenka Matsuri, many dashimatsuri flourished even in changed physical environments. In Kyoto, telegraph and later telephone and electric lines were raised for the passage of the towering *yamahoko* of the Gion Festival. Some dashimatsuri changed their routes to avoid telegraph lines, or simply propped them up to allow the dashi to pass underneath. In the Chita area, the high-ranking *kumi* members riding atop the *uwayama* [literally, “upper mountain,” the central superstructure topped by a roofed stage] were joined by members equipped with forked poles used to raise telegraph lines to allow the dashi to pass. Although the dashi of the Tenka Matsuri survive today only in the festivals of the suburban towns that acquired them from their original metropolitan sponsors in the early twentieth century, during the Taishō period (1912–26) dashi resurfaced in many areas where they had been banned.

The modern resurgence of dashimatsuri stemmed from their rediscovery as practices consonant with the cultural nationalism of imperial Japan. Because Chita dashimatsuri flourished in the Taishō and early Shōwa periods, a material, ritual, and iconographic analysis of Chita dashi provides a fascinating glimpse of the varied ways in which local festival sponsors and participants grappled with changing official agendas and shifting social conditions in modern Japan.

National Agendas and Local Realities: Chita Dashimatsuri, 1868–1945

In part because of its proximity to the cities of Nagoya and Inuyama, Edo-period centers of dashi development, the Chita Peninsula in the Meiji period was home to a multitude of dashi, as well as many skilled dashi builders and sculptors. The material legacy of the late-Edo dashi

boom, the concentration of dashi builders and *horishi* 彫師 (architectural sculptors), and the continuing importance of dashimatsuri sponsorship for those seeking social capital assured dashi a prominent place in Chita festivity during the changes of Meiji and Taishō. However, in part because Chita dashimatsuri were subject to the same national ideological and regulatory environment described above, the early Meiji period witnessed a dramatic drop in the construction of new dashi on the peninsula. During the Taishō and early Shōwa periods, the Chita renaissance in dashimatsuri exemplified the rehabilitation and reincorporation of festivals into the nationalist ethos of the Meiji state.

The 1872 merger of Owari and Mikawa domains into Aichi Prefecture indirectly influenced the development of dashimatsuri. The Meiji policy of administrative centralization reduced the number of separate villages in Chita-gun to one-third of their number during the Edo period (Handa Shishi Hensan Inkaei 1984, 166). As in other areas of Japan, this administrative rationalization resulted in the elimination of some matsuri. Because the Meiji policies of classification, registration, and consolidation affected all shrines, few dashimatsuri escaped untouched by central government regulation.

The Meiji tightening of control over local festivals and their potentially carnivalesque features often stimulated local *dashigumi* 山車組 (dashi sponsoring group) to rewrite group rules for their *wakamonogumi* 若者組 (youth associations). In October of 1869 the leaders of the two *dashigumi* of Yanabe Village in Chita were presented by the Shintō priest of Hachiman Shrine with the Meiji government's proclamation of the reestablishment of ancient rites and the need to follow the principle of *saisei itchi* 再生一 (Reunification of Rites and Rule) (Handa Shishi Hensan Inkaei 1984, 166). Because the *wakamonogumi* of the two Yanabe *dashigumi* had engaged in protracted brawls at the festival the year before, the village elders were considering strict enforcement of the Owari domain's ban on *wakamonogumi* participation in the annual shrine festival. Shortly after receiving notification of the new Ministry of Rites's jurisdiction over shrine rites and festivals, the local officials sent out a seventeen-point directive for *wakamonogumi* members that not only stipulated in detail their financial duties and other responsibilities during festivals but also echoed the Meiji official exhortations to ethical behavior centered upon loyalty and filial piety.

This example of local interpretation of Meiji official decrees shows the complex interaction between central government and regional officials. On the one hand, the leaders of local festivals lost considerable autonomy under the regulatory gaze of state officials. However, in the context of preexisting conflict between the two Yanabe *dashigumi*, as well as intragroup, intergenerational tension, it is also apparent that local shrine officials and high-ranking *kumi* members often turned official directives to their own advantage to resolve ongoing conflicts in their favor.

In a similar vein, in 1892, the Naka group of Yanabe Village issued a listing of responsibilities and annual membership fees for the three age grades in the group. More significantly, the Nakagumi elders proposed selection from the upper half of the district's richest families of an overall group leader, to be called the *yamamoto* 山本 (Handa Shishi Hensan Iinkai 1984, 42). The organizational duties and fiscal responsibilities of the *yamamoto* listed in this decree can be seen as a strategic attempt by *kumi* leaders to codify class privileges that were no longer accepted by the younger and poorer dashimatsuri participants. By defining in detail the *yamamoto*'s financial and ritual responsibilities, and limiting the pool for this position to members of the richer families in the district, this document hints at class tensions and the perceived need by prevailing *kumi* leaders to protect their positions of local power. In short, the Meiji regulation of popular festivity cannot be seen simply as a conflict between the goals of central bureaucrats and regional participants in matsuri. Power struggles at the local level were an endemic part of village and urban neighborhood social life, and members of these neighborhood groups were wont to ignore regulations they saw as inimical to their existing prerogatives, while incorporating those elements that advanced their interests.

The interplay between local and national ideologies and policies in the Meiji period through the first decades of the twentieth century occurred within the context of rapid economic development Chita that exemplified the Meiji official slogan of *fukoku kyōhei* 富国強兵 (“enrich the country, strengthen the military”). The 1880 book *Chitagun chishiryaku* 知多郡地誌略 (Geographical outline of Chita-gun) vividly describes the sake and vinegar breweries of Handa, the famed *shibori* textiles of Arimatsu, the venerable kilns producing *Tokoname-yaki* pottery, and the bustling seashore of Ōno Village, whose coastal waters were renowned for their restorative powers. The book goes on to describe the rich peasant and merchant elites of these

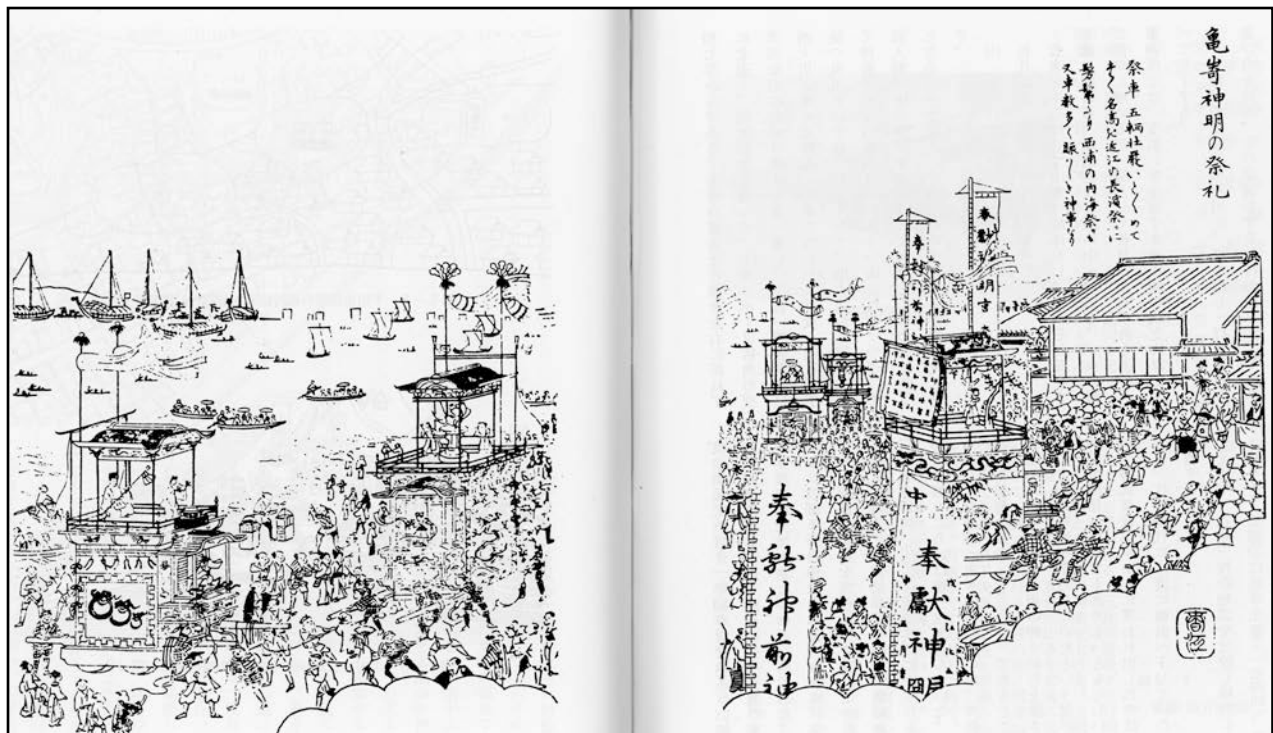
towns as progressive and diligent (Fukuoka 1991, 174–177). The ceramic kilns; sake, vinegar, and shōyu breweries; and textile workshops were a legacy of Chita's Edo prosperity, while the consolidation of the textile and shipping industries, the diversification of manufacturing, and the rise of banking interests were part of the Meiji economic development of the region. The Nippon Yūsen mail steamer line, formed in 1882 by the amalgamation of the Mitsubishi line and an older Chita company, served the Tokyo-to-Handa route (Fukuoka 1991, 186). These activities to promote trade and manufacturing by local actors were helped by the Meiji government's completion of a rail line from Shinbashi to Yokohama in 1872, and from Osaka to Kobe in 1874. The latter line set the stage for the construction of regional trunk lines such as the one from Nagoya to Handa City in 1886 (Fukuoka 1991, 178, 180). The Edo-period legacy of protoindustrialization, along with state agendas of connecting and making accessible all areas of the archipelago, positioned the Chita region to take full advantage of the new emphasis on manufacturing and trade. Although the continually increasing scale of manufacturing in the area eroded local control of the shipping and textiles industries, the wealth created by Chita's industrial and business development drove the construction or renovation of numerous dashi.⁵

In part because of this economic development, dashi became an even more prominent focus of Chita festivals, as local industrialists followed a familiar path to attaining social legitimacy through sponsorship of festivals. The close connections between the economic elite of new industrialists and the Handa efflorescence of dashimatsuri can be seen in the Oguri family of Handa City. The Oguri family owned successful sake and shōyu breweries, but the second-generation Oguri Tomijirō started several banks in Handa in the early 1880s, as well as a clock factory and a number of other new ventures after the Russo-Japanese War (Fukuoka 1991, 187–188). The Oguri family contributed significantly to the building of the current Shukukyūsha dashi of Shimohanda's Naka-gumi in 1914, and later generations of the family have maintained their dashimatsuri involvement through the present day.

Economic prosperity facilitated the modern reinvention and proliferation of Chita dashimatsuri; although about half of extant Chita dashi were built during the early nineteenth century, the vast majority of the remainder were constructed in the early twentieth century. During this period some Chita towns introduced dashi to their annual festivals for the first time by acquiring Edo-period floats from other areas. In addition, many older Chita dashi were

embellished with new or restored sculptural ensembles, *maku* 幕 (embroidered tapestries), and *karakuri ningyō* からくり人形 (mechanical puppets). The ritual process of Chita dashimatsuri was also standardized and codified in response to the Meiji government's promotion of State Shintō. The material culture and ritual process of contemporary dashimatsuri were formed in the context of modern nationalism and industrialization, rather than in the idealized world of Edo communal village life that remains an appealing fantasy to contemporary Japanese consumers of culture.

Figure 3. Woodblock-printed depiction of the Shiohi Matsuri during the late Edo period from the 1841 *Owari meisho zue*, an illustrated guidebook to significant attractions in the Owari area. Source: Handashi Kyōiku Inkai (1984, 482–483).



The Rebuilding of the Seiryūsha

The five magnificent dashi that appear in the Shiohi Matsuri 潮干祭り (“Ebb Tide Festival”) of Kamezaki District have long made it the preeminent dashimatsuri on the Chita Peninsula (figure 3). The Meiji and Taishō periods saw Kamezaki flourish economically, further

fueling local sponsorship of the Shiohi Matsuri. One indicator of this economic efflorescence was the decision to build a new dashi by the Ishibashi group, one of the five Kamezaki *dashigumi*. The economic elite of Ishibashi-gumi decided in early Meiji to commission an entirely new Seiryūsha 清瀧車 (Blue Dragon Vehicle) to replace the relatively small, unlacquered one built originally in 1815. After commissioning a new dashi in 1891, the 1815 float passed first to Shimohanda, then to Sunago-gumi of Kyōwa District, and finally to Taketoyo-chō's Ichihara group. The heavily lacquered components of an even earlier Ishibashi-gumi dashi dating to the 1750s are now held by the Shinsuma group of Hekinan City, though they have not been assembled for the festival in many years. The contrast between the highly lacquered and polychromatic components of the mid-eighteenth-century dashi and the unfinished aesthetic of its early nineteenth-century successor typified a late-Edo aesthetic transition in Chita dashi sculpture. The architectural details and sculptural iconography of the 1891 Seiryūsha embody the ideological and cultural complexity of Japan's encounter with modernity.

Figure 4. The Seiryūsha, dashi of Ishibashi-gumi, Kamezaki, Handa City, during *hikioroshi* (“pulling down to the shore”) at the Shiohi Matsuri in May 2001. Source: Author photo.



Although the Seiryūsha is most often seen today as an example of the preservation of Edo-period material culture, its design included many novel aesthetic and technical features (figure 4). The basic design incorporated most of the architectural elements of the Chita style, but with modern variations on traditional themes (figure 5). For example, despite the familiar overall profile of the two doubly-curved *karahafu* roofs, the joinery of the chassis differs from that of other Chita dashi. Almost all Chita-style dashi feature one to three prominent through tenons projecting laterally at each corner of the chassis. However, the sides of the new Seiryūsha were unbroken by these projections (figures 4 and 5). The connection with the transverse member was marked on the longitudinal member with an ornate metalwork cover (figure 6). The longitudinal and lateral members were now fastened internally with threaded steel rods, rather than wedged tenons and complex joinery. The metalwork cover seen today as traditional was, in the Meiji period, a novel decorative component that distinguished the Seiryūsha from Chita-style dashi of the Edo period. This streamlined design made the Seiryūsha easier to maneuver through the narrow streets of Kamezaki, a perennial challenge for the crew members who competed to negotiate turns on newly paved roads at increasingly high speeds.

The most visually complex and historically suggestive aspect of the new Seiryūsha was its sculptural ensemble, which was built up intermittently over three decades spanning the late Meiji through early Shōwa periods. The development of the sculptural program illustrates stylistic and iconographic trends over three decades, as well as the reuse of sculptures in different dashi. Since it took three decades for the Seiryūsha's sculptural ensemble to be completed, the *kumi* reused earlier sculptures, and paraded at times without all of the standard niches filled. For example, the current *oniita* 鬼板 (ridge beam end sculpture) of a chrysanthemum motif with the gold letters for “blue dragon” (*seiryū*) was executed in 1923 by the Handa sculptor Niimi Tsunejirō (1876–1956), also known by his “art name” of Horitsune I. However, the Ishibashi group still has in storage the sculpture that preceded Horitsune's work, a depiction of a phoenix by Segawa Jisuke Shigemitsu (1819–88). Shigemitsu was the son of Segawa Jisuke Shigesada (1781-early 19th century), a rival in the unlacquered wood style to the prolific Tatekawa Washirō Tomimasa, founder of the Tatekawa sculptural atelier that flourished in the Edo period (Takai 1996, 20). This sculpture was removed from the 1815 Seiryūsha sold by Ishibashi-gumi in 1891

to Minami-gumi of Shimohanda District in Handa City, and installed on the Meiji Seiryūsha until the completion of the sculptural program by Horitsune in 1923.

Figure 5. Front elevation (upper left), side elevation (upper right), and plans (lower) of the Seiryūsha. Source: Handashi Kyōiku Inkai (1984, 109–111).

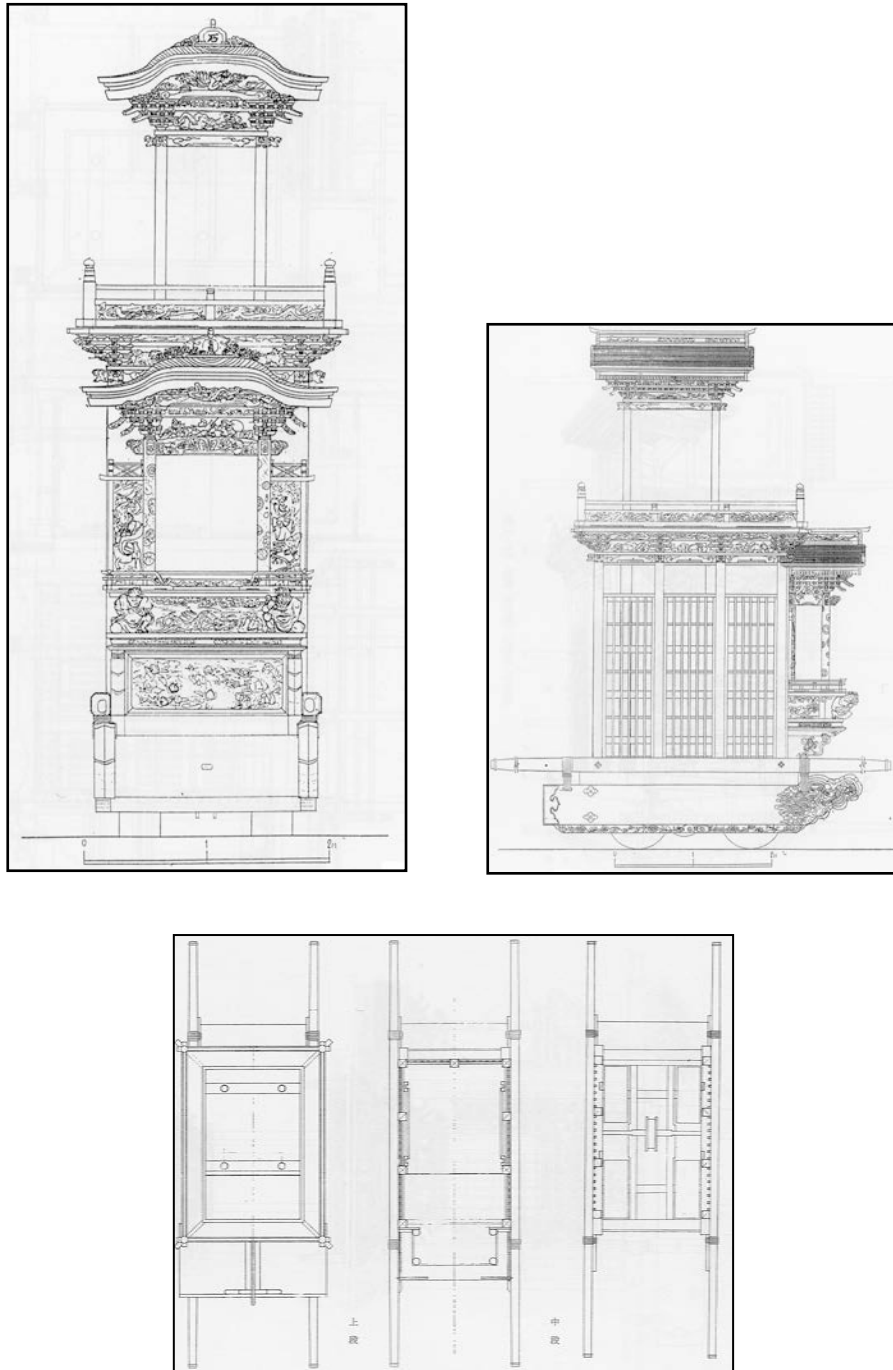


Figure 6. *Kibana* of Seiryūsha (left) and Miyamotoguruma (right). Note nail covers on left and protruding tenons on right. Source: Author photos.



Current Ishibashi-gumi members say that the completion of new sculptures took decades because no suitably skilled artisan could be found. This is an intriguing claim in light of the well-known travails of wood sculptors in the Meiji period. However, it is highly unlikely that the scarcity of skilled artisans delayed the completion of the entire ensemble for thirty years, especially in light of the thousands of sculptures completed on the Chita Peninsula during those years, many by Niimi Tsunejirō, who made most of the current sculptures of the Seiryūsha in 1923. It is possible that Ishibashi-gumi simply could not afford to commission a complete sculptural ensemble at one time, and so reused earlier sculptures until funds became available to further embellish the dashi.

This process of adaptive reuse of dashi often extended through multiple owners. The 1815 Seiryūsha, renamed Goōsha 護王車 (August King Car) and used for a decade before its Shimohanda owners commissioned a new dashi in 1901, was then sold to Kyōwa District's Sunago-gumi, where it was renamed Hakusansha 白山車 (White Mountain Car). When Sunago-gumi commissioned a new dashi in 1914, the Hakusansha lay disassembled in Sunago-gumi's storehouse until 1929, when it was sold to Ichihara-gumi of Taketoyo-chō and rechristened Agataguruma.

However, Sunago-gumi kept and reused some of the Edo-period sculptures from the original 1815 Seiryūsha, including the *gegyo* 下魚 (gable sculpture) of a dragon by Segawa Jisuke Shigemitsu (1819–88) that adorns Sunago-gumi's current dashi, the Hakusansha (figure 7). The snarling visage and latent energy of the coiled, writhing body of Segawa's dragon stand out next to the early Taishō-period works by Niimi Tsunejirō.

Figure 7. *Gegyo* sculpture of a dragon on Hakusansha, dashi of Sunago-gumi, Kyōwa, Handa City. Originally made in the mid-nineteenth century for the 1815 Seiryūsha of Ishibashi-gumi, Kamezaki, Handa City. Unlacquered *keyaki* wood. Segawa Jisuke Shigemitsu (1819–88). Source: Handa Shishi Hensan Iinkai (1995, 111).



The reuse and renaming of dashi, along with the combining of old and new parts, suggests that they functioned at the local level as a sort of cultural capital that followed shifting patterns of wealth and consumption. Kamezaki was the wealthiest town on the Chita Peninsula when Ishibashi-gumi sold the Seiryūsha to Shimohanda in 1891. Shimohanda, home of the Oguri family and, at the turn of the century, one of the wealthiest villages on the Chita Peninsula, had long supported a *dashigumi*, but during the Taishō period it witnessed the formation of three more *dashigumi* with new or substantially renovated dashi. The 1901 sale of the 1815 Seiryūsha to Kyōwa Village marked a transfer from a coastal village economically powered by fishing, shipping, and manufacturing to an inland town whose wealth was based upon agriculture. The final transfer to Taketoyo-chō in 1929 marked the expansion of dashi groups in this town in the decades after the economic boom caused by the opening of Taketoyo port in 1899 (Fukuoka 1991, 193–196).

The extant sculptures of the Seiryūsha show the work of diverse sculptors and ateliers. In 1891, Hayase Chōbei VIII (Horichō VIII), the adopted son of the noted Hayase Chōbei VII of Nagoya, carved the original *kibana* 木鼻 (carved beam ends) of the *hiradaiwa* 平台輪 (longitudinal beams) and the *mochiokuri* 持送 (corbels) supporting the main sculptural ensemble, a three-sided work referred to as the *danbako* 壇箱. The *kibana* are carved into the shape of a *baku* 獺, a Chinese-derived imaginary creature with inset metal eyes, while the *mochiokuri* are carved with an interlocking wave pattern (figure 6). In 1906, a year after Japan's

victory over Russia, Hayase's apprentice Itō Matsujirō Norimitsu carved the paired *wakishōji* 脇障子 (sculptural screens flanking the front stage of the dashi) images of Yamatotakeru and Susanō no mikoto (figure 8), legendary figures central to the nationalist ideology expressed in the Meiji public school curricular focus upon themes from the first imperial histories, the *Kojiki* 古事記 (Record of ancient matters, 712 CE) and *Nihonshoki* 日本書紀 (Chronicles of Japan, 720 CE). As Kenneth Ruoff has shown in his study of the use of nationalistic imagery leading up to the celebration of the Japanese imperial line's purportedly unbroken twenty-six hundredth anniversary in 1940, Yamatotakeru was one of several mythical figures drawn from these sources seen as redolent of the "cult of the pioneer" that glorified and promoted Japanese colonial expansion in the late Meiji through prewar periods (Ruoff 2010, 154). The dynamically posed figures are linked by the sword *kusanagi* (grass mower), with which Susanō kills a dragon and Yamatotakeru executes a human foe. The climactic moment of triumph shown in both images was calculated to inspire bellicose sentiments in viewers.

Figure 8. The *wakishōji* sculptures of the Seiryūsha: Yamatotakeru (left) and Susanō no mikoto (right). *Keyaki* wood, 1906. Itō Matsujirō Norimitsu (active early twentieth century). Source: Author photos.



The frontal *danbako* and *kekomi* 蹴込 sculptures were executed in 1891 by Takenouchi Hisakazu (1857–1916), the first professor of sculpture at the Tōkyō Bijutsu Gakkō (Tokyo Institute of Fine Arts) and a key figure in the revival of Edo-period wood sculptural techniques. In standard architectural parlance, the term *kekomi* refers to a stair riser beneath an overhanging tread, much like the relationship between the large overhanging *danbako* ensemble and the flat openwork panel beneath it. The *kekomi* theme of *botan ni hashi* (bridge amid peonies) contrasts an upper border of idealized cloud patterns and a fragment of an arched bridge with a detailed and highly realistic depiction of peonies (figure 9). In the main *danbako* sculpture, a more complex version of the upper cloud pattern overhangs a snarling dragon riding on frothing waves (figure 10). The rediscovery of the Chinese-derived imagery of dragons and peonies, as well as the emergence of themes drawn from the eighth-century *Nihonshoki* and *Kojiki* reflects a broader mid-Meiji reconsideration of indigenous and Confucian sources of cultural inspiration, in contrast to the early-Meiji focus by progressive artists and architects upon contemporary Western techniques and imagery.

The front corners of the *danbako* are supported by two striking sculptures, usually referred to collectively as Fūjinraijin 風神雷神 (Gods of Wind and Thunder), which flank the central dragon and recall in scale and visual impact the early nineteenth-century sculptures of Rikijin 力神 (Gods of Strength) by the prolific dashi builder and sculptor Tatekawa Washirō Tomimasa. Takeuchi is said to have based his sculptures upon the thirteenth-century Fūjin and Raijin sculptures by the studio of Tankei (1173–1256 CE) in Kyoto’s Sanjūsangendō (figure 11). A comparison of the Takeuchi work with its Tatekawa- and Kamakura-period predecessors speaks to Takeuchi’s role as a modern sculptor reworking overlapping notions of “tradition” as he tried to create an indigenous sculptural style appropriate to modern times.

As a student of ancient sculpture, Takeuchi was certainly familiar with the Sanjūsangendō images. However, the iconographic references, facial expressions, and hair quality of the older images have been recombined in Takeuchi’s work. The most obvious differences lie in the construction and finish of the figures. The Sanjūsangendō sculptures were made using *yosegi-zukuri* 寄せ木作り (joined-woodblock construction), with layers of lacquer, gold leaf, and pigment, while the Takeuchi and Tatekawa works share the massive, *ichiboku-*

Figure 9. The *kekomi* sculpture of the Seiryūsha, showing the theme *Botan ni hashi* (bridge amid peonies). *Keyaki* wood, Taishō period, 1913. Takeuchi Kyūichi (Hisakazu, 1857–1916). Source: Author photo.



Figure 10. The *danbako* of the Seiryūsha, showing Fūjin 風神 (God of Wind) (left) and Raijin 雷神 (God of Thunder) (right), with a flanking cloud motif and dragon. The paired figures are often referred to collectively as Fūjinraijin 風神雷神. *Keyaki* wood, Taishō period, 1913. Takeuchi Kyūichi (Hisakazu, 1857–1916). Source: Author photo.



Figure 11. Fūjin 風神 (God of Wind) (left) and Raijin 雷神 (God of Thunder) (right) on the altar of Sanjūsangendō, Kyōto. Wood with lacquer, gold leaf, paint, and inlaid eyes, thirteenth century. Source: Mason (2005, 196).



zukuri (single-woodblock construction) method of construction, with a *shirakibori* 白木彫り (unlacquered wood) finish. Although the Rikijin do not hold any implements, their crouching stance and the treatment of their lower garments resemble those of Takeuchi's Fūjinraijin. An overall examination of the three figures suggests that Takeuchi's work attempts to synthesize aspects of the two earlier sculptural styles. His sculptures lack the strikingly realistic detail of the Kamakura-period figures, but shy away as well from the exaggerated corpulence and stylized, rounded protrusions of the early Tatekawa technique known as *marubori* 丸彫り (round carving). These formal cues suggest that Takeuchi was well aware of these two traditions; his work responded to both the plasticity of so-called "Kamakura realism," and the striking visual power of the unlacquered *shirakibori* style popularized by the Tatekawa atelier in the Edo period.

These formal relationships should be analyzed within the context of Takeuchi's role as a sculptor and public intellectual in late Meiji Japan. Two years before his work on the Seiryūsha, Takeuchi had been appointed professor of sculpture at the Tōkyō Bijutsu Gakkō by Okakura Kakuzō (1862–1913) as part of Kakuzō's untiring promotion of supposedly indigenous sources of artistic and cultural inspiration. Granted the highest official rank of *Teishitsu gigei'in* 帝室技

芸員 (Imperial Household Artist), fifth degree, by the Meiji government, Takeuchi was famous throughout Japan as an important figure in the revival of “traditional” wood sculpture. Trained as an ivory carver before switching to wood, reputedly after a life-changing encounter with the Heian- and Kamakura-period sculptures in Nara temples, Takeuchi shared his teaching duties at the Bijutsu Gakkō with Takamura Kō’un (1852–1934), father of the noted modernist sculptor and writer Takamura Kōtarō (1883–1956) and a specialist in Buddhist sculpture (Guth 2004, 163).

The Bijutsu Gakkō led the late nineteenth-century elite reconsideration of the early-Meiji, government-sponsored experimentation with Western oil painting, sculpture, and other forms of artistic expression (Rimer 1987). Among the most well-known promoters of Japanese art was Okakura Kakuzō, director of the Bijutsu Gakkō from its 1889 founding until 1898, chief curator of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts’ Japanese collection, and writer of numerous books explaining Japanese culture and arts to Western, especially North American, audiences. Okakura and his former teacher Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) promoted the Bijutsu Gakkō as an institution for the exploration and elucidation of “national themes, forms, and styles” in step with the prevailing Hegelian notion of the “spirit of the age.”⁶ In general terms, Fenollosa and Okakura advocated the depiction of familiar “Eastern” and particularly Japanese themes using such “Western” techniques as chiaroscuro and single-point perspective in painting, and fully three-dimensional “realism” in sculpture (Conant 1995).

At the School of Fine Arts, Takeuchi and Ishikawa Kōmei (1852–1913), a specialist in ivory sculpture, pursued the revival of premodern motifs, materials, and techniques more persistently than Takamura. Both Takamura and Takeuchi completed commissions for Shintō festival offerings. Takamura executed at least one heavily ornamented *mikoshi*, while Takeuchi completed a number of dashi sculptures, including the Fūjinraijin sculpture mentioned above. The borrowing of Takeuchi’s Fūjinraijin sculptures from both canonical Kamakura and late Edo-period dashi sculptural modes reflects the contemporary search for a syncretic aesthetic approach that preserved the conceit of cultural authenticity embodied in the Meiji catchphrase *wakon yōsai* 和魂洋才 (“Japanese spirit and Western techniques”) (Bryson 2003; Guth 2004).

Some of Takeuchi’s other extant works represent themes important in ongoing debates over national destiny and cultural identity using techniques of visual representation that appealed

to modern viewers familiar with Sestern sculptural modes. For the Third National Exhibition of 1890, Takeuchi carved a wood statue of Jimmu Tennō, the mythical first emperor of the putatively unbroken imperial line that formed the core of modern Japanese official ideology. The imposing sculpture towers almost eight feet tall (236 cm), representing at monumental scale a figure central to the ideology of imperial reverence (figure 12). The massiveness of this work harks back to the so-called columnar style of the late seventh-century depictions in *ichiboku-zukuri* style of the Shitennō 四天王 (Four Heavenly Kings) in the Golden Hall of Horyūji Temple (Lee 1994, 56, 61–62). At the same time, the self-consciously archaic clothing cannot disguise the remarkable resemblance of this figure to the official portraits of the Meiji emperor (figure 13). The barrel chest, broad shoulders, prominent facial hair, high forehead, and resolute gaze of the statue recall the Italian artist Edoardo Chiassone's (1833–98) formal portrait of the Emperor Meiji (Fujitani 1996, 155–194). Takeuchi's powerful image seamlessly melded the legendary, martial exploits of Emperor Jimmu with the ubiquitous imagery of the Meiji emperor, in a potent visual reimagination of a mythical ruler repackaged for modern citizens of an aspiring imperial power.

The revival of wood sculpture in Japan entailed the reinvention of the sculptor as an artist of individual aesthetic genius, similar in status to an elite painter. However, Takeuchi's adherence to both self-consciously archaic subject matter and the unlacquered wood style reflected a distinctively modern reinvention of the *shirakibori* aesthetic that dominated late Edo-period dashi sculpture in the Chita region. The art historian Christine Guth has pointed out that the modern use of the unpainted wood aesthetic occurred within the context of a heightened Japanese awareness of Western perceptions of Japanese aesthetic predilections (Guth 2004, 159). Guth claims that the *shirakibori* style was sometimes used by sculptors such as Takamura Kōun to satisfy the preferences of Western buyers, who shared the Western Orientalist perception of an inherent Japanese proficiency in the depiction of “nature.” Although Guth backs up her claim with concrete examples, it is also true that the late-Edo proliferation of the *shirakibori* style was sponsored by Japanese patrons who valorized an essentialized “natural” aesthetic generated not by Western Orientalist misperceptions, but by ongoing debates among indigenous ideologues. In the late Edo period, as I have argued elsewhere, the prevalence of the *shirakibori* style in dashi

sculpture reflected changing status and regional preferences (McPherson 2007). The valorization of “nature” and supposedly “natural” aesthetic finishes did not originate in the Meiji period.

Figure 12 (left). Sculpture of Jimmu Tennō (*Jimmu Tennōzō*). Unlacquered *keyaki* wood, Meiji period, 1890. Takeuchi Kyūichi (Hisakazu, 1857–1916). Source: Home Page of the University Art Museum.

Figure 13 (right). Portrait of the Meiji Emperor by Edoardo Chiossone (1833–98). Source: Fujitani (1996, 178).



Most of the sculptures of the Seiryūsha were completed by the most prolific Chita dashi sculptor of the twentieth century, Niimi Tsunejirō (Horitsune I, 1876–1956), who was the son of a *funadaiku* 船大工 (ship’s carpenter) in Handa City (Handa Shiritsu Hakubutsukan 1992, 54–55). Like many aspiring sculptors in the Tōkai region, Horitsune was trained in the famed Hayase atelier in Nagoya, under Horichō VIII. Horitsune’s immediate senior apprentice was Itō Matsujirō Norimitsu, who as an apprentice to Horichō VIII during the 1891 building of the new Seiryūsha was responsible for sculpting its *mochiokuri*. Because Horitsune began his

apprenticeship at age fourteen in 1890, he was surely aware of the atelier's subsequent work on the Seiryūsha. Although Horitsune's work remained famous largely at the regional level during his lifetime, his numerous extant works, estimated by many as more than half of the major sculptures commissioned on Chita dashi during the Taishō and early Shōwa boom, tell us much about the shifting fortunes of festivals in this period.

Figure 14. View of *taiheibire* (top) and *kaerumata* sculpture (below) of *maeyama* of Seiryūsha. *Taiheibire* shows on the right Jingū Kōgō (regent 201–269 CE) and on the left Takenouchi no sukune holding the son of Jingū Kōgō. This child would later become the Emperor Ōjin (Jimmu Tennō, r. 270–310). *Keyaki* wood, Shōwa period, 1937. Niimi Tsunejirō (Horitsune I, 1876–1956). Source: Author photo.



As an apprentice in the Hayase atelier in the late Meiji period, Horitsune executed a sculpture of a *ryū* 龍 (dragon) around the handrail of the *uwayama* 上山 (literally, “upper mountain,” the central, highest part of the superstructure of Chita dashi), an assignment suitable for an apprentice sculptor because of the distance from the eye level of spectators. In 1923

Horitsune was commissioned to complete the sculptural ensemble of the Seiryūsha. Among the most important of his works is the *maeyama taiheibire* 前山太平鱗 (paired sculptures adorning the gable of the upper superstructure). This sculpture depicts the legendary Jingū Kōgō 神功皇后 (Empress Jingū, regent 201–269 CE), a figure also depicted in Muromachi-period paintings of the Gion Festival's *yama* 山 (mountain) and *hoko* 矛 (halberd) festival floats (figure 14). In the Muromachi period the appearance of this theme can be connected to the veneration by the Ashikaga *bakufu* [military government] of the Empress Jingū's son Ōjin as Hachiman, God of War and tutelary deity of the Ashikaga clan. In the twentieth-century context of Japanese colonial ambitions and military strengthening, the popularity of this figure in dashi sculpture spoke more to Japanese perceptions of the Meiji state's manifest destiny of territorial expansion onto the Korean peninsula (Trede 2008).

Horitsune's sculpture on the Seiryūsha shows a process of iconographic overlay and quotation, rather than rejection of earlier motifs. Although the contemporary official preference for nativist subject matter is on display, many of Horitsune's sculptures revive late Edo themes such as *ryū* 龍 (dragons), *shishi* 獅子 (mythical Chinese creatures resembling lions), *kumogata* 雲形 (cloud motifs), *nami ni chidori* 波に千鳥 (plovers amid waves), and *take ni tora* 竹に虎 (tigers in bamboo). Despite his training in the Hayase atelier, Horitsune styled himself a successor to the Tatekawa tradition, though he interpreted Tatekawa's work in ways he thought appropriate to the modern era. For example, Horitsune never wavered from the archaic *ichiboku zukuri* technique of sculpting an entire work from a single block of wood, shunning the *yosegi zukuri* mode of multiple-woodblock construction used for centuries in the fabrication of Buddhist icons. Horitsune believed that the *ichiboku* method forced the sculptor to accurately assess the internal qualities of a given block of wood, without reliance upon lacquer and pigment to cover imperfections. This privileging of the material and of the initial design process was reflected as well in Horitsune's delegation of time-consuming finish work to his apprentices. Like many Edo-period artisans, Horitsune believed that great sculptors shared the ability to select the finest piece of wood based on an intuitive understanding of how its specific grain and other material qualities could be exploited for a particular subject (Handa Shiritsu Hakubutsukan 1992, 55).

The Shukukyūsha, a dashi Horitsune completed for Shimohanda District's Naka-gumi in 1914, shows the emergence of the typically nativist themes that dominated Taishō and early

Shōwa dashi sculpture. The consistently nationalistic sculptural ensemble was finished four years after Japan's annexation of Korea, in the midst of an intensive struggle with the leading Western nations for equal treatment as a military and economic power. The *taiheibire* sculpture shows the familiar nativist theme of *Izanami Izanagi kunizukuri no zu* 伊邪那美伊弉諾国作りの図 (Izanami and Izanagi Creating the Nation; figure 15). The Shukukyūsha's *danbako* shows the theme of *Ama no iwato* 天岩戸 (Gate of the Celestial Rock Cave), with the central figure of the goddess Ama no uzume no mikoto 天鈿女命 dancing wildly to lure the Sun Goddess Amaterasu from her hiding place in a cave, while the deity Ame no Tajikarao 天手力男神 waits to seal off the cave with a sacred rope to prevent Amaterasu from again hiding in the cave and depriving the world of light (figure 16).

Figure 15. Izanami and Izanagi Creating the Nation (*Izanami Izanagi kunizukuri no zu*). *Maeyama taiheibire* sculpture of Shukukyūsha, dashi of Naka-gumi, Shimohanda, Handa City. Unlacquered hinoki wood, Taishō period, 1914. Niimi Tsunejirō (Horitsune I, 1876–1956). Source: Handa Shishi Hensan Iinkai (1995, 108).



Figure 16. *Ama no iwato*, showing the dance to lure the Sun Goddess Amaterasu ōmikami out of hiding. *Danbako* sculpture of Shukukyūsha dashi of Naka-gumi, Shimohanda, Handa City. Unlacquered *hinoki* wood, Taishō period, 1914. Niimi Tsunejirō (Horitsune I, 1876–1956). Source: Handa Shishi Hensan Iinkai (1995, 108).



This ensemble is interesting because it rejects the Edo-period standbys in favor of a theme drawn from the primary sources of Japanese mythology (*Nihon shinwa*) promoted by the Meiji state, the *Nihonshoki* and the *Kojiki*, the first official, imperial histories, written in the eighth century. The *wakishōji* show another theme with more easily interpreted imperialist aims: Jimmu tōsei 神武東征, Emperor Jimmu's legendary subjugation of the Eastern provinces (figure 17). The popularization and integration into national agendas of *Nihon shinwa* themes was an important educational aim of the Meiji and early Shōwa state in Japan. The depiction of Amaterasu spoke once again to the desire of Meiji ideologues to legitimate their leadership of the nation by association with the legendary progenitor of the putatively unbroken imperial line. In a more straightforward fashion, Emperor Jimmu's military forays onto the Asian mainland to the east of Japan were seen as auspicious forerunners of the contemporary agenda of colonial expansion to the Korean peninsula and beyond.

Figure 17. *Wakishōji* sculpture with theme *Jimmu Tōsei* (Emperor Jimmu Subjugating the East). Shukukyūsha, dashi of Naka-gumi, Shimohanda, Handa City. Unlacquered *hinoki* wood, Taishō period, 1914. Niimi Tsunejirō (Horitsune I, 1876–1956). Source: Handa Shishi Hensan Inkaikai (1995, 108).



Local Nationalist Spectacle: The Tokoname Matsuri

The Taishō and prewar Shōwa years witnessed the rise of nationalistic images and sculptural themes drawn from the officially approved curriculum of the public schools, as well as other official ideological channels such as images on banknotes, stamps, and bonds (Trede 2008). The nativist iconographic shift accompanied the previously discussed trend toward standardization of ritual in conformance with approved Shintō ritual practices under the government's continuing effort to promote State Shintō beliefs and practices. These changes in festival ritual and art were stimulated in part by the burgeoning national pride that followed the unexpected Japanese victory in the 1905 Russo-Japanese War. The defeat of a “Western” nation by Japan shocked the world, and did much to fan the national pride the Meiji government had sought to inculcate in the preceding decades. The initial euphoria led to matsuri-like celebrations all over the nation.

Many early twentieth-century dashimatsuri were heavily influenced by the ritual process and iconography of *shōkonsai* 招魂祭, festive war memorials that echoed at the regional level the immense public events in Tokyo during the enshrinement of newly dead soldiers at the Yasukuni Grand Shrine. Although these visual and ritual changes in many Chita dashimatsuri were in essence material and visual overlays upon local festivals that had been observed in some form for centuries, a significant number of dashimatsuri originated as celebrations of contemporary military achievements. The Tokoname Matsuri of Tokoname City began as a *shōkonsai*, both a memorial and a celebration of Japan's 1905 victory over Russia. The Tokoname Matsuri exemplifies the nationalistic aspect of modern dashimatsuri, as nationalistic ritual process and sculptural iconography were combined in a potent form to create a dynamic and highly participatory celebration of military prowess. Tokoname's *shōkonsai* was held for the first time on the military Memorial Day of March 10, 1906. On this occasion the *dashigumi* of Segi and Ichiba *aza*, both of which had only introduced dashi into their shrine festivals in the mid-Meiji period, assembled and paraded their new dashi in the jubilant celebration of Japan's victory. Not to be outdone, the other four districts constructed makeshift dashi called *hanaguruma* 花車 (flower car) and participated in the victory festival (Kataoka 1995, 19). This spontaneous festival marked the beginning of the modern Tokoname Matsuri, which was soon graced by dashi in the standard Chita style from each of the six districts. The six floats appeared

in an annual *shōkonsai* held at the Hakusan *shōkonsha* 商魂社, a Meiji grade of shrine created specifically for ritual observances to the war dead. Like dashi in festivals all over Japan, the six dashi of Tokoname became highly visible adornments to these nationalistic celebrations.

As Takashi Fujitani has shown, the rites carried out at the preeminent *shōkonsha*, Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, provided an important affective focus for national attention during rituals to honor the war dead. Fujitani argues convincingly that these state rituals were an important part of a broader Meiji attempt to harness the hearts and minds of citizens toward a larger national imaginary (Fujitani 1996). Because the emperor observed memorials to the spirits of the war dead at Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo, in tandem with local celebrations on the same day in shrines to the war dead all over Japan, a sense of simultaneity was created in this state attempt to memorialize those who had fallen for the nation. The words of authority carried greater affective power when reinforced with ritual and spectacle.

In a similar vein, Sarah Thal shows how Kotooka Hirotsune, an enterprising priest at present-day Mount Konpia, in search of both official approval and popular contributions, changed the identity of the tutelary deity from the indelibly syncretic Konpira Daigongen to Kotohira Ōmikami, a supposedly pure Japanese figure with a place in the hierarchy of State Shintō in the early Meiji period (Thal 2005, 127–146). By reinventing the tutelary deity of Mount Zōzu within the parameters of the official rejection of Buddhism in favor of a nativist version of Shintō, Kotooka was able to gain official recognition from state authorities for his preeminent leadership position at this venerable pilgrimage site (Thal 2005, 146).

The Tokoname Matsuri's simultaneous reenactment of the ceremonies offered to the war dead at Yasukuni ritually reinforced the ties of this local municipality to a wider national imaginary. The emphasis on martial subject matter from both legendary and historical sources in the dashi sculpture of Niimi Tsenejirō and his son Niimi Motoji visually expressed this connection between local and national agendas. At the same time, the continued use of Edo-period architectural styles and Chinese-derived sculptural themes speaks to their incorporation into modern notions of Japanese cultural identity.

For the first *shōkonsai* in 1906, the Ichiba District used the same dashi paraded by the local shrine in the annual shrine festival, a *funagata* (boat-shaped) dashi bought in the Edo period from Nagoya's Meidochō area. In 1924 the prolific dashi builder Okado Minejirō of Agui

Village was commissioned to build the current Tokiwasha, a dashi with sculptures by Niimi Tsunejirō (figure 18). Niimi used many familiar Edo themes, including Momotaro’s triumphal return on the *danbako* sculpture, the Gods of Wind and Thunder (Fūjin rajjin) on the *maeyama kaerumata*, as well as phoenix-like birds (*hōō*) and undulating *karakusa* [literally, “Chinese grass,” Chinese-derived patterns typified by repeating, interlinked floral designs] motifs on the *mochiokuri* supporting the main *danbako* ensemble. A 1988 depiction of the folk deities Ebisu and Daikoku by an unknown sculptor continues the resurrection of Edo themes. In contrast, the *wakishōji* sculptures flanking the *maeyama* show a theme rarely depicted in Chita dashi sculptures of the Edo period. The two sculptures feature the popular scene Ama no iwato (Gate of the Celestial Rock Cave) with the Goddess of Revelry, Ama no Uzume no mikoto, dancing on the right, flanked by the deity Ame no Tajikarao pulling back the boulder in front of the cave to expose the hiding Sun Goddess Amaterasu (figure 19). As with the example of the sculpture from Handa discussed above, this sculptural theme reflects the official promotion of *Nihon shinwa* themes drawn from the eighth-century *Nihonshoki* and *Kojiki*.

Figure 18. Tokiwasha, dashi of Ichiba, Tokoname City. Taishō period, 1924. Okado Minejirō (active early twentieth century). Source: Author photo.



Figure 19. *Wakishōji* sculpture with theme *Ama no iwato* (Gate of the Celestial Rock Cave), with goddess of revelry Ama no Uzume no mikoto (left) and deity Ame no Tajikarao (right). Tokiwasha, dashi of Ichiba, Tokoname City. Unlacquered *hinoki* wood, Taishō period, 1924. Niimi Tsunejirō (Horitsune I, 1876–1956). Source: Author photo.



Segi's use of dashi began in 1877 with the purchase from the nearby village of Fuki of a small, early Edo-period float known colloquially as the Butsudansha because of its gold-and-black lacquer finish. This float was used in the *shōkonsai* until the building in 1914 of the current Serakusha, which combined components purchased from Kamihanda Minamigumi with a new structural base and sculptural ensemble (figure 20). The Serakusha's sculptures include an 1842 depiction of waves (*nami*) by Hayase Chūzō on the *mochiokuri* corbels, as well as the 1954 *kekomi* sculpture of plovers and waterwheels in waves (*nami ni chidori to suisha*) by Shodai Horitsune.

Figure 20. Serakusha, dashi of Segi, Tokoname City. 1914. Source: Author photo.



However, the most visually prominent and ideologically significant work is Niimi Tsunejirō's *danbako* sculpture of *Sankan seibatsu*, the subjugation of the three Koreas spoken of in the *Nihon shoki* (figure 21). In the Japanese account, the Empress Jingū conquered the southeastern Korean kingdom of Shiragi, after which the other two major Korean kingdoms sent envoys to declare their fealty to the Japanese invaders. The eighth-century Japanese account of the subjugation of the Korean peninsula fit well into contemporary justifications for Japan's 1911 annexation of Korea. Like the depiction of Amaterasu on Ichiba's dashi, this *danbako* sculpture was reflective of the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century pattern of using themes and images from ancient sources to ideologically justify contemporary expansionist policies.

Figure 21. *Danbako* sculpture with theme of *Sankan seibatsu*, showing Empress Jingū accepting tribute from Korean emissaries. Serakusha, dashi of Segi, Tokoname City. Unlacquered *hinoki* wood, Taishō period. Niimi Tsunejirō (Horitsune I, 1876–1956). Source: Author photo.



Figure 22. Tokoyamaguruma, dashi of Yamakata, Tokoname City. Taishō period. Source: Author photo.



A similar emphasis on themes of nationalism and militarism is evident in the Yamakata District's Tokoyamaguruma, a dashi inspired by the *hanaguruma* built for the 1905 festival, and built with funds borrowed from prominent local business owners (figure 22). Niimi Tsunejirō's early Shōwa-period *danbako* sculpture of *Fuji no makigari* 富士の巻き狩り (The Hunt at Mount Fuji) depicts the legendary 1193 hunt at Mount Fuji led by Minamoto Yoritomo, founder of the Kamakura bakufu and one of a number of Japanese martial figures who became popular subjects for dashi sculpture in the early twentieth century (figure 23). Specific reference to *Nihon shinwa* themes occurs in the paired *wakishōji* sculptures of Empress Jingū Kōgō and Takenouchi no Sukune, Jingū Kōgō's grand minister during her invasion of Korea, and after his death a deified Shintō kami (figure 24). Art historian Melanie Trede has argued convincingly that Jingū Kōgō was chosen to represent the Meiji state on stamps, banknotes, bonds, and other officially issued documents to ideologically justify the agendas of a "Westernizing, modernizing and ultimately colonizing nation-state" (Trede 2008, 56).⁷ Although Empress Jingū was depicted in four distinct roles representative of official ideology, this sculpture shows her in her most familiar role as a "warrior and prototype of Japanese interests on foreign soil" (Trede 2008, 73).

Figure 23. *Danbako* sculpture with theme *Fuji no makigari*, on Tokoyamaguruma. Unlacquered *hinoki* wood, Taishō period. Niimi Tsunejirō (Horitsune I, 1876–1956). Source: Author photo.



The emphasis on martial themes continues in Niimi's early Shōwa gable sculpture *Ushiwakamaru to karasutengu*, a depiction of the training of Ushiwakamaru (Minamoto no Yoshitsune, 1159–89) by a *tengu* (goblin). Niimi represents Ushiwakamaru holding the “Tiger Chapter” of the Han-dynasty Chinese text *Rikutō Sanryaku* 六韜三略 (The Six Secrets and Three Strategies; *Liutao sanlue* in Chinese), the source from which he learned the principles of war. The sculptures of the Tokoyamaguruma feature historical and legendary subjects that reinforced the Meiji official emphasis on martial valor and expansion beyond national borders. The thematic consistency reflects the fact that none of these sculptures are recycled Edo-period works, or sculptures executed during the postwar rejection of wartime nationalism.

Figure 24. Jingū Kōgō (right) and Takenouchi no sukune (left). *Wakishōji* sculpture of Tokoyamaguruma dashi of Yamakata, Tokoname City. Unlacquered *hinoki* wood, early Shōwa period. Niimi Tsunejirō (Horitsune I, 1876–1956). Source: Author photo.



In contrast to the Tokoyamaguruma, the Jinmeisha 神明車 of Kitajo District is dominated by Edo-period sculptural imagery. Before building a *hanaguruma* for the 1906 *shōkonsai*, Kitajo had no history of dashi sponsorship in its annual shrine festival. In 1909 the district bought a Chita-style dashi from Takayokosuka Village, now Takayokosuka-chō in Tōkai

City. Although the current Jinmeisha retains some parts from this earlier float, almost all of the extant sculptures were made by Niimi Motoji (Nidaime Horitsune, 1912–95), the son of Shodai Horitsune, after the dashi was rebuilt in 1963 (figure 25). In a reflection of the postwar rejection of nativist themes because of their association with the discredited ideology of imperial Japan, the Jinmeisha features only Chinese-derived imagery of sages and imaginary creatures, such as the dragon, phoenix, and the Animals of the Four Directions [Chinese mythical animals associated since the Warring States period with the four cardinal directions].

Figure 25. Jinmeisha, dashi of Kitajo, Tokoname City. 1909, rebuilt 1963. Source: Author photo.



Figure 26. Tokoishiguruma, dashi of Okujō, Tokoname City. Taishō period. Source: Author photo.



A similar emphasis on Edo-period themes can be seen in the current sculptural ensemble of the Tokoishiguruma of Okujō District, made in the Taishō period by Okado Minejirō (figure 26). Okado's Tokoishiguruma replaced a used dashi bought in 1912 from nearby Nishinarawa Village. The main *danbako* sculpture depicts the *Shichifukujin* 七福神 (Seven Gods of Good Fortune), a theme that retained its Edo-period popularity into modern times. Most of the other sculptures, mainly postwar works by Niimi Motoji, also emphasize themes popular in Edo-period dashi sculpture.

These iconographic and stylistic shifts in sculpture played an important part in the early twentieth-century dashimatsuri renaissance. The resurrection of pre-Meiji sculptural motifs and architectural styles was part of a broader reclamation of Edo cultural forms that in the early Meiji period were perceived as backward, while the Taishō and early Shōwa turn toward martial themes drawn from the *Kojiki* and *Nihon shoki* reflected contemporary popular engagement with

state agendas of military expansion and cultural exceptionalism. In both cases, these shifts reflected the relationship of power and influence between local and central authorities. All of these sculptures were executed in the *shirakibori* style that in the late Edo period came to typify Chita dashi sculpture. During the early twentieth century the *shirakibori* style also came to have a connotation of “Japaneseness” in the rejection of any pigmentation that would cover up the natural wood grain of the base materials. The notion that Chinese culture and learning in particular were a veneer masking and detracting from an authentic, primal Japanese cultural identity here was extended to the sculptural style of these works.

The early twentieth-century boom in dashimatsuri, as well as changes in dashi sculpture and architecture, was part of a broader interplay between national and local conceptions of cultural identity. However, nationalistic sculptural imagery was only one aspect of the nativist turn in popular festivity. In 1929, the first radio broadcast of the Shiohi Matsuri inaugurated an annual media event that spread the fame of the festival to a broader national audience. In 1938, the Kamezaki *dashigumi* decided to display a large *hinomaru* 日の丸 (rising sun) flag on their respective dashi (Takai 1996, 14). Prewar photographs of dashi groups in Chita and other areas of Japan often show dashi flying the hinomaru flag and group members wearing military caps, a practice that continues today in festivals such as the Okkawa Matsuri in Handa City. When I inquired about this practice during fieldwork in 2001, only older *kumi* members were able to recall the origins of this practice as a prewar and wartime show of support for soldiers fighting overseas.

During the festival, the procession of the six dashi spatially unified the previously separate *aza* that had been administratively merged into modern Tokoname City. This spatial redefinition of Tokoname was effective not only because the matsuri was the most participatory and visually impressive civic event of the year, but also because it evoked premodern ritual forms and notions of cultural legitimacy that enjoyed unquestioned social status in the Chita area. The reinvention of dashimatsuri ritual and material culture facilitated the Meiji state’s efforts to clothe the wrenching shifts of modernization in the comforting veneer of an imagined, unified past, but the many variations on this theme in different areas responded to existing practices and changes at the local level. The unlacquered *shirakibori* style, the sculptural themes drawn from Edo-period precedents and rediscovered ancient sources, the performances of *kagura*

[Shintō offering of dance and music] and other ritual remnants of Edo festivity connected participants to a supposedly authentic and unchanging Japanese cultural identity that was now marshaled into the state's efforts to nurture nationalist sentiment and public support for its expansionist aims.

Of Revivals and Reinvention

During the Pacific War, dashimatsuri were ideologically favored but materially challenged. Wartime priorities sapped the resources normally used to mount festivals, including the young conscripts who in times of peace would have pulled the dashi through the city streets. In the final year of the conflict, intensive American firebombing destroyed festival floats in Tokyo, Osaka, Nagoya, and countless other cities. This physical destruction, coupled with postwar poverty and the ideological discrediting of Shintō festivals from their association with wartime propaganda, led to a decline in dashimatsuri participation in the immediate postwar period. According to local informants, festival participation suffered as well during the general neglect of putatively traditional practices in the period of high economic growth of the 1950s and 1960s. It was only in the 1970s that regional and national agendas of urban renewal (*machizukuri*, literally, "city making") fueled the sustained revival and promotion of local festival practices (Robertson 1991, 1995).

Boosters of the recent commodification of dashimatsuri in the form of municipal festivals emphasize their connections to Edo-period matsuri. It is certainly true that the vibrant dashimatsuri of the Edo period embody the ethnologist Yanagita Kunio's historical distinction between older matsuri, or festivals based upon abstinence and seclusion from society, and later *sairei*, or forms of festivity rooted in practices of display and public participation (Yanagita 1942, 176–192). However, representing current dashimatsuri as straightforward traces of Edo culture overlooks the important spatial, visual, and ritual shifts in festivity during Japan's transition to modernity. The dashimatsuri revival of the early twentieth century in the Chita region and elsewhere was in part a regional response to national agendas, but it was also driven by local concerns and existing practices. As the historian Carol Gluck has shown in her analysis of Meiji ideology, central government agendas were advanced through and influenced by the interpretation and implementation of state directives by local officials at many levels (1985). Amid the socioeconomic uncertainty and political centralization of the late nineteenth and early

twentieth century, reinvented local festivals rebuilt and nurtured the affective bonds of participants both to communities sundered by the policies of the central government and to the state itself.

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Notes

1. On the Meiji persecution of Buddhism, see Collcutt (1986), Grapard (1984), and Thal (2005). For a fascinating account of Buddhism's reclamation of legitimacy in the face of official suppression, see Ketelaar (1990). On the disciplining of Shintō by Meiji ideologues, see Hardacre (1989).
2. On the uneven trajectory of this campaign, see Ketelaar (1990, 96–122), Hardacre (1989), Picken (1994, 36–37), and Thal (2005, 127–176). The original aims of the campaign foundered amid the overreaching and internal rivalries among Shintō advocates, the defense of venerable Buddhist institutions at the local level, widespread popular contempt for the inept presentations of official ideology by instructors, and the pressure to juridically guarantee “freedom of religion” in response to Western political pressure.
3. See Picken (1994, 36). Under the 1871 system, larger shrine categories were further divided into subcategories. For example, shrines of prefectural rank and below were ranked in descending order as prefectural shrines (*fukensha*), district shrines (*gōsha*), and village shrines (*sonsha*). See Picken (1994, 37–38) for a concise listing of these categories, as well as Hardacre (1989, 79–99) for an account of the Meiji regulation of Shintō shrines.
4. See Hardacre (1989, 84). Under the shrine ranking system established in 1879, the Ise Grand Shrines ranked above all other shrines; government shrines included imperial and national shrines, each of which was subdivided into major, middle, and minor grades; civic shrines were graded in descending order as prefectural, district, town, village, and unranked. Special shrines made up the other category. See also Thal (2005, esp. 203–219) for a detailed analysis of how many local shrines became “sites for the rituals of imperial subjecthood.”
5. The capitalization of companies in Chita-gun tripled from 1908 to 1917, a period which also saw the proportion of capital devoted to manufacturing rise from 66 to 84 percent. Overall capitalization doubled again from 1917 to 1935.
6. See Guth (2004, 163). On Hegelianism and late nineteenth-century understandings of history in the work of Okakura and Fenollosa, see Tanaka (1994).

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