

山岳信仰・民俗学の立場から宗像の祭祀・信仰を考える

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宗像・沖ノ島に関する膨大な研究は考古学や歴史学の分野で大きな成果を挙げてきた。本講演では民俗学や宗教学の観点からの考察を試みることにしたい。

1. 祭神名の検討

宗像大社では、宗像三女神の田心姫(タゴリヒメ)、湍津姫(タギツヒメ)、市杵嶋姫(イチキシマヒメ)を、沖津宮、中津宮、辺津宮に祀る。現在の祭神と鎮座地の比定は、『日本書紀』神代卷第六段本書(本文)に基く。祭神名の由来については、タゴリやタギツは「水流の勢い激しく流れる様、逆巻沸き上がる様子」「潮流の激しく速い様」を意味するという見解『宗像市史』1999:12。『新修宗像市史』2023:76]が広く受け入れられている。ただし、タゴリやタギツの冒頭の「タ」はタツ(立つ)に通じ、「顕現する」「現れる」の意味もある。神出現の形容である。他方、イチキシマはイツクシマ、神霊が斎く島の意味である。宗像三女神は一体として信仰されたが、実体は「現れる神」二神と「いつく神」一神の複合で、「海と島」の神格化と言える。宗像三女神の鎮座地は、海上の島の沖ノ島・大島と陸地の浜の田島で、複合的な島の聖地でもある。日本各地には神霊が斎く島があり、「地先の島」で「神島」と呼ばれる所も多いが¹、沖ノ島は遠距離で独自の信仰が展開してきた。「地先の島」の大島よりも更に遠い沖ノ島を瀛津嶋・奥津嶋として神聖視した。『古事記』では祭神の最初は多紀理毘売命(別名奥津嶋比売命)である。「奥」を究極の聖地としたのである。

祭神名の表記は様々である。『日本書紀』の異伝、一書第一は瀛津島姫、湍津姫、田心姫、一書第二は市杵嶋姫命(遠瀛)、田心姫命(中瀛)、湍津姫命(海濱)、一書第三は瀛津嶋姫命(亦名市杵島姫神)、湍津姫命、田霧姫命である。一書第三は、三女神の降臨地は葦原中国之宇佐嶋、海北道中に在りて、号して道主貴とあり、航海の守護神の様相を強く出す。田霧姫の名称は霧の神格化であろう。注目すべきは、異伝では神名と場所名に「瀛」の文字が四か所使われていることで神仙思想の影響が色濃い。中国の戦国時代の斉や燕の方術者が、東方海上に神仙がいて不老不死の仙薬を作っている蓬萊・方丈・瀛州の三神山が海中にあるという説を唱えた。沖ノ島は三神山のうちの「瀛州」に譬えられたのではないだろうか。「瀛」の字の使用例は、『日本書紀』では海宮遊幸の段の「瀛風」、尾張連の遠祖「瀛津世襲」の表記のみでさほど多くない『宗像市史』1999:9]。天武天皇の和風諡号は「天渟中原瀛真人天皇」で崩御(686年)の後に「瀛真人」として神仙に祀り上げられた²。薬師寺(730年建立)東塔相輪の擦替銘には天武天皇は崩御後に「龍駕騰仙」とあり仙人になったと伝える。天武・持統朝(673~697)は神仙思想が高揚した時代で[和田2004:92]、吉野山が神仙世界とされ、持統天皇は在位中に31回吉野宮(宮瀧)への行幸を行った。天武天皇は、胸形君徳善の娘、尼子娘を妃として迎え、長男は高市皇子で、宗像との縁は深い³。記紀の編纂は天武朝から始まり、『古事記』の編纂は和銅5年(712)、『日本書紀』の編纂は養老4年(720)に完成した。『古

¹ 祭祀遺跡のある「地先の島」は、安芸国佐伯郡の伊都伎島(厳島)があり市杵嶋姫命を祀っている(現在は三女神)。その他では、大飛島(笠岡市)、神島(鳥羽市)、神島(笠岡市)、祝島(上の関町)、神津島(伊豆諸島)などがある『宗像市史』1999:17~18。和田1988:174~184]。

² 天皇の称号は天武天皇が初めて使用し、道家思想の影響が指摘されている[福永1982:8]。

³ 宗像君は天武13年(684)の「八色の姓」の制定に際して朝臣姓を与えられた『宗像市史』1999:63]。

事記』の祭神名は^{たきりひめのみこと}多紀理毘売命（奥津嶋比売命）、^{いちきしまひめのみこと}市寸嶋比売命（狭依毘売命）、^{さよりひめのみこと}多岐都比売命で、奥津宮・中津宮・辺津宮の所在を記し、「瀛」の文字は使わない。『日本書紀』は漢文で書かれ祭神名に「瀛」を使う⁴。一書第二は市杵嶋姫命は遠瀛に鎮座とし、一書第一で最初に登場する神は「瀛津嶋姫命」一書第三では「瀛津嶋姫命（亦名市杵嶋姫神）」である。そこに神仙思想を読み取ってみた。

2. 山岳信仰と沖ノ島

沖ノ島は神霊がイツク島であると共に、島内の山にも神霊がイツクと観念された。島の中央部に連なる岩峯は、一の嶽、二の嶽、三の嶽、白嶽である。祭祀遺跡の背後に聳えるのは「一の嶽」で、祭祀に際して山に祈願した可能性は高い。「一の嶽」の「イチ」にはイツクの意味もある。沖ノ島の4世紀後半から9世紀に至る祭祀は、「一の嶽」の山腹の巨岩群を祭場とし、1期・岩上、2期・岩陰、3期・半岩陰・半露天、4期・露天と祭祀形態は変わっても、祭祀の根源には一貫して巨岩信仰がある。山と巨岩とは大地を通して繋がっている。

沖ノ島の一の嶽・二の嶽・三の嶽は三を聖数とする三山信仰である。三つで一つ、一つで三つの三山信仰は各地にあるが、北九州では志賀島（勝山・衣笠山・御笠山）、彦山（北嶽・中嶽・南嶽）^{かわらだけ}香春嶽（一の嶽・二の嶽・三の嶽）などで、後世には三所権現にもなる⁵。権現とは仏菩薩の化身として日本に垂迹した神のことである。

沖ノ島の山々は南西（裏鬼門）から北東（鬼門）に連なり壁のように聳えて宗像に対峙する。近世の『沖ノ島図』（17世紀後半～18世紀前半、福岡市立博物館蔵）には、沖ノ島の前に小屋島と御門柱が鳥居のように海中に立ち、険しい三山と白嶽が描かれ

ている。白嶽は北東の鬼門鎮めの山と観念されたかもしれない。石英斑岩の山で月光の下では白く輝き神聖性は高まる。『沖ノ島図』（1875年、宗像大社蔵）には三山の姿が重なりあうように描かれている⁶。三は聖数である。絵図に描かれた沖ノ島からは、島と山を一体化した三山信仰のイメージが伝わってくる。

沖ノ島の祭祀遺跡ではどの方向を向いて拝んだのか。確定は難しいが、I号巨岩の岩上祭祀の17号遺跡は宗像を向いているという〔正木晃 2008：171-172〕。I号巨岩は三角形の船のような形で舳先を本土を向けてそそりたち、岩上に18号遺跡があった〔正木晃 2008：48-50〕。17号遺跡と同様に4世紀後半（古墳時代前期）の祭祀遺跡だという。21号遺跡のあるF号巨岩もI号巨岩と同様に玄界灘に乗り出す船のようで、第三次調査の時は玄界灘を一望のもとに望めた〔『宗像沖ノ島』1979：222〕⁷。沖ノ島の祭祀は、宗像の海を見はるかす岩上祭祀で始まった。祭祀を「海に見える場所」で行うことで海と陸と山の一体性を再認識したのではないか。

17号遺跡から出土された21面の鏡は、大和の大型古墳の副葬品と共通し、沖ノ島が大和王権の国家祭祀の祭場であったことを雄弁に物語る。21号遺跡から出土した滑石製の手持勾玉は、豊穰多産を祈った民間信仰の証で、大和の三輪山西麓の禁足地出土の手持勾玉と共通する。三輪山の古代祭祀は4世紀後半から6世紀で沖ノ島の祭祀遺跡の1期2期に年代的に符合する。7世紀からは律令時代で奉納品にも変化が生じ、3期の7世紀後半の祭祀は宗形氏の奉獻に特化したともいう。沖ノ島は、祭祀の担い手や意図は変わっても、一貫して外敵に対抗し、宗像や九州、そして国土を守る「霊的障壁」（spiritual barrier）として機能してきたのではないだろうか。500年にわたる古代祭祀の終了後、中世の宗像氏は春夏秋冬の4回、沖ノ島に渡って祭祀を継続した。

⁴ 現在でも大島の中津宮や大島の沖ノ島遥拝所では「瀛津嶋」の表記が使われている。

⁵ 『肥前国風土記』逸文（『万葉集注釈』巻三引用）には、杵島郡家の南に、南西から北東に比古神、比売神、御子神を祀る三峯があるという〔大場 1970〕。

⁶ 最古の絵図『御国絵図』（1682）、『筑前国続風土記附録』『大島図』（1797、平岡邦幸氏蔵）も同様である。

⁷ 正木晃が渡島した2008年5月27日には木に覆われて眺望はきかなかった〔正木 2008：52〕。

近世の幕藩体制下では領主権力の庇護を得て、4月と10月の例祭を行ってきた。沖ノ島は時空を超えた「生きている聖地」であった。

3. 方位と風

自然現象や方位、海と山の信仰に注目して祭祀の継続性を考えてみたい。宗像からみると沖ノ島は戌亥（北西）にあたる。戌亥は神聖視されると共に畏れられる方位で風の信仰も伴う。1年の風の動きについて、「玄界灘では冬季（11月～2月）は北西の季節風が卓越して海は時化^{しげ}る。春から秋（3月から10月）は風向は一定しないが、南西から南、東南の風が多くなる」[秋道 2024 : 36]という。北西の季節風は、山陰地方や九州では「アナジ」と呼んで恐れられ漁民は常に警戒を怠らない⁸。宗像地方の沿岸漁民は、沖ノ島の方角から吹いてくる荒々しい風に神意を感じたかもしれない。北西から吹く風は「タマ風」とも呼ばれる。戌亥は神門ともいい鬼門に対抗する聖なる方位である。吉祥の方位にある沖ノ島に宗像の人々は守護を願ったのではないか。北西の季節風が吹き出すのは霜月（11月）の前からである。冬至の太陽は、南約30度から上るので、宗像宮（宗像社）から見れば、日の出の太陽は背後の宗像山から上る。冬至は1年の内で最も日照時間が短くなり人間の魂も衰えると信じられ、各地で神楽を奉納して収穫感謝の願いを神に捧げ、舞によって靈魂を活性化させる。宗像宮の冬の霜月祭は江戸時代には総社祭として11月15日の満月の日に行われた⁹。現在は12月15日に地元の宮座が担当する古式祭として、江口の浜でとった海藻のゲバサモが供えられ海神を祀る[森 2011 : 20-23]。海藻は北西の季節風が吹く12月から2月に吹き寄せられる海からの「寄り物」である。御神楽大神事は11月16日と2月16

日に行われ、季節風の開始と終了に対応する。孔大寺大権現の大祭も2月1日から4日であった。霜月祭は海神と山神と農神を祀る重要な祭事であった。

民間の家屋敷では戌亥隅は尊い方位で福德を齎すとされて屋敷神を祀る。民間神楽でも戌亥は重視される。諸塚村（宮崎県）の戸下神楽では葛^{もろつかそん}葛^{とし}をまとい笠を被って杖をついた「山守」が出現し、神主との問答の末に杖を譲り、杖は御神屋の戌亥隅に置かれて豊穰を約束する。備後（広島県）の十二神祇神楽の將軍舞では、山人の杖を戌亥隅に蔵の下積みとして納めて繁栄を願った。歴史文献に遡れば、平安時代の宮中の記録では、「内神」^{みこうや}として戌亥隅に守護神を祀っていた[平川 1992 : 10-20]。民間・宮中を問わず戌亥は吉祥の方位であった。辺津宮の高宮（宗像山）と中津宮の御嶽山は、南東から北西に至る一直線上にあり、戌亥にあたる沖ノ島の遥拝地であった。高宮と御嶽山からは、沖ノ島の7世紀後半以降に特徴的な滑石製舟形や土器片と同種の遺物が採集されている[花田 2012 : 53-108]。

沖ノ島へは、宗像の辺津宮での祈願の後、神湊^{こうのみなと}から船出して、大島の中津宮で航海安全を祈り、沖ノ島を目指す。「海上の参詣道」とも言える。大島と沖ノ島の真ん中の「神中」^{かみなか}では、手向の幣を海中の神に奉り、航海安全を祈った[『宗像神社史』下巻 1966 : 333]。沖ノ島に近づくと小屋島、御門柱、天狗岩の岩礁が現れる。御門柱は聖域への門である。沖ノ島に向かって拝礼し、船は岩礁の間を通過して島に至る。沖ノ島では南東側を「表」に見立てる。北西側は絶壁が続き上陸は難しく人を寄せ付けず、まさしく「裏」である。沖ノ島には「表と裏」という自然の造形の妙があり、遥拝する島として絶好の景観を形成している¹⁰。

上陸にあたっては、神職も参詣者も御前浜で禊をして身を清める¹¹。江戸時代の記録では、上陸して7

⁸ 「アナジ」『改訂総合日本民俗語彙』第1巻、平凡社、1970、28頁。近畿以西で使われる用語で北西風を指す。

⁹ 一条兼良『公事根源』（1423）には11月上卯日が宗像祭で五月浜で神事を営んでいた。大宮司氏貞以降は11月15日に「惣社祭」として執行した[森 2011 : 20]。明治には「民例祭」となった。

¹⁰ 西方の対馬、東方の角島から望むと三角形に見え、南東側とは異なる神聖性を喚起する。

¹¹ 5月27日の海軍記念日に一般人の沖ノ島参拝が許されていたが、世界遺産登録後には中止された。

日間は磯の近くの仮屋で忌籠し、日々潮で禊をする
精進潔斎を行い、7 日目に岸边近くの末社の正
三位社に参詣し、8 日目に山腹の大神の宮（本社）
に参って供物をそなえて祭祀を執行した¹²。島の清
浄性が極度に高いことが特徴である。島内では厳格
な禁忌の遵守が義務付けられ日常とは異なる語彙を
使った。忌詞である。「不言様」の名称の通り、島の
事は言わず語らずで、島内のものを持ち出すことは
禁じられた。

沖ノ島の周辺の海域は漁民には絶好の漁場で、島
は船の位置を知るための「山アテ」とされ、南東側
は風待ちが出来る良港として機能した。島には真水
が湧き出ている、漁民にとっては貴重な生活の水で
あると共に聖水であり、持ち帰っても腐らないとさ
れた。季節ごとに回遊してくる海の生き物に対して
は、神の恵みとして感謝の祈りを捧げた。大島の人
は、10 月から沖ノ島に渡って小屋にいて漁をして旧
正月に戻り、春彼岸から 4、5 月まで沖ノ島で漁を
したという〔服部 2011：24〕。沖ノ島は信仰の場
であると共に暮らしを支える生業の場として重要であ
った。沖ノ島では日常実践の中に非日常性が組み
込まれていたのである。

4. タケの信仰と宝満山修験

注目されるのはタケの信仰である。日本では山の
呼称として、ヤマ・タケ・ミネ・モリがあるが、宗
像宮の祭祀に関連する山岳にはタケの呼称が多く、
内陸部の宗像盆地周辺にはヤマの呼称が目立つ。漢
字表記の「嶽」は「山」冠で尊称であり、宗像宮の
周囲の山々の優越を示すのであろう。沖ノ島には一
の嶽、二の嶽、三の嶽、白嶽が聳え、大島の御嶽山
頂には御嶽宮（上宮）が祀られ、嶽神様として信仰
を集め、山麓の中津宮では年間二度の「嶽祭」を行
っていた。沖ノ島を遥拝できる御嶽の山頂には祭祀
遺跡があり、沖ノ島と共通する遺物が出土し、渡海

前の祭場であった。島の北部の神崎にある馬蹄石は
田心姫が馬に乗って沖ノ島に渡った跡とされ、中継
地としての大島の在り方を示している。御嶽の名称
は修験道の揺籃の地、吉野山や大峯山の金御嶽に
由来し、鎌倉時代には宗像もその影響を受けた。沖
ノ島の入口の天狗岩も山岳修行者の修験者に因む名
称で、天狗は元々は山の神で仏敵とされたが次第に
統御され、室町時代には験力に秀でた修験者と同一
視された。沖ノ島の白嶽は鬼門鎮めの山と見られる。
対馬北部上県町の白嶽は修験道の山で、雄嶽と雌嶽
からなり、平嶽と併せて御嶽という。白嶽や御嶽は
修験道の痕跡を残す。

タケの信仰や祭りは、沖ノ島や御嶽山に留まらず、
宗像周辺や各地に広がっている。大島の御嶽山から
九州本土を望むと、宗像周辺の霊山や彦山・宝満山・
背振山などの大パノラマが広がる。宗像の四塚連山
と呼ばれる城山、金山、孔大寺山、湯川山が正面に
迫る。江戸時代の宝満山（竈門山）修験の春峯の峯
入り道であった〔森 2009：475-618〕。修験は山を
曼荼羅とし巨岩・巨木・滝などを祀り拝所の仏菩薩
を拝む山林抖擞の修行を行った。宝満山を金剛界、
彦山を胎蔵界とする秋峯の大峯と、孔大寺山を胎蔵
界とする春峯の葛城峯を修行の根幹に据えた。孔大
寺山（499m）は胎蔵界で法華の道場とされ、吉野の
蔵王権現が祀られ、本地仏は十一面観音であった¹³。
この地域で最も高い山である。頂上に山名の由来と
なった大きな穴がある〔『新修宗像市史』2023：95〕。
『正平年中行事』（1368）によれば、孔大寺権現の祭
りは 2 月 1 日から 4 日で、日々、洗米と幣帛を七十
五供えた。七十五は山の神霊の総数である。宗像の
末社も七十五社とされ広域な信仰圏を聖数に当ては
めた〔森 2011：17-19〕。孔大寺は山麓に二十八坊が
あったと伝える。30 年ごとの宝満山の葛城入峯に際
しては、山麓の篠原姓の家 7・8 軒が観音堂を荘厳
した〔伊東編 1932：511〕。仏教は健在であった。
孔大寺山の次の拝所が織幡宮で、尾根が海に没す

¹² 『宗像神社縁起附録』奥津嶋の条、『筑前国統風土記』十六、青柳種信『瀛津嶋防人日記』等に記載がある〔服部 2011〕。供物には生魚も含まれる。

¹³ 正安 3 年（1301）に梅谷寺に移った。鎌倉時代後期作と推定されている〔『新修宗像市史』2023：100-101〕。

る鐘崎の佐屋形山の中腹に織幡宮を祀る。宗像郡の式内社は、織幡神一座のみで古い聖地である¹⁴。織幡からの峯入り道は「外金剛部法華二十八品の峯」とされ、『法華經』序品第一の織幡から宝満山までの拝所を『法華經』二十八品になぞらえた。葛城山の写しである。鐘崎は修験との関係が色濃い。現在も役行者を祀る大峯籠堂で正月に例祭を行い、大峯講は毎月7日と28日に精進を守り、山上ヶ岳登拝を続けてきた〔『新修宗像市史』2023：617-622〕。役行者や大峯山の信仰は神湊・大島・地島にもあった。

鐘崎の地先の海中には梵鐘を積んだ高麗からの船が難破して沈んでいて龍神が鐘を守っているという。響灘と玄界灘を分ける鐘崎と地島の間の潮流は速くソネ（暗礁）がありしばしば難破する難所で、龍神を祀り海を鎮めた。『宗像大菩薩縁起』によれば、神功皇后の三韓遠征に際して鐘崎にいた武内宿彌が「御長手」と呼ばれる紅白の二枚の幡を織幡で作り、長い竹の竿に取り付けて船の先頭で振って勝利に導いたという。異賊の襲来退散、海路守護の神として武内宿禰を祀る¹⁵。昇天した場所に「沓塚」がある。中世にはこの故事に因んで御長手神事が行われ、沖ノ島から竿に使った竹をとってきて田島の宮で祀り神の力を更新した。織幡は機織りにも通じ、神に奉仕して神聖な浄衣を織る女神の象徴で宗像三女神の親の天照大神を彷彿させる。織幡大明神と許斐権現は宗像三女神と共に宗形五社とされ、鐘崎は重要な祭場であった。

タケ祭りは、『応安神事次第』（応安8年・1375、癸本）によれば、12月に次々と行われていた〔『神道大系 宗像』1979：328-329〕。12月16日の宗像宮での新嘗祭に引き続き末社ではタケ祭りが継続する。始まりは12月19日で、宗像宮の東方を流れる釣川の対岸の田野郷に鎮座する与里嶽明神で嶽祭が行われた。引き続き森大明神、織幡大明神と嶽祭

が続く。「山の幸と安全に山仕事を終えたことを山の神に感謝して、一年を締めくくる行事」〔『新修宗像市史』2023：138〕と推定されている。『応安神事次第』（甲本）によれば、同日には宗像宮の第一宮（祭神・田心姫）の序座（政所社）で、忌子禰宜と執行の「申事」という問答があり、忌子禰宜が船の舵取りの「大梶取」となって東の与里嶽、南の許斐嶽、西の大島嶽（御嶽）の雲のかかり具合を問い、執行の「小梶取」はいつも「吉候」と答える〔宗像大社文書編纂刊行委員会編2009：218。河窪2011：251-252〕。忌子禰宜は世襲で「宗像忌子家系」によれば、古代の胸形君の系統を引く神事執行者と伝え〔正木喜2004：428〕、執行は社僧であった〔『宗像神社史』下巻：82〕。宗像では神官・社僧が梶取として船に乗り込んで水夫を統括し指揮していた。海に生きる人々が漁撈や航海に際して「山アテ」として船の位置を確かめ安全を祈る山々に感謝を捧げる。「舵（梶）」は船を制御する道具で、海の民は「櫓」と「舵」にいのちを託した¹⁶。「舵」に掛けて風見・天候占で神意を伺った。与里嶽は「山アテ」の山で「依嶽」とも表記される神霊の寄り憑く山であった¹⁷。宗像宮を取り巻く東・南・西の山は「梶取」神事で祀られて、海や山で生きる人々の生活の指針となる神託が下されたのである。

12月20日は許斐社山麓での原祭を行って御供を捧げ、倍従歌と榊舞の奉納、ウケの歌を謡う。南方の宮地嶽で嶽祭を行い歌の奉納、在自社で粥を進上する神事を執行し、最後に北方の奴山の縫殿大明神（古墳群の近く）で嶽祭を行った。12月のタケ祭りは沖ノ島を北西に遠望する海に面した山々で航海守護を祈り、山の幸の収穫に感謝する祭りであった。北西風が吹き荒れる12月の嶽祭では風鎮めの祈願もなされたであろう。玄界灘の荒波に対抗できるのは、荒ぶる山の力しかない。一年のうち本土や大島

¹⁴ 鐘崎は万葉集巻七・一二三〇の「ちはやふる 鐘の岬を過ぎぬとも われは忘れじ志賀の皇神」で知られる。難所の鐘崎を志賀の神の加護で越えることができた感謝の想いを詠む。

¹⁵ 『筑前国続風土記』では武内大臣、住吉大神、志賀大神を祀るとある。

¹⁶ 志賀海神社の秋の神幸祭では、「八軒の浦公」という特別な家柄が一軒ずつ櫓を持って参加する。

¹⁷ 与里嶽は地元の宮座が「山の神祭り」として明治24・25年まで祀ってきた〔古野1970：52、232、234〕。

から沖ノ島をよく望めるのは、10月から12月だという。宗像宮の嶽祭は、鐘崎・与里嶽に始まり、津屋崎から福津にかけての山々で展開する。宗像宮の北西の神湊がある草崎^{くさき}から、勝浦、渡半島^{あらし}までが宗像氏の勢力圏で、日宋交易の拠点^{あらじ}は在自で唐坊（中国人居住地）もあり〔正木喜2004：431〕、日本の内と外の接点をなす境界地であった。12月のタケ祭りには古代・中世以来の歴史的連続性が感じられる。

津屋崎周辺は5世紀以来、宗像の在地勢力の拠点となり多くの古墳が造られた。5世紀から6世紀の勝浦峯ノ畑古墳、勝浦井ノ浦古墳、新原^{しんばる}・奴山^{ぬやま}古墳群、須多田^{すだた}古墳など前方後円墳5基、円墳35基、方墳1基、総計41基が現存する。7世紀前半の巨大円墳^{みやじだけ}の宮地嶽古墳、円墳^{てびかなみきりふどう}の手光波切不動古墳もある。嶽祭は宗像氏の先祖の記憶を伝える故地での祭祀であった。

5. 神仏習合

宗像三女神は、『日本書紀』本文では「胸肩君」、第三の一書では筑紫水沼君等^{つくしのみぬまのみみら}、『古事記』では「胸形君」などが奉斎していたとある。その後、地域豪族の宗像氏が祭祀を掌握し、宗像大宮司家に発展して独自の神仏習合の祭祀を展開した。8世紀初期に神も人間と同じく輪廻の苦しみの中にある衆生で仏教による救済を求めるという「神身離脱」の言説が現れ、神宮寺が建立されて「神前読経」が行われた¹⁸。

『（藤氏）家傳』下「武智麻呂伝」（760年頃）には、霊亀元年（715）に越前の気比神の救済のために神宮寺を建てたと記す。『類聚国史』卷八十・仏道七は養老年中（717～723）に若狭の比古神が神願寺の建立を願ったとある。『神宮寺伽藍縁起并資財帳』によれば、伊勢の多度神は天平宝字7年（763）神身離脱を願い仏道に帰依し小堂（神宮寺）が建てられ多度大菩薩と称された。神々は仏法を守護する「護法善神」ともされた。神仏習合は11世紀中後期には神仏を一体とする本地垂迹説に展開した。

宇佐の八幡神には菩薩号が与えられた。天平9年（737）に藤原広嗣の乱に神徳ありとして八幡神に最勝王経と三重塔が寄進され、天平勝宝元年（749）には八幡神が東大寺大仏の完成を助力するとの託宣を下し、宇佐の巫女が上京して「禰宜尼」と称された（『続日本紀』）。八幡神は天応元年（781）に菩薩の称号を得て、「八幡大菩薩」とされ、僧形八幡神像が造られた。教王護国寺の造像が最古で（9世紀半ば）、薬師寺の休ヶ岡八幡宮の造像は寛平年間（889～898）とされる。神に「菩薩」の称号を与えて在地の信仰を仏教の中に取り込んだのである。宗像神も藤原純友の乱が天慶4年（941）に平定された後に、効験ありとして菩薩号が贈られて「宗像菩薩」となった¹⁹。

宗像に仏教が及んだ最初の記録は、『類聚国史』卷五、延暦13年（794）3月戊寅（三日）条で、朝廷が僧侶を豊前国宇佐、筑前国宗形、肥後国阿蘇に派遣して「神前読経」を行い7人に度者（出家僧）の位を授けたという〔熊谷1987：1〕。神宮寺が建立された可能性もある〔『新修宗像市史』2023：114〕。承和5年（838）には宗像宮に僧侶を割り当てて遣唐使の渡海安全を祈らせた。これが最後の遣唐使となった。遣唐使は寛平6年（894）菅原道真の命で廃止になった。社殿建立は、『中右記』長承2年（1133）条に、焼失した社殿を元永2年（1119）に造営とあり、社殿創建の年とされている〔『新修宗像市史』2023：144〕。

中世の宗像宮は大宮司家（979年設置）が、対外交易を経済的基盤として政治と祭祀を取り仕切り、全盛時代を築き上げた。神宮寺は宗像宮の南方の宝塔院で、弘長3年（1263）に真言宗の鎮国寺が釣川の東に創建されて神宮寺となり五智如来を移転させた〔『宗像神社史』上巻：363。正木2004：389〕。宗像宮の繁栄は、宗像氏貞が天正14年（1586）に病死して家系が断絶するまで続いた。中世の神宮寺は真言宗の鎮国寺であった。略縁起によれば、弘法大師空海が帰朝後に宗像宮に詣り、東方の屏風嶽に紫

¹⁸ 神仏習合・神仏融合に関しては、〔伊藤2012、吉田2024〕参照。

¹⁹ ムナカタは奈良時代には宗形、平安時代には宗像となる〔『宗像市史』1999：66～67〕。

雲が棚引くのをみて修行の場とし、^{りょうじゅくつ}霊鷲窟に参籠して寺を開基したとあるが伝承に留まる。太政官符（鎮国寺文書）には、文永 2 年（1265）に^{こうがん}皇鑑聖人を長老として門弟に相承させ、領主の宗像大宮司長氏の宿願で、寺地を与え四至を定め、両寺（本堂・霊鷲堂）を建立し、宗像五社（沖津宮・中津宮・辺津宮・許斐権現・織幡宮）の本地仏を安置して、鎮護国家の道場とした〔花田 2012 : 83〕²⁰。現在も五社の本地仏、大日・釈迦・薬師・阿弥陀・如意輪観音を祀る。本尊は秘仏の不動明王で平安時代後期作という。境内には日本最古の板碑とされる阿弥陀如来坐像板碑（元永 2 年・1119 銘）、中世石塔、中世墓地がある。寺には二口の銅製経筒が保管され、保延 4 年（1138）と永治元年（1141）の銘がある。雨乞い祈願で掘り起こされたことが推定されている〔『新修宗像市史』2023 : 97-100〕。奥之院・不動堂の奥にある^{こうがん}霊鷲窟には釈迦と八大龍王が刻まれている。皇鹽は弘長 3 年（1263）に不動窟（^{こうがん}霊鷲窟）で請雨経を転読したとされ、雨乞いも建立の理由であった。宗像盆地は三方を分水嶺で囲まれて降水量は少なく仏菩薩に雨乞いを願った。中世の宗像の祭祀は、宗像宮と鎮国寺を一体として展開した。『筑前国続風土記拾遺』によれば、大宮司氏貞の死後には鎮国寺は衰退し、文永の頃（1592～1595）には修験が来住していたという〔花田 2012 : 85〕。近世も修験の活動は続いていたようである。現在も 4 月 28 日には北九州の修験が集まって柴燈護摩を行うなど活動は続いている。

6. 三宮一社制

宗像宮の社殿は遅くとも 12 世紀には田島（現・辺津宮）に建てられていた。祭神の祀り方が独特であった²¹。『宗像三所大菩薩御座次第』（建治 3 年・1277）によれば〔『神道大系 宗像』1979 : 285〕、

宗像三女神の本地仏の^{ていいち}第一大菩薩・第二大菩薩・第三大菩薩を祀る「惣社」があり三所大菩薩とも称した。第二大菩薩と第三大菩薩を中殿と地主社に祀る²²。俗体の神像・仏体の神像・両者の混合像があり神仏習合の様相を伝える〔岩田 2007 : 235-238〕。

神仏習合は、11 世紀中後期に本地垂迹説に展開し、印度の仏菩薩を本地、日本の神々はその垂迹とされ、12 世紀に本地仏が定まり神仏は一体となった〔吉田 2024 : 285-347〕。宗像でも本地垂迹説が 13 世紀には定着し、田島が祭祀の中心になった。『宗像大菩薩縁起』（鎌倉時代末期）は、天応年間（781～782）に宗像神の託宣で大宮司の屋敷に社殿を造営して三女神を「一所」に祀ったと伝える。中世の状況を古代に遡って権威付けたのであろう。三所大菩薩は、惣社の中央に田心姫、本地大日如来、左に湍津姫、本地釈迦如来、右に市杵嶋姫、本地薬師如来を祀り、三所の神明として崇め鎮護国家の^{おきのみしま}霊神とする〔『神道大系 宗像』1979 : 14〕。第一の神は遠瀛の^{おきのみしま}息御嶋、第二の神は中瀛、第三の神は海辺の田嶋に鎮座と記し、^{おきのみしま}息御嶋は高麗と日本の中間にあるという。新たな表現である。

『正平年中行事』（1368）では、本社三所大菩薩大神宮と記し、田心姫は第一大神宮、湍津姫は第二大神宮、市杵嶋姫は第三大神宮に祀る〔『神道大系 宗像』1979 : 296〕。沖ノ島への渡島は意のままにならず、本殿の造営も困難なので、田島に本社を造営し三女神を併せ祀るという「二重構造」が出来上がった〔『新修宗像市史』2023 : 114-115〕。宗像三女神の究極の主神は「息御嶋」で、沖ノ島そのものを祀る。本当の神には名前はいらない。「息御嶋」は中世的表現で、沖ノ島は息をしている島、生きている島と観念されたのではないか。文字化によって思いがけない形で言説は再解釈される。文字の力で意味を読み替えた可能性がある。第一宮、第二宮、第三宮はここに完成をみた²³。これを「三宮一社制」と呼ぶ。

²⁰ 宗像大宮司下文案には、文永 3 年に皇鹽を寺の院主職に任命し、長日不退の行法を納めたとある〔花田 2012 : 83〕。

²¹ 以下は、〔河窪 2011〕の考察に多くを負っている。

²² 惣社は現在の辺津宮、中殿は現在の沖津宮、地主社は現在の中津宮である。地主社の故地は南方の小丘陵にあった。

²³ 史料上は、第一宮の初見は仁治 2 年（1241）、第二宮の初見は建治 3 年（1277）、第三宮の初見は建仁元年（1201）である。詳細は

「眷属小神」は、第一宮は善神王二所と織幡明神、第二宮は地主明神、第三宮は伽藍明神を祀る²⁴。境内には堂塔伽藍が立ち並び、「田島宮社頭古絵図」（元和3年・1617）²⁵には東塔・西塔・弥勒堂・宝塔院・一切経堂・鐘楼などが描かれている。

「三宮一社制」は宗像に限定されるものではない。志賀海神社は表津綿津見・仲津綿津見・沖津綿津見の三神を祀る表津宮・仲津宮・沖津宮で構成される。表津綿津見神は降臨地の勝馬から、勝山・三笠山・衣笠山の三山が周囲にそびえる現在地に鎮まったと伝えられる。海神と山神の融合である。山岳では彦山や宝満山は、下宮・中宮・上宮で構成される。平戸島の式内社の志々伎社は、海の民の山神信仰で、島の西南の沖ノ島に沖ノ宮、宮之浦のひもろぎ山の麓に地ノ宮（辺津宮）、志々伎山（347m）の中腹に中宮、頂上に上宮を祀る。海神と山神が混淆した山岳信仰である。三宮を一体とする聖地が各地に成立したのである。

7. 色定法師と彦山

平安時代後期の宗像では、社僧の色定法師（1159～1242）の活躍が目立つ『新修宗像市史』2023：160-171。一切経を一人で写し終えるという偉業を果たした。永暦元年（1159）に、宗像宮の座主兼祐と、妙法尼の子として生まれ、初めは良祐と名乗り、経祐、栄祐と法名を変えて、最後に色定と名乗った。写経の契機は源平合戦での死者供養を意図した可能性が高い。文治元年（1185）の壇ノ浦合戦で、幼少の安德天皇が入水して平家は滅亡した。色定法師は、戦いの2年後の文治3年（1187）から安貞2年（1228）までの42年間に、一筆書写の行を継続して、5048巻の一切経の書写を完了した。書写の場所は許斐山麓八並の「別所」の吉原寺で聖の集住地であったという〔正木 2004：341〕。書写は宗像宮の援助を受

け、日宋貿易に関わった宋人が、墨・筆・経文などを提供した〔田村 2015：69-70〕。宗像大社には、底本となった宋の経文は残っていないが、書写経巻のうち4300巻以上が現存する。

色定法師は、一切経書写を開始してから3年後の建久元年（1190）8月から約1年間の40巻余りの経巻に「彦山権現以貴水書之」と奥書に記し、彦山との関係が判明する『むなかたの山岳信仰』2016：50-51。一切経では中途の9月から「彦山三所権現」と名称を変更した。なお、「彦山権現」の文献上の初見は六郷満山の開山伝承を記す『人聞菩薩朝記』（仁平2年・1152）で、「彦山三所権現」の表記は、養和2年（1182）に次ぐ古さだという。色定法師が使用した彦山権現の「貴水」とは、彦山発祥の地とされる般若窟の中に湧き出している聖水と考えられる。現在も毎年一回「御池浚え神事」を行って祭りを継続している。般若窟、別称玉屋窟は彦山の最も重要な聖地であり、その聖水を使って書写したことは経文の力を増大させた。経文の書写は、円仁創始と伝わる天台の「如法経書写」に倣ったのかもしれない。特別な紙と筆と墨を使って書写し、霊山の山頂に納めて功德を積む行法である。

英彦山神宮に所蔵される一筆一切経（大乘密厳経巻上）には、建久5年（1194）5月27日の奥書があり、宗像と彦山の縁で奉納されたことがわかる。

『鎮西彦山縁起』（元亀3年・1572）には色定法師の伝記も書かれ宗像との交流が深かった『神道大系』1987：27。宗像宮の境内には、一切経堂があつて一筆一切経が保管されていたが、御堂は弘治三年（1557）に焼失した。書写文は救出されて現在に伝わり、宗像大社が所蔵している。南宋との文化交流を伝えるものとして名高い阿弥陀経石²⁶は、大宮司の宗像氏国が亡父氏見の供養のために南宋の工人に作製を依頼したもので、建久6年（1195）にあたる中国年号が刻まれている。境内の阿弥陀経堂に納め

〔「宗像神社史」上巻、1961：221-284〕参照。

²⁴ 善神は護法善神と考えられる。

²⁵ 『宗像記追考』（1617）に折り込まれていた。『宗像神社史』上巻、1961口絵写真に掲載。

²⁶ 平重盛の発注は俗説である。

られていた。現在は宗像大社所蔵で神宝館で展示されている。中世の宗像の仏教文化は、多彩な展開と深まりを見せていた。しかし、宗像宮は天正 14 年（1586）に大宮司宗家が滅びて衰微し、8 世紀以降、16 世紀に至る神仏習合の時代は終焉を迎えた。宗像宮は江戸時代には「田嶋宮」として藩主の庇護を受けて復興したが、中世の多くの祭式は復活しなかった。寛文 5 年（1665）に唯一神道となって神道化した。明治 4 年（1871）には、明治政府は神社は国家の宗祀と宣言し、神社神道に再編されて宗像神社と称した。昭和 52 年（1977）に宗像大社に改称した。現在では仏教の命脈は完全に断たれたのである。

8. 彦山と宗像

彦山と宗像の交流は、彦山の開山伝承に記されている。『彦山流記』（建保元年・1213）は彦山が修験化する前の天台宗の山岳修行場であった時代の記録である²⁷。『流記』によれば、彦山権現は天竺（印度）の摩訶提国から五本の劔を投げた後、震旦（中国）の天台山の王子晋の旧跡に至り、東方を目指して甲寅年に日本の豊前国に上陸した。最初は香春明神に宿を借りようとしたが妨げられ、金剛童子に勅して香春嶽の樹木を引抜かせた。権現は彦山に登り地主神の北山三御前に出会い、土地を譲り渡された。地主神は暫く中腹に留まったが許斐山に遷った。彦山権現は八角水精の形で般若窟に天下った『神道大系』1987：2]。

『鎮西彦山縁起』（元龜 3 年・1572）は、彦山が修験化した時代の縁起である。冒頭で『日本書紀』を引き、天照大神と素戔鳴尊の誓約で、十握劔から田心姫命・瑞津姫命・市杵嶋姫命の三女神が生まれ、八坂瓊から天忍穂耳尊をはじめ五人の男神が生まれたと記す。日神が化生した三女神は筑紫洲へ下り、宇佐嶋に降りて、彦山に遷った。北嶺には北山地主がいたが、市杵嶋姫命に山を譲って中腹に移る。天忍穂耳尊は鷹となって東から飛

来して峯にきて、その後に八角真霊石上に移った。大己貴神は北嶽を天忍穂耳尊に献呈し、田心姫命・瑞津姫命を妃として山に留まり地主神となった。山名は日子と号した。その後、女神は宗像宮へ、大己貴神は許斐山に遷り、伊弉諾尊が中嶽に、伊弉冉尊が南嶽に降りた『神道大系 英彦山』1987：19]。

この二つの縁起の共通点は、許斐山が中継点になっていることで、『彦山流記』では彦山の北嶽にいた地主神が遷って留まった山であり、『鎮西彦山縁起』では北嶽にいた大己貴神が遷った山とされた。宗像三女神のうち、田心姫命・瑞津姫命が、大己貴神の妃となったが、別れて宗像宮に移ったとある。市杵嶋姫命の行方は語られていない。宗像三女神は『鎮西彦山縁起』によれば、天上から筑紫洲、宇佐嶋、彦山と移動し、最終的に宗像宮に落ち着いたことになり、彦山が宗像三女神の原点と語られる。

宗像と彦山の結節点は許斐山で熊野信仰が共通点である。許斐山は、『宗像社記』によれば、天安元年（857）に紀伊国から熊野権現を勧請したという。ただし、史料では文永 2 年（1265）の太政官符が初見である[正木喜 2004：423]。山頂直下の三尊石の下に熊野三所権現が祀られ山頂には王子社がある²⁸。本地仏は熊野本宮と同じ阿弥陀如来であった。地元では熊野神社を「権現さん」と呼ぶ。三羽の鷹が東から飛来して三尊石になったと伝え彦山のお使いの鷹と同じである[『新修宗像市史』2003：759]。許斐山は宗像氏の分家が祭祀に関わった。天正年間（1573～1591）には社家 12 戸、祝家 8 戸あり、年間 24 回の祭があった。

中世には五月会では宗像宮へ神輿巡行し、浜殿で織幡宮と共に祭りを行った。8 月の放生会でも、宗像宮へ神輿渡御を行い、浜殿で織幡宮の社人と共に様々の芸能を奉納した。船闕神事では許斐がいつも勝利する。許斐山に祀られる熊野権現は宗像宮の力の源泉で、織幡宮と共に宗像宮を支え、根底には山の霊力がある。海神と山神の交流でもあった。近世には神輿渡御の行事は消滅した。許斐山は近世に

²⁷ 『彦山流記』の奥付は 7 月 8 日、建暦 3 年から建保元年（1213）への改元は 12 月 6 日で年号については疑義がある。

²⁸ 熊野権現にあった宋風獅子、滑石製女神像、木彫の石仏立像は、現在は博物館で保存されている。

は宝満山修験の春峯の峯入りの札所になったが、彦山と宗像の結節の役割は維持した。広域にわたる山岳信仰のネットワークに宗像宮は組み込まれていたのである。

宗像宮では、摂社も含めて宗像六社として、三女神と、許斐権現、織幡宮、孔大寺権現を祀る。三女神の他の三神は山の神で、山岳信仰が宗像宮に深く浸透していた。

9. 神楽とミコとホサ

中世の宗像宮の特徴は豊富な祭祀芸能である。神楽は「宮廷御神楽」と「民間神楽」が併せ行われていた。宮中と民間の神楽の邂逅は貴重である。『応安神事次第』(癸本)によれば、正月15日から三日間は「踏歌」が行われ、15日に惣社と弥勒殿と浮殿、16日に摂社の織幡宮、17日に摂社の許斐権現で斎行された。社殿の周囲を回って寿詞を詠う「踏歌」と、弓矢で的を射る「歩射」が組になっていた。16日は「踏歌」の後に、培従の歌、庭火歌、早韓神、御神楽と続く。甲本には御神楽は「ミコ・ホサノ役也」とある²⁹。

御神楽大神事は2月16日と11月16日の二度で「二季神楽」と称した(「預所備中守橘知茂奉書写」)。『応安神事次第』(甲本)によれば、第三宮、第二宮、第一宮の順に、早韓神の歌、人長舞、内侍舞、癸本では最後は八人女舞とある。内侍が舞うので内侍舞ともいったのであろう。宮中の内侍所御神楽(1005年創始)の写しであるが、宗像では人長の後に内侍舞があり、内侍所御神楽には内侍舞はない。内侍舞は宗像の特色で神子の重視と見られる。内侍所御神楽で人長が榊枝を持って舞うのは「早韓神」と「其駒」だが、宗像では「其駒」の人長舞がない[渡辺2016:15]。庭火・阿知女作法・九種採物・前張・千歳の歌、早歌で内侍舞(八人女舞。八女神事)・星三首の歌・朝倉・其駒と続く。宮中の内侍所御神楽を踏襲しつつ独自に展開する。織幡宮と許斐権現でも神楽が行われた。『宗像宮年中神事御供下行事』に

よれば14世紀半ばには宗像宮所属の「神楽坐」が成立し、「二季神楽」は15世紀半ばまで継続した(『新修宗像市史』2023:129,140)。神楽の伝統は根強かった。

8月13日から15日までの放生会では多彩な芸能が演じられた。8月13日には許斐社が行幸して、舞楽・相撲の後、夜に風流・田楽・延年(『応安神事次第』甲本)、猿楽(乙・丙・丁本)、14日は五社神輿行幸の後、風流・田楽・延年・猿楽(乙・丙・丁本)、15日は舞楽・相撲の後、船鬨神事で五社を表す船が競い常に許斐社の神船が勝利した。釣川の畔では王之舞が奉納され笛を「社猿楽」が担当した。放生会の大般若経書写供養・献饌の後、舞楽・一つ物・行事行列・相撲などの芸能が続く。宇佐八幡の放生会に匹敵する賑やかな祭りであった。延年は奈良や京都の大寺に平安時代に発祥して各地に伝播した寺院法楽の総称で、稚児の童舞、白拍子・乱拍子の歌舞、言語遊戯の開口・当弁、連事・風流の劇などを遊僧が演じ、猿楽も行われた。宗像の芸能は日宋貿易の豊富な富に支えられていた。宗像が中央と強い絆を持ち文化交流が盛んであった中世の様相を伝える。

9月には、御九日神事が三日間開催される。『正平年中行事』によれば、9月9日は第一宮、9月10日は織幡大明神、9月11日は許斐小神の的原小城大明神で大神事とする。いずれも経供養を行う。『応安神事次第』(癸本)によれば、舞楽・神楽・相撲・流鏑馬が演じられた。宗像宮の膨大な富を基礎にして中央から受容された多彩な芸能が祭で奉納された。

12月1日に大島で御神楽神事が始まり、3日に御神楽と馴子神事が行われた。『応安神事次第』(癸本)によれば、12月25日には大島の沖ノ島祭祀を司る「一の甲斐」と神人が、田島の八女神事に赴き「鳴の御神楽」を奉納した。「枅折」の儀で沖ノ島と大島の運定めを行い、新羅遠征の六將軍を演じたという[『宗像神社史』下巻1966:289]。大島の神楽は盛大であった。『正平年中行事』の第二宮本社の「大島仏神事」には下神楽神事の21社で「七日七夜御

²⁹ 『応安神事次第』甲本・癸本などの異本については、[宗像大社文書編纂刊行委員会編2009:189-374]参照。

神楽昼夜十四夜」とある。信じがたいような大規模な神楽であった。大島は田島の辺津宮とは異なり、「宮廷御神楽」を受容せず、独自の「民間神楽」を展開した。

田島の12月25日の八女神事は酉時（夕刻）から上高宮・下高宮・第一宮の順に行った。「キネノヲサ（乙本は貴彌^{きねのほさ}法者）と八人の乙女が舞う」〔河窪2011：252〕³⁰神事で、ヲサは「法者」であろう。「貴彌ノヲサハ、祝詞代トシテ、祝詞ヲ申也」という。12月の織幡社、許斐社の嶽祭と八乙女舞は、御幣にカツライ紙を用い特別な意味があった。『正平年中行事』の最後には年間祭祀5921度と記されている。巨大で長期にわたる祭祀が展開していた。

注目されるのは、「民間神楽」の担い手の巫女と法者、ミコとホサである。『応安神事次第』（癸本）の1月17日「許斐踏歌事」では、「御子^{みこ}発者^{ほさ}ノ舞アリ」、（甲本）正月16日に「御神楽ミコホサノ役也」、9月10日織幡宮で「ミコホサ神楽アリ」、同日に的原社でミコホサの御神楽が行われた〔宗像大社文書刊行会編2009：201、214〕。表記はミコホサで女性のミコが優先されている。宗像ではミコ（巫女、神子、御子^{みょうぶ}）は命婦や市とも呼ばれた。『応安神事次第』（癸本）には正月16日の神事に参加する一ノ命婦、二ノ命婦、三ノ命婦、織幡命婦、許斐命婦が列記される。『筑前国続風土記附録』（1797）には、在自村^{あらじ}の惣の市、勝浦村の惣ノ市など多数の巫女を記す。

中世の九州には、巫女として命婦^{みょうぶ}・内侍・御子（神子・巫女）がいて、男性職能者の楽人・祝・神楽男・神楽師・法者^{ほさ}（発者^{ほつしゃ}・験者^{げんざ}）などと組になって舞をまっした。法者は法力を持つ民間の職能者で、修験の影響もある。法者は寺社だけでなく民間にもいた。宗像の野坂に残る天正11年（1583）の「御宮座正免」には、ノット（祝詞、ホサ）、宗方^{そうぎょう}（僧形）、ミコ（見こ）等が記され、上座に座るミコは七人で祈禱の舞を行ったと推定される〔古野1970：20〕。宗像の八人女舞や内侍舞は消滅したが、現在でも近隣の志賀海神社の秋の神幸祭では八乙女舞が奉納される。太鼓と鉦を伴奏にして右回りに舞い、安曇磯良

を海中から誘い出すと伝えられる。引き続き、磯良^{せいのおまい}の細男舞（鞆鼓の舞）が奉納され、安曇族の歴史を彷彿させる。

「神子^{みこ}法者^{ほうじゃ}」に関する最古の史料は備前国一宮（吉備津神社）の康永元年（1342）奥書の『備前国一宮社法』である。男性の法者が弓や太鼓を鳴らし唱句を唱え歌をうたい、神子^{よりぎとう}（巫女）を舞い踊らせて神がかり状態にした。修験の憑祈禱の技法の影響がある。「神がからせる者」と「神がかかる者」、法者と神子の手法は神楽に取り込まれ、備後の荒神神楽に顕著である〔鈴木2001：123-195、鈴木2025b：116-124〕。法者と組んで展開した命婦舞は1970年代には対馬の佐護湊と仁位に残っていたが〔鈴木2004：161-165、221-229〕、現在では仁位の和多都美神社の命婦舞だけになった〔渡辺2016：12-48〕。宗像宮の命婦舞や内侍舞は現在では絶えてしまったが、記録には残り、中世の芸能や神楽の実態をよく伝えている。

10. 『宗像大菩薩縁起』

『宗像大菩薩縁起』（鎌倉時代末期成立）は、鎌倉幕府が蒙古襲来に備えて、全国の主要社寺に敵国降伏の祈禱を命じたことに応じて書かれた縁起である。香椎・高良・住吉などの社寺が神功皇后説話を題材にして作り上げた〔河窪2011：244、『新修宗像市史』2023：143-160〕。『宗像大菩薩縁起』は、『八幡宮宇佐託宣集』（1290～1331）の影響を受けて書かれた〔正木喜2004：63〕。神功皇后の新羅遠征に際して、強石將軍が武内宿禰が織った紅白の御長手を捧げ持ち、乾珠満珠を海に投げ入れて敵を溺死させて打ち破った。帰国後に息御嶋に御長手を立てた。不思議なことに毎年瓶の中から三本の竹が同じように生えた。御長手は宮中に納めたと記す。『宗像社口決』では沖ノ島に幡棹を立てた跡から毎年一本の竹が生え、「宗形大郡使」が毎冬に沖ノ島で祭祀を行ったと記す。これが春夏秋冬に沖ノ島に渡島して竹を採取し持ち帰って祀る「御長手^{みながて}神事」の由来である。沖

³⁰ 河窪は天正6年第一宮遷宮で湯立を行った祈念太夫に繋がり修験とする〔河窪2011：28〕。法者は修験ではない。

ノ島から齎された竹の生命力で、田島の第一宮に祀られる神霊の力を更新したのである。

本縁起の特徴は、「御長手」と称する棹の先端に紅白の布を取り付けた祭具の呪力が強調されること、宗像大菩薩が強石将軍ごうせきしょうぐんという「人格神」となって登場すること、独自の呪力の源泉が沖ノ島と竹に求められていることである。宗像の縁起は、『住吉縁起』、その展開としての『香椎縁起』『高良縁起』『宇佐託宣集』の三種の縁起とは異なる。『住吉縁起』で住吉神の父とされる高磯強石將軍を、宗像では強石將軍という独自の英雄として提示し、神功皇后の働きはさほど強調されない。宗像氏は、周辺の安曇氏や津守氏などに優越することを顕示し自らの祭祀の正統性を伝える縁起を作り上げたのであろう。霊力の源泉は、縁起に「根本御影向之地」こんぽんごようごうのちと記されている沖ノ島である。宗像は沖ノ島を力の根源とすることで、八幡系の有力な社寺に対抗して優越性を誇示できた。ただし、御長手神事は、南北朝時代以降は中断する。その理由は何かが問われねばならない。昭和 37 年 (1962) 10 月に、御長手神事と放生会を参考に海上神幸を行なう「みあれ祭」として復興した。過去との連続性は猿楽の翁舞のみである³¹。天正 6 年 (1578) の遷宮祭に使用された面を被る翁舞が、延宝 3 年 (1675) に亀石太夫によって復活して継続した。大正 3 年 (1925) からは能楽師の担当となり、現在は 10 月 1 日から 3 日までの秋季大祭の中日に奉納されている。みあれ祭は、全くの新しい祭りとなり [森 2011 : 8-16. 山中 1990]、創られた伝統 (invention of tradition) として継続している。

11. 今後の課題

本稿では、宗像・沖ノ島の祭りと伝承を中心に様々な読み解きを試みてきた。古代に関しては、磐座いわくら、カムナビ (神奈備)、神籬ひもろぎなどの神道用語の使用を避けて考察した。山に関しては「神体山」は用いない。「神体山」は近代概念で安易には使用できない [鈴

木 2025a : 16-18]。神道という言葉も意識的に回避した。

圧倒的に史料が少ない宗像の古代に関しては、考古資料が大きな導きになることは、これまでの沖ノ島研究で明らかである。ただし、祭祀に関する記録はなく史料との照合は間接的である。ジレンマを打開するために、現地を歩くことで見えてくる「霊的景観」 (spiritual landscape) に注目したいと考えた。「景観」とは物理的な形象を指す。「風景 (scenery)」を「景観」のサブカテゴリーとし、「見えるもの」と「見えないもの」があると考え。「霊的景観」とは、「見えない風景 (invisible scenery)」を景観に読む方法である。日本のカミは、元来、目に見えないものであった。「霊的景観」は、カミを観る方法といってもいい。自然の移り行き、天体の運行、風の動き、海洋のうねり、山や岩のたたずまい、木々のざわめきなどなどの万物照応の世界を素直に見つめ直す。森羅万象のささやきに耳を傾けることで見えてくる心的表象 (mental representation) とも言える。大島の住民の一人は、「沖ノ島は神様の島やけん。行けるところやないと。大島と沖ノ島はつながっとうけん。沖ノ島が見えんときは、沖ノ島の島影が心に浮かぶとばい」 (大島交流館展示映像) と述べている。「眼には見えなくとも、心の中で見ている」。「内なる風景 (inner scenery)」と言ってもいい。風景には visible, invisible, inner の三種がある。spiritual landscape は私の造語であり、英語での題名の本はない。古代に関する考察では、新たな景観論の提示を試みたのである。

宗像の中世に関しては膨大な文書があり、その読解に関して多くの研究がなされてきた。政治史や経済史に関しては大きな進展があったが、古代との連続と非連続を踏まえた精神史 (spiritual history) の考察はこれからの課題であろう。精神史は広義の信仰の歴史でもある。「宗教」の概念は放棄する。宗像は 8 世紀以降は仏教の影響を強く受けて、神仏習合・神仏混淆の時代が 16 世紀に至るまで長く続いた。

³¹ 室町時代の宗像大宮司興氏の時に、鐘崎の海中から浮上したとされる翁面が現存する。現在はレプリカを使用して秋季大祭 2 日目に奉納する。

朝鮮や中国との交易によって盛えた宗像の全盛時代は中世であった。宗像が繁栄を極めた 800 年にわたる神仏習合の実態を、貴重な「宗像文書」によって解き明かしていくことが課題として残されている。宗像は 17 世紀以降、唯一神道となり、明治元年（1868）の神仏判然令による神仏分離・廃仏毀釈によって過去の歴史との連続性が断ち切られた。明治以降の近代神道の展開は 150 年に過ぎない。神仏混淆を再評価し、歴史の動態的变化を民衆の精神史を含めて理解することが今後の課題と言えるのではないだろうか。

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Lecture 4

Considering Munakata's Rituals and Beliefs from the Perspectives of Mountain Worship and Folklore

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Significant discoveries have been made regarding Munakata and Okinoshima in the fields of archaeology and history. In this lecture I will attempt to consider the region from the perspectives of folklore and religious studies.

1. Considering Deity Names

Munakata Taisha collectively worships the Three Goddesses *Tagorihime*, *Tagitsuhime*, and *Ichikishimahime* across its three shrines, *Okitsu-miya*, *Nakatsu-miya* and *Hetsu-miya*. The goddesses and the shrines attributed to them were detailed in the 6th chapter of the *Jindai no Maki* volume of the *Nihon Shoki*. In regard to the origins of the goddesses' names, *Tagori* and *Tagitsu* are widely accepted to mean “the force of violently flowing water, surging up,” “a fast and intense tide” (*History of Munakata City*, 1999:12; *New History of Munakata City*, 2023: 76). However, the syllable ‘*Ta*’ at the beginning of *Tagori* and *Tagitsu* also relates to the word *tatsu* (立つ), thus also implying “to manifest,” or “to appear,” which describes the appearance of a deity. *Ichikishima*, on the other hand, originated as *Itsukushima*, which means an island that is possessed by deities. The Three Goddesses are worshipped as a unified group, but when considered individually, they consist of the two kind of deities “who appear” and the one deity “who is possessed,” and are the deifications of both land and sea. The shrines attributed to the Three Goddesses are located in the sea on the islands of Okinoshima and Oshima, and on the mainland on the seashore of Tashima, making their domain one that links multiple lands. There are “Chisaki-no-shima” (isoand near the land) islands that

enshrine deities across Japan, many of which are called *Kami-shima* (lit. “*kami* island”) ¹, but Okinoshima remained at a distance from the land and developed its own unique belief system.

The Goddesses go by a variety of names. In the other version 1 of the *Nihon Shoki* they are *Itsukishimahime* (瀛津島姫), *Tagitsuhime* (湍津姫) and *Tagorohime* (田心姫). In the other version 2 they are written as *Ichikishimahime-no-Mikoto* of the Far-Away Sea (市杵嶋姫命 遠瀛), *Tagorohime-no-Mikoto* of the Middle Sea (田心姫命 中瀛), and *Tagitsuhime* of the Seashore (湍津姫命 海濱). In the other version 3, they are written as *Okitsushimahime-no-Mikoto* (瀛津嶋姫命, alternative name for *Itsukishimahime*), *Tagitsuhime-no-Mikoto* (湍津姫命), and *Tagirihime-no-Mikoto* (田霧姫命). In the other version 3, the place the Three Goddesses are said to have first appeared on earth was *Ashihara-no-Nakatsukuni-no-Usanoshima* (葦原中国之宇佐嶋), which is located along a seafaring path, where they fulfilled the position of protectors of ships. *Tagirihime*'s (田霧姫) name comes from the word *kiri* (霧) or fog, which she would have been the deity of. It is important to note here that the character *ei* (瀛) is used on four places in the various legend, which shows remarkable influence from the Shinsen (神仙) Taoist thought of immortality. During the Warring States Period, diviner of the Qi and Yan regions of China were said to have believed that immortals who knew how to make meclcal herbs lived in the three sacred mountains of Mt. Penglai (蓬萊), Mt. Fangu (方丈) and Mt. Yingzhou (瀛州) in the Eastern Sea. It is possible that Mt. Yingzhou is actually Okinoshima. The character *Ying/ei* (瀛) is only

¹ Another island with ancient ritual sites is Itsuki Island in Saeki County, Aki Province, and *Ichikishimahime* was enshrined there (now it venerates all the Three Goddesses). Other such islands include Ōbishima (Kasaoka City), Kamishima (Toba City), Kōnoshima (Kasaoka City), Iwaijima (Kaminoseki Town), and Kōzushima (Izu Islands) (*History of Munakata City*, 1999, 17-18; Wada, 1988, 174-184).

used a handful of times in the *Nihon Shoki*; in the legend *Umi-no-miya Yuukou* (the legend of journey to ocean place) in the word *okitsukaze* (瀛津世襲, lit. “ocean wind”), and in the name of the ancestor of the Owari Clan, *Okitsuyoso* (瀛津世襲; *History of Munakata City*, 1999, 9). Emperor Tenmu’s Japanese-style posthumous name is *Ama-no-nunahara-oki-no-mahito-no-sumera-mikoto* (天渟中原瀛真人天皇), and after he passed away in 686 he was enshrined as an immortal sage under the name *Okina-no-mahito* (瀛真人)². According to an engraving on Yakushi-ji Temple’s (built in 730) east pagoda’s *sorin*, Emperor Tenmu posthumously became an immortal sage riding on the dragon. In the *Tenmu* • *Jitō* era (673-697) the ritual of immortality was exalted (Wada, 2004, 92), Mt. Yoshino was considered a land of Shinsen, and during her reign, Empress Jitō visited *Yoshino-miya* (*Miyataki*) 31 times. Emperor Tenmu accepted *Munakata-no-Tokuzen*’s daughter *Amako-no-Iratsume* as his princess, and their eldest son *Takechi-no-miko* had deep ties with Munakata³. The compilation of the *Nihon Shoki* and *Kojiki* began in the era of Emperor Tenmu; the *Kojiki* being completed in 712 (5th year of the *Wadō* era), and the *Nihon Shoki* in 720 (4th year of the *Yōrō* era). The goddesses are listed in the *Kojiki* as *Takirihime-no-Mikoto* (多紀理毘売命, also referred to as *Okitsushimahime-no-Mikoto* 奥津嶋比売命), *Ichikishimahime-no-Mikoto* (市寸嶋比売命, also referred to as *Sayorihime-no-Mikoto*), and *Takitsu-hime-no-Mikoto*. It is written that the three exist in the shrines *Okutsu-miya*, *Nakatsu-miya* and *Hetsu-miya* - the character *ei* (瀛) is not used anywhere in this text. In the *Nihon Shoki*, however, names of deities written in Chinese text utilize the character *ei* (瀛)⁴, from which I interpret a connection to the ritual of immortality.

2. Mountain Worship and Okinoshima

Alongside the deity of Okinoshima, *Itsukushima* (伊ツク島, lit. “Possessed Island”), it has been considered that the deity possessed on island’s mountain. There are a series of rocky peaks that run across the center of the island which are known as *Ichinotake*, *Ninotake*, *Sannotake* and *Shiratake*. *Ichinotake* towers behind excavated ritual sites, so it is very possible that the mountain itself was the subject of ritual worship. The *ichi* in *Ichinotake* (一ノ嶽) also means *itsuku* (to be possessed). Between the second half of the 4th century and the 9th century, the rituals that took place on Okinoshima were held on large boulders on the mountainside of *Ichinotake*. Shifting locations over the ages, the rituals began on the tops of boulders (1st period), then moved to the shade created by those boulders (2nd period), to partly in the shade and partly in the open (3rd period), to finally taking place fully in open air areas (4th period). Though the form of the rituals may have changed, their roots remain in the worship of large boulders, and such large boulders are linked to mountains through the earth.

Okinoshima’s *Ichinotake*, *Ninotake*, and *Sannotake* belong to a ‘Three Mountain Worship’ based on the holy number 3. Such Three Mountain Worships, in which 3 mountains symbolize one unified body or one mountain or peak symbolize three parts, exist in various regions across Japan. For example, in Northern Kyushu there are: Shika Island (Mt. Katsu, Mt. Kinugasa, and Mt. Mikasa), Mt. Hiko (*Kitadake*, *Nakatake*, and *Nangaku*), and Mt. Gongen is the incarnation deities of Buddha and Bodhisattva in Japan. *Kawaradake* (*Ichinotake*, *Ninodake*, and *Minamidake*) which in later times became known as the *sansho gongen*⁵.

Okinoshima’s mountains stretch from the island’s southwest (*urakimon*, back demon’s gate) to northeast (*kimon*, lit. “demon’s gate” or unlucky direction) corners,

² The title of ‘Tennō’ (天皇) was first used by Tenmu, which is said to be influenced by Taoist thought (Fukunaga, 1982, 8).

³ The Munakata clan was given the title of *Ason* when the “eight hereditary title system” was established in 684 (13th year of the *Tenmu* era; *History of Munakata City*, 1999, 63).

⁴ The name *Okitsushima* (瀛津嶋) is used at Oshima’s *Nakatsu-miya* on Okinoshima Worship Site to this day.

⁵ According to a fragment of the *Topography of the Hizen Province* (quoted in vol. 3 of the *Manyōshū Commentary*), south of Kishima County there are three peaks that stretch from southwest to northeast dedicated to *Hiko-gami*, *Hime-gami*, and *Miko-gami* (Ōba, 1970).

like a towering wall that stands toward Munakata. According to the *Okinoshima Map* drawn in the early modern period (second half of the 17th century to first half of the 18th century, collection of the Fukuoka City History Museum), Koya Island and a set of gate pillars stood in front of Okinoshima like a torii gate in the middle of the sea. The map also shows the steep Three Mountains and *Shiratake*. *Shiratake* is likely to have been considered the mountain that ‘calms’ or balances the northeast *kimon*. Made out of quartz-porphry, *Shiratake* glows white in moonlight, making it feel all the more spiritual. In the *Drawing of Okinoshima* (1875, collection of the Munakata Taisha), the three mountains are drawn in a way that they appear to overlap one another⁶. Three is a holy number, and from drawings of Okinoshima one can see how island and mountain join together in the form of Three Mountain Worship.

In what direction did rituals in Okinoshima take place? Though it is difficult to determine this for certain, Site 17 on Rock I is said to face Munakata (Masaki, 2008, 171-172). Rock I is triangular in shape, similar to that of a boat whose bow faces towards the mainland. Site 18 is also located on top of this boulder (Masaki, 2008, 48-50). Both Sites 17 and 18 are thought to be from the second half of the 4th century (early *Kofun* period). Similar to I, Rock F also looks like a boat trying to set sail on the Genkai Sea, and during the 3rd excavation of Okinoshima it was recorded that the sea could be seen in its entirety from the site (*Munakata Okinoshima*, 1979, 222)⁷. Okinoshima’s rituals began atop boulders while looking out at the sea. It can be postulated that by performing rituals in places where the sea can be seen, worshippers could feel the connection between the sea, land, and mountains.

Twenty-one mirrors excavated from Site 17 share characteristics with grave goods found in large Yamato burial mounds, which eloquently displays how Okinoshima served as a ritual site

for members of the Yamato royal family. Talc *komochi* (fetus) *magatama* stone excavated from Site 21 serve as proof of folk beliefs in praying for fertility and abundance. Site 21’s *komochi magatama* are notably similar in form to those unearthed in the forbidden area of the Western foothills of Mt. Miwa in Nata Prefecture. Ancient rituals held in Mt. Miwa took place between the second half of the 4th century and the 6th century, which lines up with the 1st and 2nd periods of the archaeological sites in Okinoshima. From the 7th century, the *Ritsuryō* political system brought with it new forms of offerings, and rituals that took place in the latter half of the 7th century (3rd period) became offerings to the Munakata Clan. Even as the subject or intention of rituals in Okinoshima changed, it can be deduced that rituals were done to oppose external foes by creating a spiritual barrier to protect Munakata, Kyushu, and even the entire country. Even after the rituals that had been taken place over 500 years came to end, the medieval period witnessed the Munakata Clan crossing the sea to Okinoshima 4 times a year to hold rituals in spring, summer, fall and winter. In the early modern period, the feudal system brought the region under the rule of Chikuzen, during which rituals continued to take place every April and October. In this way, Okinoshima is a ‘living sacred site’ that overcame space and time.

3. Directions and Wind

Here I would like to discuss the transmission of rituals through natural phenomena, directions, and sea and mountain worship. Looking from the perspective of

⁶ The same can be seen in old map, the *Okuni Ezu* (1682), and in the “Drawing of Oshima” in the *Supplement to the Topography of Echizen Province* (1797, collection of Mr. Kuniyuki Hiraoka).

⁷ When Akira Masaki visited the island on May 27th, 2008, view of the sea from the site was blocked by trees (Masaki, 2008, 52).

Munakata, Okinoshima lies to the northwest, which is called *inui* in the 12 zodiac directions. According to beliefs in wind worship, *inui* is seen as being both sacred and fear-inspiring. Regarding wind movement throughout the year, it is said that, “In the winter (November to February), seasonal winds blowing from the northwest through the Genkai Sea turn the water rough. From spring to autumn (March to October), the wind does not just blow in one single direction, but winds blowing from the southwest to south or southeast are common” (Akimichi, 2024, 36). Fishermen from the Sanin Region and Kyushu call these seasonal winds from the northwest *anaji* and continue to fear and be vigilant of them to this day⁸. It is likely that coastal fishermen in Munakata felt this wind coming from the direction of Okinoshima and considered it to be the will of the island’s deities. They also call such northwestern winds *Tamakaze* (spiritual wind). *Inui* is the *shinmon* (lit. “gods’ gate”) that stands in a sacred position opposite of the *kimon*. Being positioned in this auspicious direction, it is possible that the people of Munakata prayed to Okinoshima for safety. Seasonal northwestern winds begin to blow from November (known as *shimotsuki* in the lunar calendar). The winter sun rises from approximately 30 degrees south, so from the perspective of the Munakata shrines it would appear that the sun rises from behind Munakata’s mountains and then falls behind Okinoshima in the evenings. Evenings leave the deepest impression. The winter season has the least sunlight and causes the soul to weaken - so people perform *kagura* as an offering and exhibition of gratitude for the harvest all across Japan, bringing people’s spirits back to life through the power of dance. The winter festival that took place across Munakata’s shrines was solemnly held every year of the Edo era on November 15th ⁹. The same festival now takes place on December 15th, led by local shrine leaders in its traditional form, in thanks to the deity of the sea for the

gebasamo seaweed that can be collected on the Eguchi Coast (Mori, 2011, 20-23). The Shimotsuki winter festival was important.

In households, prayers are made to the *yashikigami* (household guardian deity) in the corner of the house that faces towards *inui*. Folk *kagura* performances also place importance on the *inui* direction. One example is the *toshita kagura* performed in Morotsuka Village (Miyazaki Prefecture), whose main character is a *yamamori* (lit. “mountain protector”) wearing a *kasa* hat wrapped in ivy vines and holding a walking stick. Following a discussion with a shrine priest, the *yamamori* hands over his walking stick, which is placed in the *inui* corner of the *mikōya* (*kagura* performance hall) as a promise of abundance. In the shogun dance of Bingo’s (Hiroshima Prefecture) *jūnijingi kagura*, the mountain ascetic’s walking stick is offered to the *inui* corner of a storehouse in hopes for prosperity. Looking through historical documents, records from the Heian era show that offerings to the *uchigami* (Inner god, another guardian deity of the home) of the Imperial Court were also made in the palace’s *inui* corner (Hirakawa, 1992:10-20). Regardless of whether one was a commoner or a member of the Imperial Court, *inui* was considered an auspicious direction. *Hetsu-miya*’s *Taka-miya* (Mt. Munakata) and *Nakatsu-miya*’s Mt. Mitake form a line that stretches southeast to northwest all the way across the sea to Okinoshima, with Okinoshima being positioned as a site of worship in the distant northwest. Further, talc boat-shaped figures and earthenware shards distinct to late 7th century Okinoshima have been found on *Taka-miya* and Mt. Mitake (Hanada, 2012, 53-108).

In order to go to sail to Okinoshima, one would first pray at Munakata’s *Hetsu-miya*. After departing from the *kō-no-minato* (lit. “god’s port”), they would pray for the boat’s safety at Oshima’s *Nakatsu-miya* and continue on what can be referred to as an “ocean worshipper’s path.” At the

⁸ “*Anaji*”. *Revised Comprehensive Japanese Folk Vocabulary*. Vol. 1. Tokyo: Heibonsha. 1970. pp. 28. “Used in regions extending from Kinki to the west to refer to northwestern winds.”

⁹ In Ichijō Kaneyoshi’s *Kuji Gongen* (1423), the Munakata Festival was held at Satsukihama at the beginning of November (on a day referred to by the lunar calendar as *Jōu*). After the reign of *Daigūji* Ujisada, the festival’s date was changed to November 15th (Mori, 2011, 20).

kaminaka (lit. “between gods”), located right in the middle of Oshima and Okinoshima, offerings are made to the god of the sea for safety during sea travel (*History of the Munakata Shrines* Vol. 3, 1966, 333). As one gets closer to Okinoshima, Koya Island, the set gate pillars and the *Tengu* boulder become visible. The pillars serve as a doorway to a sacred land. One then says a prayer while facing Okinoshima, and once their boat passes through the reef, they have reached the island. The ‘front’ of Okinoshima is its southeast side. A steep cliff on its northwest side makes it difficult to land from there, giving it the position of the ‘back’ of the island. Having a unique but natural ‘front’ and ‘back,’ Okinoshima’s landscape is favorable to its identity as a distant island of worship¹⁰.

Once one’s boat lands, priests and pilgrims purify themselves with a *misogi* ritual on Omaehama beach¹¹. According to records from the Edo era, once pilgrims landed, they would spend 7 days confined to a hut near the beach, during which they would perform *misogi* in the tides daily, and abstain from consuming meat and alcohol. On the 7th day, they would visit the *Shōsanmi* sub-shrine to pray, after which on the 8th day they would climb into the mountains to the main shrine to give offerings and perform rituals to the main deity¹². The extreme purity of the island is very crucial. On the island, strict taboos were observed, that even included visitors to the island having to use vocabulary that differed from everyday life. Known as *oiwazu-sama* (lit. “the one of no words”), those who went to the island would not speak of or about the island, and bringing anything from the island to the mainland was prohibited.

The sea around Okinoshima was a favored fishing area for local fishermen. Such fishermen used the island as a landmark to know where they were sailing, and its southeast side had winds that made it a useful port. There

are freshwater springs on the island, which was both precious for the life of the fishermen, and also considered to be holy water. Fishermen in these waters would consider the sea creatures that migrated through the area every year as a blessing from the gods, and they prayed in gratitude. It is said that people from Oshima would travel to Okinoshima in October, from which they would fish to stay in the hut on Island until Lunar New Year; after a period back on the mainland, they would return to Okinoshima on Vernal Equinox, where they would fish again until April or May (Hattori, 2011, 24). Okinoshima was both a place of spiritual beliefs, and of importance to local people’s everyday lives.

4. *Take* Worship and Mt. Hōman *Shugendō* asceticism

Here I will focus on *take* worship. In Japan, mountains are called by names that include *yama*, *take*, *mine*, and *mori* (all meaning mountain). In Munakata, there are many mountains with *take* in their name, but coincidentally few with *yama*. Generally, mountains referred to as *take* are rough and difficult to climb, and the Chinese character 嶽 (*take*) is used out of respect. Okinoshima’s *Ichinotake*, *Ninotake*, *Sannotake*, and *Shiratake*, alongside Oshima’s Mt. Mitake (*Oku-miya*, *Shrine of Nakatsu-miya*), are places where *take* worship has concentrated throughout the years. A *Take* Festival is also held twice annually at *Nakatsu-miya*, which is located in the foothills of Mt. Mitake. The remains of ritual sites have been excavated on the peak of Mt. Mitake, from which it is presumed that people used to pray to Okinoshima. Artifacts that are also used in Okinoshima rituals were unearthed in these sites, and rituals were held here before crossing the sea. In the sacred cliffs on the north side of Oshima is the *batei-seki*

¹⁰ When viewed from Tsushima in the west and Tsunoshima in the east, the island appears triangular, evoking a different sense of sacredness from the southeastern side.

¹¹ There was a period in which the general public was allowed to visit Okinoshima annually on May 27th as a celebration of Navy Memorial Day, but this was discontinued after the island was registered as a World Heritage Site.

¹² This is mentioned in the Okutsushima section of the *Supplement to the Munakata Shrine Origins*, in vol. 16 of the *Topography of Chikuzen Province*, and in Aoyagi Tanenobu’s *Otsushima Guardian Diary* (Hattori 2011). Offerings also included raw fish.

(馬蹄石, lit. “horse hoof stone”), which is believed to be the spot from which *Tagorihime* rode on a horse to Okinoshima, and is thus seen as a resting point linking the mainland to Okinoshima. Mt. Mitake’s name stems from the Kamakura era and is inspired by its identity as a sacred mountain, *kaneno-mitake* on Mt. Yoshino and Mt. Ōmine in Nara Prefecture. The *Tengu* Boulder at the entrance to Okinoshima is also connected to *Shugendō*, ascetic practitioners in mountain, as the *Tengu* was originally a deity of the mountains and an enemy to Buddhism, but was gradually subjugated, and in the Muromachi period was considered identified with *Shugendō* practitioners. Okinoshima’s *Shiratake* lays diagonally opposite to its *kimon*. Similarly Mt. Shiratake, located in the northern part of Tsushima Island, was also a place of *Shugendō* pilgrimage. Mt. Mitake in Tsushima had a pilgrimage route that went through *Odake*, *Medake* and *Hiratake*. Remains of such *Shugendō* pilgrimages still exist on *Shiratake* and *Mitake*.

Worships and festivals in held in respect of *take* were not limited to Okinoshima or Mt. Mitake, but spread further all across the Munakata region. Looking at the mainland of Kyūshū from Oshima’s Mt. Mitake peak, the Munakata region stretches out into a vast panorama of sacred mountains such as Mt. Hiko, Mt. Hōman, and Mt. Sefuri. Munakata’s *Yotsuzuka* mountain range, which consists of Mt. Jō, Mt. Kana, Mt. Kodaishi and Mt. Yugawara, stretch across the horizon. In the Edo period, Mt. Hōman (a.k.a Mt. Kamado) *Shugendō* had a special path for pilgrims (峯入り, mineiri) of spring peak (Mori, 2009, 475-618). *Shugendō* envisioned mountains as mandalas, with practices that involved prayed to Bodhisattvas at boulders, large trees, waterfalls, etc. On the Autumn peak Mt. Hōman was the considered to be the Diamond Realm Mandala and Mt. Hiko the Womb Realm Mandala in autumn peak as Mt. Ōmine, while on the Mt. Kodaishi was

considered to be the Womb Realm Mandala in spring peak as Mt. Katsuragi. As the Womb Realm Mandala, Mt. Kodaishi (499m) was understood to be the path to the Lotus Sutra, from which Yoshino’s *Zao Gongen* was worshipped, and whose *Gongen* (the incarnation deities of Buddha and Bodhisattva) was the 11-faced Kannon¹³. It is the highest mountain in this region, and at its peak there is a large hole, which is the origin of the mountain’s name (the *ko* in *kodaishi* meaning ‘hole’; *New History of Munakata City*, 2023, 95). According to the *Annual Festivities of the Shōhei Period* (1346-1370), *Kodai-ji* Temple’s *Gongen* Festival took place over 4 days starting from February 1st, throughout which 75 meals were made and given as offerings. Seventy-five is the total number of mountain deities. Munakata also has 75 sub-shrines, and this sacred number represents a wide region of faith (Mori, 2011, 17-19).

The next stop for pilgrimage after Mt. Kodaishi is Orihata Shrine. Orihata Shrine is located on the slopes of Mt. Sayagata in Kanezaki, at a point where the mountain ridge sinks into the sea. Orihata Shrine is the only shrine in the Munakata area that is listed in the *Engishiki*, making it an incredibly old place of worship¹⁴. The mountain path from Orihata is called “The 28 Peaks of the Lotus Sutra of the Outer Diamond Realm Mandala,” with the places of worship located between Orihata Shrine and Mt. Hōman being likened to the twenty-eight chapters of the Lotus Sutra. Kanezaki has deep connections to *Shugendō* pilgrimage. To this day festivals take place every year around New Years at the *Ōmine-komori-dō* in honor of *En no Gyōja*, the founder of *Shugendō*, the *Ōmine-kō* sect pray together every month on the 7th and 28th, and worship across the mountain peaks has carried on (*New History of Munakata City*, 2023, 617-622). Worship of *En no Gyōja* or the *Ōmine-kō* sect also takes place at *kō-no-minato*, Oshima and Jinoshima.

¹³ The deity was moved to Umedani-ji Temple in 1301 (3rd year of the *Shōan* era). The deity’s statue is believed to have been made in the late Kamakura period (*New History of Munakata City*, 2023, 100-101).

¹⁴ Kanezaki is known for the poem “Violently swelling / Even if I do not pass the cape of the *Kane* / I will not forget the Emperor God (*sumerakami*) of Shika” in Vol. 7, Ch. 1230 of the *Manyōshū*. The poem expresses gratitude for being able to get past the difficult Kanezaki with the protection of the god of Shika.

The power of the pilgrimage path is condensed in Kanazaki. It is said that bells that come from the sacred land are sunk deep in the sea near Kanazaki and are being protected by the Dragon God. The currents between Kanazaki and Jinoshima are fast and often cause shipwrecks, so gods were worshipped here to calm the sea. According to legends, during Empress Jingū's *sankan seibatsu*, Takenouchi-no-Sukune made his so-called *minagate* at Orihata. The *minagate* consisted of one red and one white colored flag tied onto a long bamboo rod, which by waving from the bow of his boat, he orchestrated their victory. Forcing the enemy bandits to flee, Empress Jingū became the deity that protects sea travelers¹⁵. A *kutsuzuka* (lit. "shoe mound") is located in the spot where Takenouchi ascended to heaven. In the medieval period, this legend was celebrated through a *Minagate* Festival, during which a bamboo staff from Okinoshima was brought to a shrine in Tashima with prayers to revive the powers of the Tashima deity. Orihata also connects to the word *hataori* (weaving), so it symbolizes a goddess who serves the gods by weaving sacred robes, reminiscent of *Amaterasu-Okami*, the mother of the Three Munakata Goddesses. *Orihata Daimyōjin* and the *Konomi Gongen* together with the Three Goddesses of Munakata make up the 5 shrines of Munakata, for which Kanazaki was an important place of worship.

According to the *Ōan Shinto Ritual Records* (1375, 8th year of the *Ōan* period), *take* festivals took place one after another every year starting in December (*Shinto Records: Munakata*, 1979, 328-329). Beginning on the 19th of December, a *take* festival would first take place in *Yoritake Myōjin*, a shrine located in Tanogo, a village faces the eastern side of the Munakata Shrine from the opposite side of the Tsurikawa River. The *take* festivals would then continue in the *Mori Daimyōjin* and *Orihata Daimyōjin* shrines. It is predicted that these were, "Festivities to wrap

up the year and show gratitude to the mountain *kami* for mountain harvests, and for safe work in the mountains" (*New History of Munakata City*, 2023, 138). On the same day, at the head worship place (*Mandokorosha*) of the first shrine of Munakata Shrine (whose enshrined deity is *Tagorihime*), there is a question-and-answer session between the *ingo-negi* and the *shigyō*. The *ingo-negi* plays the role of the "large rudder" who steers the ship and asks about the cloud cover over *Yoritake* in the east, *Konomi-dake* in the south, and *Oshima-dake* (Mt. Mitake) in the west. The *shigyō*, who plays the role of a "small rudder" always answers, "There will be good weather" (Kawakubo, 2011, 251-252; Masaki, 2004, 456-458). Those who live alongside the sea pray thanks to the mountains that serve as landmarks, protecting them when they go fishing or sailing. A rudder (*kaji*) is a tool that helps control boats, and sea-faring folk entrust their lives to their rudders and oars¹⁶. At the *Kaji-tori* Ritual, people ask their rudders about their divine will. *Yoritake* is especially valued as a landmark when out at sea, and it is thought to be where a divine spirit of the same name (*Yoritake*) resides¹⁷. *Kaji-tori* rituals took place in the mountains that surround Munakata to the east, south and west, serving as a holy oracle that guided people's lives.

On the 20th of December, the *Matohara* Festival is held at Konomi Shrine, which includes the offering of *baijūka* song and *sakakimai* dance, and the singing of *uke* songs. *Take* festivals with offerings of songs are also held at *Miyajidake*; ritual of offerings of rice porridge were performed at Arai Shrine; and a *take* festival was held at *Nuidono Daimyōjin Shrine* on Mt. Nuyama. December *take* festivals pray to the mountains of Okinoshima that look out to the sea to the north of the island, to express hopes for safety at sea, as well as gratitude for mountain harvests. December being when rough winds blow from the northwest, it is likely that these *take* festivals also

¹⁵ In *The Topography of Chikuzen Province*, Takenouchi-no-Sukune, Sumiyoshi-no-Okami, and Shika-no-Okami are also venerated similarly.

¹⁶ At the autumn festival of Shikaumi Shrine, special families called *The 8 Households Ura-no-Miko* participate, each bringing their own oars.

¹⁷ *Yoritake* was worshipped by local shrines in a "Mountain God Festival" until 1891-2 (24-25th year of the Meiji era; Yoshino, Huruno; 1970, 52, 232, 234).

prayed for the calming of the wind, as the only thing that can oppose the strong waves of the Genkai Sea is the violent power of the mountains. It is said that one can have the best view of Okinoshima from the mainland or Oshima between October and December. Important festival was conducted this season. Munakata Shrine's *take* festival would begin in Kanezaki and *Taridake*, and then would carry on across the mountains, going from *Tsuyazaki* to *Fukutsu*. Influence of the Munakata clan extended from the *Sōzaki* at the *kō-no-minato* on the northern side of Munakata Shrine, to Katsuura and the Oshima Peninsula, as well as including important bases for trade between Japan and the Song Dynasty were also in *Araji* and *Tōbō* (a Chinese settlement). One can feel a sense of historical continuity from the *take* festivals.

The *Tsuyazaki* area became an important center of influence for the Munakata clan from the 5th century onwards, and many burial mounds were built there. Five keyhole-shaped, 35 round, and 41 square burial mounds remain from between the 5th to 6th centuries, which include the *Katsuura-Minenohata* burial mound, *Katsuura-Inoura* burial mound, *Shimbaru-Nuyama* mounded tomb group, and *Sudata* burial mound cluster. From the first half of the 7th century, the giant *Miyajidake* burial mound and the *Tebikanamikirifudō* burial mound also remain intact. *Take* festivals were rituals also meant to carry on the memories of the ancestors of the Munakata clan.

5. Shinbutsu sūgō (the combinatory amalgamation of “Kami” and “Hotoke”)

In the main text of the *Nihon Shoki*, the Three Goddesses of Munakata are enshrined by the local leader, the *Munakata-no-kimi* (胸肩君), in the other version 3 their name becomes the *Tsukushi-no-minuma-no-kimira* (筑紫水沼君等). In the *Kojiki*, they are called a variety of names, including the *Munakata-no-kimi* (胸形君). In a period following these records, when the local aristocrats the

Munakata clan became in charge of rituals in the area, a unique form of **Shinbutsu**-sūgō developed. The concept of *shinshin-ridatsu* (神身離脱) appeared in the beginning of the 8th century. According to this idea, Deities had to turn to Buddhism to seek savior from the suffering of the cycle of rebirth in the same way that humans did. Following this, religious compounds were built that included both shrines and temples (*jingu-ji*), and the reading of Buddhist sutras in front of deities took place¹⁸. According to the *Muchimaro-den* (c.760, part of the *Fujiwara Clan Records*), in 715 (1st year of the *Reiki* era), a Buddhist temple was built attached to a shrine in *Echizen* in order to save the deity *Kehi*. Described in the *7 Buddhist Paths* in the 80th volume of the *Ruijū Kokushi*, it was prayed that a Buddhist temple would be built for Wakasa's *Hiko* deity. Additionally, according to the *Jingu-ji Garan Engi Narabini-shizai-chō* (lit. “Jingu-ji temple Origin Accounting Book”), in 763 (the 7th year of the *Tenpyō-hōji* era), a small Buddhist hall was built in Ise with the hope that the deity *Tado* could undergo *shinshin-ridatsu*, and the deity became referred to as the Great *Tado* Bodhisattva. *Kami* were also made into *Dharmapala*, a guardian deity for Buddhism. Towards the latter half of the 11th century, *Shinbutsushugo* further developed into *honji suikaku* (the thought that Japanese deities are incarnations of buddha and bodhisattva).

The *Hachiman* deity of *Usa* was also granted Bodhisattva rank. After the end of the *Fujiwara-no-Hirotosugu* rebellion in 737 (9th year of the *Tenpyō* era), the Sutra of the Supreme King and a three-story pagoda were donated to Hachiman Shrine as a symbol of divine virtue. In 749 (the first year of the *Tenpyō-Shōhō* era), *Hachiman* received a holy message that he should assist in the completion of the Great Buddha of Todai-ji Temple, so he sent a shrine maiden from *Usa* to Kyoto to serve as a “*negi-ni*” (nun-priest, according to the *Shoku Nihongi*). Following this, *Hachiman* received Bodhisattva status in the Nara period. As the Great Bodhisattva *Hachiman*, *Hachiman* was pictured as a monk, and statues of this

¹⁸ Please refer to Itō (2012) and Yoshida (2024) for more information about Shinbutsu-sūgō.

figure became worshipped in Todai-ji's Tamukeyama-Hachiman Shrine and Yakushi-ji's Yasumigaoka-Hachiman Shrine. By receiving the title of Bodhisattva, one's original beliefs were folded into Buddhism. The deity of Munakata was also given Bodhisattva status after the *Tengyō* Rebellion in 941 (4th year of the *Tengyō* era), making him into the Great Bodhisattva Munakata¹⁹.

The first written record of Buddhism in Munakata is the 5th version of the *Ruijū Kokushi*, dated 3rd of March, 794 (13th year of the *Enryaku* era), which states that the royal court stationed monks in *Usa* (Buzen Province), Munakata (Chikuzen Province), and Aso (Higo Province). These monks read sutras in front of *kami*, transforming the *kami* into monks themselves (Kumagai, 1987). It can also be presumed that in this same period Buddhist temples were built attached to shrines (“*jingu-ji*”; *New History of Munakata City*, 2023, 114). In 838 (5th year of the *Jōwa* era), monks were sent to Munakata shrine to pray for the safety of the Japanese envoys to Tang China. According to the *Chūyūki*, the current Buddhist temple was built in 1133 (2nd year of the *Chōshō* era), after the original temple that had been built in 1119 (2nd year of the *Genei* era) burned down; 1119 is considered the year the temple was established (*New Munakata City History*, 2023, 144). The *Daigū-ji* priest of Munakata Shrine during the medieval period used foreign trade as an economic base for the shrine and built a golden age for the temple by controlling politics and religious ceremonies in the region. The clan's prosperity continued until Munakata Ujisada died of sickness in 1586 (14th year of the *Tenshō* period) and the lineage ended. The center of Buddhism at the time was the *Shingon* Buddhist Temple Chinkoku-ji. According to the *Ryakuengi*, after Kūkai visited Munakata as part of his pilgrimage when he returned to Japan from China. It is said that he decided it would become a place suitable for ascetism because saw purple clouds hanging over Mt. *Byōbudake* in the east. He then

retreated to *Ryōju* Cave and founded what eventually became Chinkoku-ji temple. However, details regarding the factuality of this cannot be confirmed, and the story ultimately remains a legend. According to *Daijō-kanpu* documents regarding Chinkoku-ji, in 1265 (2nd year of the *Bun'ei* era), the holy man Kōgan was appointed as the elder of the temple, with his disciples to become his successors. Hearing that his appointment had been the wish of the feudal lord, the Munakata *Daigū-ji*, Kōgan requested temple land. When the four boundaries of the temple grounds were granted, Kōgan built two temples (the main hall and *Ryōjudō* Hall), honored the *kami* of the five Munakata shrines (*Okitsu-miya*, *Nakatsu-miya*, *Hetsu-miya*, *Konomi Gongen*, and *Orihata Shrine*) as Buddhist deities, and demarcated the shrines as places from which the safety of the nation will be ensured (Hanada, 2012, 83)²⁰. To this day the 5 shrines each have their own Buddhist deity that they venerate, the *Vairocana* (*Dainichi Nyōrai*), the *Shaka* Buddha (*Shaka Nyōrai*), the *Bhaisajyaguru* (*Yakushi Nyōrai*), the *Amitābha* (*Amida Nyōrai*) and the *Cintāmanicakra* (*Nyōrin-kannon*). The temple's *hibutsu* (lit. “secret Buddha,” kept away from public view), which is in the form of *Fudō Myō-ō*, is said to have been made in Heian times. Inside the temple grounds is the Seated Amithaba Stone Monument (inscribed as *Genei* year 2, or 1119), which is considered the oldest stone monument, Itabi (板碑) in Japan, as well as a medieval stone pagoda and medieval graves. The temple also preserves a double-lidded bronze sutra container which is inscribed with the dates 1138 (4th year of the *Hōen* period) and 1141 (1st year of the *Eiji* period). It is hypothesized that this sutra was buried as a prayer for rain (*New Munakata City History*, 2023, 97-100). The *Shaka Nyōrai* (*Buddha*) and the 8 Dragon Kings are carved into the walls of the *Ryōju* Cave, which lies behind the *Okunoin* and *Fudō* Hall. Prayers for rain is one of the reasons why the temple was established, and in 1263 (3rd

¹⁹ The spelling of Munakata was 宗形 in the Nara period and became 宗像 in the Heian period (*History of Munakata City*, 1999, 66-67).

²⁰ According to the *Munakata Daigūji Gebunan*, in the 3rd year of the *Bun'ei* era, monk Kōgan was appointed as the head priest of the temple and submitted a long-day practice of unwavering devotion (Hanada, 2012, 83).

year of the *Hōchō* era) Kōgan fulfilled this by chanting the Prayer for Rain Sutra in the *Fudō* Cave (now known as the *Ryōju* Cave). Munakata's medieval rituals converged Munakata Shrine and Chinkoku-ji as one. According to the *Fragment of the Topography of Chikuzen Province*, Chinkoku-ji Temple went through a period of neglect after the *Daigū-ji* Ujitaku passed away, until *Shugendo* monks settled there in the *Bun'ei* era (1592-1595; Hanada, 2012, 85). *Shugen* ascetic practices continued into the early modern period. Currently, on April 28th of every year, ascetics from around northern Kyūshū gather in Chinkoku-ji to perform a *saito-goma* (skt. *hōmā*) outdoor fire ritual.

6. “Three Shrines as One System”

The most recent building among the Munakata shrines is Tashima (*Hetsu-miya*), which was built in the 12th century. Tashima's ritual celebrations were unique²¹. According to the *Records from the Seat of the Great Bodhisattva of the Three Munakata Temples* from 1277 (*Munakata Sanjo Daibōsatsu Goza Shidai*, 3rd year of the *Kenji* era), Munakata's Three Goddesses were worshipped at a *sōja* under the names First Great Bodhisattva, Second Great Bodhisattva and Third Great Bodhisattva. Collectively they were referred to as *Sanjo Daibōsatsu* (lit. “Great Bodhisattvas of the Three Temples). The Second and Third Great Bodhisattvas of Munakata were also venerated individually at their own temples. *Sannnomiya* was a *sōja*, *chūden*, and *jishusha* all in one²².

Shinbutsu *sūgō* developed into *honji suijaku* (the thought that Japanese deities are incarnations of Buddha and Bodhisattva) in the middle of the 11th century, a belief in which Buddhist deities from India appeared in the form of Japanese *kami*. By the 12th century, *kami*'s Buddhist deity identities were decided, and *Kami* and *Hotoke* “became one” (Yoshida, 2024, 285-347). The concept of

honji suijaku was also accepted in Munakata, and by the 13th century it was fully established as a belief.

The *Origin of the Great Bodhisattva Munakata* (*Munakata Daibōsatsu Engi*; compiled at the end of the Kamakura era) states, that in the years of *Ten'nō* (781-782), the oracle of Munakata Shrine constructed a shrine building in the manor of the *Daigūji*, from which the Three Goddesses were worshipped as one with their Buddhist equivalents. The *sōja* worshipped *Tagorihime* and the *Dainichi Nyōrai*, in the *chūden*, *Tagitsuhime* and the *Shaka Nyōrai*, and in the *jishusha*, *Ichikishimahime* and the *Yakushi Nyōrai*. It was in this period that the gods and the Buddhist deity (本地仏, *Honjibutsu*) that each Goddess personified was firmly established (Iwata, 2007, 235-238). According to the *Records of the Rituals Held in the 22nd Year of the Shōhei Era* (*Shōhei Nijūsan'nen Munakatamiya Nenchū Gyōji*; 1368, further referred to as the *Shōhei Era Annual Rituals*), *Teiichi-daijingu*, the sub-shrine of *Okinomishima*, venerated *Tagorishima*; *Teini-daijingu*, the sub-shrine of *Oshima*, venerated *Tagitsuhime*; and *Teisan-daijingu*, the sub-shrine of Tashima venerated *Ichikishimahime*. In the case that the Three Goddesses and *Okinoshima* are celebrated as one, Tashima's *sōja* serves as the *Teiichi-no-miya*, *Oshima* as the *Teini-no-miya*, and the Tashima as the *Teisan-no-miya*. The *sōja* was built on Tashima, creating a system where two distinct features (a single goddess, and all 3 goddesses at once) can both be worshipped in Tashima. This was done because it was difficult to reach *Okinoshima*, and even more difficult to build a large shrine befitting of a *sōja* there (*New History of Munakata City*, 2023, 14-115). The ultimate deity of the Munakata Three Goddess Belief is *Okinoshima* (息御嶋), which is the island of *Okinoshima* (沖ノ島) itself. The genuine *kami* itself has no need for an official name. 息御嶋 is a medieval expression, a name which can be presumed to refer to *Okinoshima* as a “breathing” (息), and thus living (生き), island. It is here that the united form of

²¹ From here on I heavily rely on Kawakubo's (2011) analysis.

²² Currently, the *sōja* is *Hetsu-miya*, the *chūden* is *Okitsu-miya Shrine*, and the *jishusha* is *Nakatsu-miya*. The former site of the *jishusha* Shrine was on a small southern hill.

Teiichi-no-miya, *Teini-no-miya* and *Teisan-no-miya* can be seen²³. This is referred to as the “Three Shrines as One System.” Each has a lesser deity; the *Teiichi-no-miya*’s is the *Zenjō-Nijo-Sayū*²⁴, *Teini-no-miya*’s is the *Jinushigami*, and *Teisan-no-miya*’s is *Garan Myōjin*. *Zenjō*, *Jinushigami*, and *Garan Myōjin* are expressions of **Shinbutsu** sūgō. In the grounds of Chinkoku-ji, *dōtō-garan* (堂塔伽藍) buildings were lined in rows. In the *Ancient Layout of Tashima Shrine* (*Tashima-miya Shato Koezu*; 1617, 3rd year of the *Genwa* era)²⁵, an east pagoda, west pagoda, *Maitreya* (*miroku*) hall, treasure hall, sutra hall, and bell tower, etc. are depicted.

The “Three Shrines as One System” is not just limited to Munakata. The Shikaumi (志賀海) Shrine consists of *Uwatsu-gū*, *Nakatsu-gū* and *Okitsu-gū*, which worship the *kami* *Uwatsuwatatsumi*, *Nakatsuwatatsumi*, and *Okitsuwatatsumi*. Originally located Katsuma, which is the place where *Uwatsuwatatsumi* descended on earth, he was then shifted to being enshrined in the current location surrounded by the three mountains of Mt. Katsu (勝山), Mt. Mikasa (三笠山), and Mt. Kinugasa (衣笠山). The Shikaumi Shrine displays a combination form that includes both sea and mountain *kami*. Mt. Hiko and Mt. Hōman similarly have the three shrines *Shimo-no-miya*, *Naka-no-miya* and *Kami-no-miya*. The shrine on Hirado Island’s *Shijiki Shrine* (listed in the *Engishiki*) represents mountain worship of sea-faring folk. On the southwestern part of Hirado Island is *Oki-no-miya* (which represents Okinoshima), on the foothills of Miyanoura’s Mt. Himorogi there is *Ji-no-miya* (representing *Hetsu-miya*), and Mt. Shijiki (347m) has is the *Naka-no-miya* halfway up its mountainsides and *Kami-no-miya* on its mountaintop. These are further examples of mountain worship that combines sea and mountain *kami*. As has been shown, sacred sites that combine the three shrines were

established in various places in Japan.

7. Priest Shikijō and Mt. Hiko

Priest Shikijō (1159-1242) activities, which took place towards the end of the Heian era, very important to Munakata’s history (*New History of Munakata City*, 2023, 160-171). Priest Shikijō is famous for managing the feat of transcribing all of the Buddhist Sutras of Tripitaka on his own. In 1159 (1st year of the *Eiryaku* period) he was born as the son of the head priest of Munakata Shrine, Kanesuke, and the priestess *Myōhō-ni*. He was originally called *Ryōyū*, then changed his Buddhist name to *Keiyū* and *Eiyū*, until he finally took the name Shikijō. It is highly likely that he originally transcribed the sutras in memorial for those killed in the Gempei War. At the Battle of *Dan-no-ura* in 1185 (1st year of the *Bunchi* era), the young Emperor Antoku drowned himself, and the Taira clan was brought to its demise. In the 42-year period beginning 2 years after this war in 1187 (3rd year of the *Bunchi* era) until 1228 (2nd year of the *Antei* era), Priest Shikijō continuously transcribed the sutras. By the end, he managed to transcribe 5,048 volumes. He received support from the Munakata Shrine, and Song people who traded with the region also contributed materials such as ink, brushes, and papers (Tamura, 2015, 69-70). The original Song sutras that served as the primary text for his transcription no longer remain at Munakata Shrine, but over 4,300 of the volumes he transcribed still exist.

On the back of 40 volumes he produced in the one-year period beginning from August of his 3rd year of transcription (1190, 3rd year of the *Kenkyū* era), Priest Shikijō wrote the message, “Written with water from the Mt. Hiko Gongen,” which illuminates the connections he had with Mt. Hiko (*Munakata’s Mountain Worship*, 2016,

²³ According to historical records, the first sighting of the *Teiichi-no-miya* was in 1241 (2nd year of the *Ninji* era), of the *Teini-no-miya* in 1277 (3rd year of the *Kenji* era), and of the *Teisan-no-miya* in 1201 (1st year of the *Ken’nin* era). For more details, please refer to Vol.1 of *The History of Munakata Shrine* (1961, 221-284).

²⁴ *Zenshin* is considered to be the manifestation of *Dharmapala*.

²⁵ This map was found folded inside of the *Further Considerations of the Munakata Chronicles* (*Munakata-ki Tsuikō*; 1617). A photo of the map is included in Vol.1 of *The History of Munakata Shrine* (1961).

50-51). After writing in this message for a year, the next September he changed the message to, “Mt. Hiko *Sanjo Gongen*.” The first appearance of, “Mt. Hiko *Gongen*,” in written texts was in the *Records of the Ninmon Bodhisattva* (*Ninmon Bōsatsu Chōki*; 1152, 2nd year of the *Nihei* era). This document records the legend of how the Mt. *Rokugō Manzan* (六郷満山) came to be. Written in 1182 (2nd year of the *Eiwa* era), Priest Shikijō’s use of the term is the second oldest remaining in written documents. The “Mt. Hiko *Gongen kisui*” (貴水, lit. “precious water”) that Priest Shikijō mentions in his message is thought to refer to the holy water that springs in the Hannya Cave, a cave that is considered to be the origin of Mt. Hiko. To this day, there is an annual *Miikesarae* Ritual (holy water purification) that occurs in respect to Hannya Cave’s holy water. The Hannya Cave, also known as Tamayakatsu (spiritual cave), is the most important holy site on Mt. Hiko, and the use of this cave’s holy water to transcribe the sutras would have increased the power of the sutras themselves. This may have been modeled on *Tendai* methods of copying Buddhist sutras, which are said to have been first developed by monk *Ennin* (円仁). In *Tendai* methods, Buddhist sutras are transcribed using special paper, brushes, and ink, and then offered at the summits of sacred mountains to accumulate merit.

The *Mahayana Esoteric* Sutra dated the 27th of May, 1194 (5th year of the *Kenkyū* era), which is collected in Mt. Hiko Shrine, has an appendix that evidences connections between worship in Munakata and Mt. Hiko. Priest Shikijō writings in the *Records of Mt. Hiko, Chinzei* (*Chinzei Hikosan Engi*; 1572, 3rd year of the *Genki* era), also display that exchanges between the Mt. Hiko region and Munakata went deep (*Shinto Records*, 1987, 27). A sutra transcription hall in which transcriptions were stored existed in the grounds of Munakata Shrine, but it was lost to a fire in 1557 (3rd year of the *Kōji* era). Any transcriptions that were saved then are currently being stored in the Munakata Taisha Shrine. The

well-known Amida Sutra Stone²⁶, which serves as a record of trade with the Song Dynasty, was made by a Song craftsman who received the order from the *Daigū-ji* Munakata Ujikuni, as an offering to his late father Ujimi. There is an inscription on the stone in Chinese text that dates its production to 1195 (6th year of the *Kenkyū* era). The stone was originally kept in the Amida Sutra Hall, but it is currently housed within the Munakata Taisha Shrine and can be seen on display in the shrine’s Treasure Hall. Buddhist culture in Munakata during the medieval period displayed diverse developments and strongly planted roots. However, when the lineage line of the *Daigū-ji* Munakata came to an end in 1586 (14th year of the *Tenshō* era) the shrine’s influence decreased, and the period of Shinbutsu sūgō

that began in the 8th century and continued through the 16th century came to an end. During the Edo period, Munakata Taisha was restored as “Tashima Shrine” under the patronage of the feudal lord of Chikuzen but many of the shrine’s medieval rituals were not revived. In 1665 (5th year of the *Kanbun* era), the shrine turned to a fundamentalist form of Shinto, and Buddhist elements were gradually reverted to Shinto. Further, in 1871 (4th year of the Meiji period), the Meiji government declared that shrines were sites of the state ritual, which led to the form of Shinto belief called “Shrine Shinto” to spread to Munakata, completely cutting away any existing Buddhist influences.

8. Mt. Hiko and Munakata

Exchange between Mt. Hiko and Munakata is recorded in texts about the origins of Mt. Hiko. The *Mt. Hiko Records* (彦山流記, *Hikosan Ruki*; 1213, 1st year of the *Kempo* era) is a series of texts from the period when Mt. Hiko was a place of *Tiandai* ascetic practice and had not yet shifted to *Shugendo* asceticism²⁷. According to the *Ruki*, after the Mt. Hiko *Gongen* threw 5 swords from the

²⁶ The story that *Taira-no-Shigemori* ordered the stone is a myth.

²⁷ The appendix of *The Records Mt. Hiko*, states that the era name transitioned from the 3rd year of *Kenryaku* to the first year of *Kenpo* (1213) on the 8th of July that year, but there are doubts about this.

Magadha Kingdom in India, he passed through the former site of Prince Jin on Mt. Tiantai in China, and then headed eastward, landing in Buzen Province, Japan, in the year of the Tiger. He first tried lodging at the Kawara Myōjin Shrine, but was denied from doing so, so he ordered *Kongo Dōji* (Vajrakilaya) to uproot the trees on Mt. Kawara. The *Gongen* then climbed Mt. Hiko and met the *jinushigami Kitayama San-gozen*, who handed over land to him. The *jinushigami* stayed on the mountainside for a while, after which it moved to Mt. Konomi. The place where Mt. Hiko *Gongen* originally descended from the heavens in the form of an octagonal water spirit, was the Hannya Cave (*Shinto Records*, 1987, 2).

The *Records of Mt. Hiko, Chinzei* (1572, 3rd year of the *Genki* era) are records of the period when Mt. Hiko became a place of *Shugendo* ascetic practice. Its first section takes from the *Nihon Shoki*, in telling how following a pledge between *Amaterasu* and *Susano'o*, the Three Goddesses *Tagorihime-no-mikoto*, *Tagitsuhime-no-mikoto* and *Ichikishimahime-no-mikoto*, as well as 5 male deities that included *Yasakani* and *Ameno'oshihomimi-no-mikoto* were born. The Three Goddesses metamorphosed and went to *Tsukushizu*, descending *Usajima* and crossing Mt. Hiko. There was already a *jinushigami* in the peaks of the northern mountain range, but he handed over the peak of his mountain to *Ichikishimahime* and moved lower, to the center of the mountainside. *Ameno'oshihomimi-no-mikoto* became a hawk that flew to the east, eventually moving to the Octagonal Spirit Stone. *Ōnamuchi-no-kami* presented the northern mountain range to *Ameno'oshihomimi-no-Mikoto*, and took *Tagorihime* and *Tagitsuhime* as his wives, remaining on the mountain and calling himself Mt. *Hiko* (日子). The Three Goddesses continued on to Munakata Shrine, while *Ōnamuchi-no-kami* went to Mt. Konomi. *Izanagi-no-Mikoto* descended to the mountain range's *Nakadake*, and *Izanami-no-Mikoto* descended to *Minamidake* (*Shinto Records*, 1987, 19).

What these two records share in common is how Mt.

Konomi serves as a transit point. In the *Mt. Hiko Records*, Mt. Konomi is where the *jinushikami* who previously lived on the northern peak of Mt. Hiko moves; and in the *Records of Mt. Hiko, Chinzei*, it is where *Ōnamuchi-no-kami* moves, who had until then also settled on the northern peak of Mt. Hiko. Of the Three Goddesses, *Tagorihime* and *Tagitsuhime* became the wives of *Ōnamuchi-no-kami*, but they then part ways from him and continue on to reach Munakata Shrine. No details are recorded about the movements of *Ichikishimahime-no-Mikoto*. The Three Goddesses move from the heavens through *Tsukushizu*, *Usajima* and Mt. Hiko, eventually settling in Munakata Shrine, and it is the records of Mt. Hiko that tell this story.

The link between Munakata and Mt. Hiko is Mt. Konomi. According to the *Munakata Shrine Records* (*Munakata Shaki*), *Kumano Gongen*, who was originally enshrined in the Kii Province, shifted to being enshrined in Mt. Konomi in 857 (1st year of the *Tenan* era). The *Kumano Sansho Gongen* is enshrined under the *Sanzon* Stone just below Mt. Konomi's summit, and Oji Shrine is located at the summit itself²⁸. The *Kumano Sansho Gongen's* Buddhist form is the *Amida Nyorai*, which has not changed, regardless of his enshrined locations changing. The sub-clan of the Manakata clan, called the Konomi clan, were those involved in the rituals held at Mt. Konomi. In the medieval period, the Mt. Konomi May Festival involved a *mikoshi* procession to Munakata Shrine, where festivities were held in collaboration with Orihata Shrine at *Hamadono*. At Life Release Rituals, *Hōjō-e* (放生会) held in August, a *mikoshi* was taken to Munakata Shrine, and various folk performance were done together with the shrine priests of Orihata Shrine. One such related boat ritual, the *Funakurabe*, is always won by the Konomi Shrine. *Kumano Gongen* on Mt. Konomi is considered a source of power, and together with Orihata Shrine, it supports Munakata Shrine. Konomi and Orihata are based on the spiritual power of the mountain. Eventually, in the early modern period, the *mikoshi* procession ritual

²⁸ The Song-style lion stone, talc statue of a goddess, and standing stone Buddha statue that were at *Kumano Gongen* are now preserved in a museum.

disappeared. In this same period, Konomi Temple became part of the spring peak pilgrimage of Mt. Hōman *Shugen* pilgrimage, maintaining its role as a junction between Mt. Hiko and Munakata. In summary, Munakata Shrine was incorporated into wide-ranging network of mountain worship.

The six Munakata Shrines (Munakata Shrine and its sub-shrines) enshrine the Three Goddesses, *Konomi Gongen*, *Orihata Myojin*, and *Kodaishi Gongen*. The latter three deities are mountain *kami*, making mountain worship deeply rooted in the Munakata Shrines.

9. Kagura, *Miko* and *Hosa*

One characteristic of the medieval period Munakata Shrines is the richness of their folk performance art. *Kagura* performances combined spiritual *mikagura* that took place within shrines and folk *kagura*. The encounter of two kind of *Kagura* dance is very important. According to the *Ōan Shinto Ritual Records* (*Ōan Shingi Shidai*), the *Toka* Ritual takes place for 3 days beginning on the 15th of January in the Munakata Honsha and the sub-shrines in its grounds. On the 16th, the ritual moves to the Orihata Shrine, and on the 17th it moves to the *Konomi Gongen* auxiliary shrine. During the ritual, the procession circles each of the shrines singing a *toka* song, and pairs of *busha* archers shoot at targets with bows and arrows. On the 16th, *mikagura* is performed in the *Teisannomiya*, *Teininomiya* and *Teiichinomiya* in that order, as *hayakarakami* songs, *ninchō-mai* dances, and *naishi-mai* dances²⁹ continue.

The Grand *Kagura* Ceremony is held on February 16th, around the time of the Spring Equinox. This grand *kagura* ritual takes place in February and November, giving it the name of “The Two Season *Kagura*” (according to the *Azucarisho Bichūmori Tachibana Kazushigehe Shosha*). This ritual originates in Imperial Palace performances of *Naishidokoro-no-Mikagura*, but in Munakata there is a

naishi-mai dance after the *ninchō-mai* dance, which differs from the original. In the *Naishidokoro-no-Mikagura*, the ritual leader dances the *Hayakarakami* and *Sono-koma* while holding a branch of sakai (clevera japonica), however in Munakata there is no *Sono-koma*. The performance continues with a *niwabi*, *Achime Saho*, nine forms of plant harvesting, *maebari*, Chitose (Thousand Years) Song, sped up *naishi-mai* (Eight Maiden Dance, *Yaotome-mai*), *Hoshi-sanshu* (Three Stars) song, *Asakura* and *Sono-koma*. It largely follows the *Naishidokoro Mikagura* of the Imperial Palace but developed in its own unique way. The *naishi-mai* (lit. “maiden of honor dance”) likely received its name due to the face it is performed by eight maidens. *Kagura* was also performed at Orihata Shrine and Konomi Gongen Shrine. According to records of the *Munakata Shrine Annual Shinto Ritual Offerings* (*Munakata-miya Nenchū Shinji Gokuka Gyōji*), Munakata Shrine began its own *kagura* troupe in the mid-14th century, and performances of the “Two Seasons *Kagura*” continued until the mid-15th century (*New History of Munakata City*, 129, 140). Munakata’s *kagura* traditions have deep roots.

A variety of performances take place during the Life Release ritual (Hōjō-e) held from August 13th to 15th. On August 13th, Konomi Shrine has a parade, after which *bugaku* and sumo wrestling are held. In the evenings there are performances of *furyu*, *dengaku*, *ennen*, and *sarugaku*. On the 14th, after the five shrines’ *mikoshi* are paraded, *furyu*, *dengaku*, *ennen*, and *sarugaku* take place. On the 15th, after more rounds of *bugaku* dance and sumo wrestling, a *funakurabe* (lit. “boat battle”) ritual is held in which boats representing the five shrines compete, with the sacred boat of Konomi Shrine always winning. On the banks of the Tsurikawa River, an *Ō-no-mai* (lit. “King’s Dance”) is performed to the tune of Shrine *Sarugaku* flute musicians. After a memorial service and ritual offering of copies of the Great *Prajnaparamaya* Sutra that are

²⁹ *Ōan Shinto Ritual Records* (compiled in the *Collection of Japanese Festivals and Events*) mentions the *naishi-mai* dance, and other version *Shinto Records* mentions the *Eight Maiden Dance*. Please refer to Documents of Munakata Shrine, vol3 2009;189-374. On the several versions of *Ōan Shinto Ritual Records*,

customary parts of the Life Release, performances continued, including *bugaku*, *hitotsumono*, processions, and sumo wrestling. This Life Release ritual was incredibly lively compared to that of the Usa Hachiman Shrine.

In September, the *Okun'ichi* ritual is held over a span of 3 days. According to *Annual Festivities of the Shōhei Period*, rituals were held at the *Teiichi-no-miya* on September 9th, at the Orihata Daimyōjin Shrine on September 10th, and at Konomi's sub-shrine, the Matohara Oshiro Daimyōjin Shrine, on September 11th. At each of these, sutra chanting offerings were made. According to the *Ōan Shinto Ritual Records*, performances during this ritual included *bugaku*, *kagura*, sumo, and *yabusame* (horseback archery). With the immense wealth of Munakata Shrine as a financial base, a wide variety of performing arts were accepted from the Imperial Court.

The *mikagura* ritual would begin on Oshima on December 1st, with *mikagura* and *narekoshi* rituals taking place on the 3rd. According to the *Ōan Shinto Ritual Records*, on December 25th, the *Ichino-kai*, special priest who oversee Okinoshima rituals on Oshima, sail to Tashima to join the Eight Maiden ritual on Tashima with other priests and offered an Island *Mikagura*. Fortune-telling of Okinoshima and Oshima's destinies takes place in the *Afukori* ritual, and participants play the roles of the Six Generals of the Silla Expedition (*History of the Munakata Shrines*, Vol. 3, 1966, 289). The Oshima *kagura* was a grand affair. The *Teini-no-miya* Shrine's "Oshima Shinto and Buddhist Rituals" section of the *Annual Festivities of the Shōhei Period* mentions the *Shimo Kagura* ritual, with 21 shrines performing "a non-stop seven days and seven nights of *mikagura*." It was an unbelievably large-scale *kagura* performance. Unlike Tashima's *Hetsu-miya*, Oshima did not accept the "Imperial Court *mikagura*" but instead developed its own "folk *kagura*."

The Eight Maiden ritual held on December 25th at

Tashima began at the hour of the Rooster (evening) and was performed in order at the *Kamitaka-miya*, *Shimotaka-miya* in Mt. Munakata, and finally at the *Teiichino-miya*. In the "*Kine-no-Hosa* and Eight Maidens dance" ritual (Kawakubo 2011, 252)³⁰, *hosa* likely means half monk and half priest. It is said of the ritual that, "*Kine-no-Hosa* recites a ritual prayer in the place of a chanter." The December *Take* festivals of Orihata Shrine and Konomi Shrine, as well as Eight Maidens dance use *katsururai* paper as sacred offerings, giving them special significance. The final chapter of the *Annual Festivities of the Shōhei Period* writes that 5,921 rituals took place annually, so it can be said that large-scale and long-term rituals developed in the region.

Of particular note are the shrine maidens and priests, the *miko* and *hosa*, who perform the folk *kagura*. The 10th volume of the *Ōan Shinto Ritual Records* records a *Konomi-tōika* ritual on January 17th, "There is a dance by *miko* and *hosa*" (*Collection of Japanese Festivals and Events*); on January 16th it is written that, "*Miko* and *hosa* fulfil the role of *mikagura*"; and, "*Miko* and *hosa kagura*" is also listed in the Orihata Shrine Ritual held on September 10th (Watanabe, 2016, 16). Every listing writes them in the order of *miko-hosa*, with *miko* taking precedence. In the Munakata region, *miko* were also called *myōbu* or *ichi*. In the *Ōan Shinto Ritual Records*, it is listed that the *ichi-no-myōbu*, *ni-no-myōbu*, *shikihan-no-myōbu* (from Orihata), and *konomi-no-myōbu* participate in the May Festival. The Appendix lists many other shrine maidens, including the *sō-no-ichi* from Arajō Village and Katsuura Village.

In medieval Kyushu, shrine maidens included *myōbu*, *naishi*, and *miko*, and they performed dances in pairs with male professionals such as musicians, *ikuna*, male *kagura* performers, *kagura* masters, and *hosa*. *Hosa* were practitioners with spiritual powers, who were also influenced by Ō. *Hosa* existed not only in temples and shrines but also among the general villages. The *Miyaza Shomen* (1583, 11th year of the *Tenshō* era), a report by

³⁰ Kawakubo believes that the *Kine-no-Hosa* is a *Shugendo* practitioner connected to Kinen Tayū, who performed the Yūdate ceremony at the first shrine relocation in 1572 (Kawakubo, 2011, 28). However, he is not a *Shugendo* practitioner.

Furuno Kiyoto during his survey with the leaders of the Nosaka Shrine in Munakata, listed *notto* (hosa, prayer), *sōgyō* (monk's form), and *mikoto* (miko) (Furuno, 1970, 20). While the Eight Maidens Dance and *Naishi-mai* dances of Munakata have disappeared, an Eight Maidens Dance still takes place as part of the autumn *Shinko-shiki* of the nearby Shikaumi Shrine. The dance, performed clockwise to the accompaniment of drums and gongs, is said to lure *Azumi-no-isora* out of the sea. Next, the *isora-mai* dance's *sei-no-mai* (細男舞, a dance performed with a *kakko* drum), is performed, recalling the history of the Azumi clan.

The oldest historical document relating to *miko-hōja* (hosa) is the *Bizen Province Ichinomiya Shrine Law* (*Bizen-no-kuni Ichinomiya-shaho*), dated 1342 (1st year of the *Kōei* era; Kibitsu Shrine). Male priests played music on bows and drums, chanted verses, and sang songs, leading the *miko* to dance and enter a state of divine possession. This was influenced by the techniques of *yorigitō* (prayers for possession) in *Shugendo*. The techniques of *hosa* and *miko*, which can be summarized as "those who cause spirit possession" and "those possessed by the deities," were incorporated into *kagura*, and are particularly evident in the *kōjin kagura* of the Bingo region (Suzuki, 2001, 123-195; Suzuki, 2025b, 116-124). *Myōbu-mai*, which developed from collaborative performances between shrine priests and maidens, remained in practice in the *Sago-minato* and *Nii* areas of Tsushima Island until the 1970s (Suzuki, 2004, 161-165, 221-229). However, today only the *myōbu-mai* of Watatsumi Shrine in *Nii* remains (Watanabe, 2016, 12-48). Although the *myōbu-mai* and *naishi-mai* of Munakata Shrine are no longer in practice, they remain in records, providing a good insight into the true nature of medieval folk performance, especially, *kagura*.

10. Munakata Daibōsatsu Engi (Origin of the Great Bodhisattva Munakata)

The *Munakata Daibōsatsu Engi* (Origin of the Great

Bodhisattva Munakata; completed in the end of the Kamakura period), was written in response to the Kamakura Shogunate's order for all major shrines and temples across the country to pray for the surrender of foreign enemies in preparation for a Mongol invasion. Many shrines and temples used the story of Empress Jingū as their theme of their prayers (Kawakubo, 2011, 244; *New History of Munakata City*, 2023, 143-160). The *Engi* describes how, during Empress Jingū's expedition to Silla, "General Gōseki held the *minagate* (御長手, red and white cloth) in reverence. He waved the *minagate* as a signal to throw the *kanshu* and *manshu* (stone with special power to control ocean tide) into the sea. After returning to Japan, he settled on Ikimishima (Okinoshima), where he stuck the *minagate* into the ground. Miraculously, three identical bamboo stalks sprouted from a glass jar every year. The God of Munakata raised and swung the *minagate* to fight away foreign enemies, and this same *minagate* was then presented to the Imperial Court as an offering, but the same bamboo as that which was used for the *minagate* sprouted from a glass jar." The *Munakata Shrine Oral Records* state that a bamboo stalk grew every year at the site of a flagpole erected on Okinoshima, and that the "Great Protector of Munakata" performed a ritual on Okinoshima every winter. This is the origin of the *minagate* festival, which is performed by crossing over to Okinoshima in spring, summer, fall, and winter. Bamboo brought from Okinoshima during this ritual is said to renew the power of the deity enshrined at Tashima's *Teiichi-no-miya*.

This *Engi* is characterized by its emphasis on the magical power of the ritual instrument - a pole with a red and white cloth attached to its top called the "*minagate*"; the appearance of the Great Bodhisattva Munakata as a "personified deity" named General Gōseki; and its claim that the source of the instrument's unique magical power is Okinoshima. As has been noted by other academics, it differs from the *Sumiyoshi Engi* and its derivatives, the *Kashii Engi*, the *Kōra Engi*, and the *Usa Takusenshu*. In the *Sumiyoshi Engi*, General Takaiso Gōseki is considered the father of *Sumiyoshi-no-kami*, but in the *Munakata Engi*,

General Gōseki is presented as a unique hero. The story also does not share much about Empress Jingū's actions. This *Engi* tells of an expedition to Silla, not the Three Kingdoms of the *sankan seibatsu*. What could be the reason for this? The Munakata clan likely created this *Engi* to demonstrate its distinctiveness from the neighboring clans, such as the *Azumi* and *Tsumori*, and to convey the legitimacy of their rituals. The source of the spiritual power in the story is Okinoshima, which the *Engi* refers to as *Konpongoyōgōnochi* (lit. “the land where deities show their true form”). By regarding Okinoshima as the source of power, the Munakata clan was able to demonstrate their superiority over the powerful shrines and temples venerating *Hachiman*. However, practice of the *Minagate* ritual was stopped after the *Nanboku-cho* period, reasons for this need to be analyzed. In October 1962 (37th year of the Shōwa era), the first *Miare* festival took place, a sea-faring deity procession based on the *Minagate* and Hōjō-e, Life Release rituals. Though taking inspiration from these historic rituals, the only portion that continued from the past was the *sarugaku okina-mai* dance³¹. The *Okina-mai*, performed wearing masks identical to those used in the 1578 (6th year of the *Tensho* era) *Sengu* Ceremony, was revived by the Noh performer *Kameishi* in 1675 (3rd year of the *Enpō* era) and has since then continued to be performed. Since 1925 (3rd year of the *Taisho* era), Noh performers were put in charge of this dance, and in the present day it is performed during mid-day in the autumn festival that is celebrated every year from October 1st to 3rd. Deeply disconnected from the past, the *Miare* festival was something entirely new (Mori, 2011, 8-16), and is practiced as an invented tradition.

11. Ongoing Challenges

In this paper, I have attempted to present various interpretations of the festivals and traditions of Munakata's Okinoshima. Regarding ancient times, I have avoided

using Shinto terms such as *iwakura*, *kamunabi* (*kannabi*), and *himorogi*. Regarding mountains, I did not use the term *shintaisan* (神体山, sacred mountain), as it is a modern concept that cannot be used frivolously (Suzuki, 2025a, 16-18). I have also consciously avoided the term Shinto where possible.

Very few historical documents exist about Munakata in ancient times, and previous research on Okinoshima has made it clear that archaeological materials are a significant tool in the place of such documents. However, since there are no remaining records specifically regarding rituals, conclusions can only be made from indirect comparisons with other historical documents. To resolve this dilemma, I decided to shift my focus to the "spiritual landscape" that emerges when you walk in the site. The word "landscape" refers to physical forms. Thus, here I use "spiritual landscape" as a way of interpreting "invisible scenery" as a landscape. "Scenery" can be divided into the "visible" and "invisible." Japan's *kami* were originally invisible, so a "spiritual landscape" can be considered a way of observing these *kami*. It involves an honest reexamination of the influences between all things in this world, including the fluctuations in nature, the motion of celestial bodies, the blowing of the wind, the swell of the ocean, the appearance of mountains and rocks, and the rustling of trees. It can also be considered a mental representation that emerges by listening to the whispers of the universe. "Spiritual landscape" is a term I coined, and no books exist published in English with a title that uses that term. In this study of ancient times, I have attempted to present a new theory of landscape.

There are a great number of documents related to Munakata's medieval period, and much research has been conducted into their interpretation. While significant progress has been made in the areas of political and economic history, consideration of the region's spiritual history remains a challenge. Spiritual history encompasses the history of *faith* in a broad sense, pushing aside the

³¹ During the reign of Munakata Daigūji Okiuji in the Muromachi period, an old man's mask (翁面, Okinamen) is said to have surfaced from the sea off Kanazaki. A replica is currently used.

concept of "religion." Munakata was strongly influenced by Buddhism from the 8th century onward, and Shinbutsu sūgō continued until the 16th century. This medieval period was Munakata's most prosperous, fueled by trade with Korea and China. Unraveling the true nature of Shinbutsu sūgō during these 800 years of Munakata's prosperity through the remaining historic documents is an ongoing challenge. From the 17th century onward Munakata turned to fundamental Shintoism, and "separation of Shinto and Buddhism" Order of 1868 (*Shinbutsu Hanzenrei*; 1st year of the Meiji era) separated kami from hotoke, abolished Buddhism, and irreversibly severed Munakata from its historic rituals. Modern Shinto has only evolved over the past 150 years since the beginning of the Meiji era. It can be said that the biggest challenge for the future of this research is to reevaluate Shinbutsu sūgō and to understand the dynamic changes in the region's history, including the spiritual history of its' people.

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