

## A SONG OF CONTINUITY: KAGURA SECRET SONG AND THE VICENNIAL RENEWAL OF ISE JINGŪ ON THE EVE OF THE MODERN PERIOD

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### Abstract

*During the transition from the Edo period to the Meiji Restoration, Ise Jingū (Ise Grand Shrine) underwent significant changes due to Westernization and modernization, culminating in the Jingū reformation of 1871. However, in the latter part of the Meiji era, there was a resurgence of interest in restoring ancient rituals and preserving the shrine's core principles. This paper focuses on the pivotal 1889 vicennial renewal at Ise Jingū to understand how shrine priests sustained ritual continuity amidst modernization. Specifically, it examines the sacred music (mikagura) and the kagura secret song (hikyoku) introduced during this ceremony. Mikanagi Kiyonao's writings provide valuable insights into the origins and influences of linguistic and ritual elements. As the 63<sup>rd</sup> Shikinen Sengū reconstruction ritual approaches in 2033, this paper offers insights into Ise Jingū's resilience.<sup>2</sup>*

**Keywords:** Ise Jingū, Shikinen Sengū, Meiji era, Resilience, Mikagura, Kagura secret song (hikyoku)

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### 1. Introduction

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Ise Jingū (Ise Grand Shrine) enshrines the Imperial Ancestor Deity Amaterasu, and it is one of the most revered of the nearly eighty thousand shrines in Japan. Every twenty years, a renewal ceremony (Shikinen Sengū) takes place, where all shrine buildings are rebuilt and divine treasures are newly prepared on adjacent land. Shikinen Sengū has been conducted for approximately thirteen hundred years. Most recently, the 62<sup>nd</sup> Shikinen Sengū was conducted in 2013 when I, who was conducting fieldwork, also served as a temporary staff member for public relations of the shrine administration, which provided an opportunity to witness the Shikinen Sengū from an internal perspective. At midnight on October 2, the sacred mirror symbolizing Amaterasu was transferred from the old shrine to the new shrine at Ise Jingū. At dusk on the following day, October 3, I observed the solemn procession of court musicians from the Imperial Household Agency, along with the chief priest and senior priests, preparing for the sacred music performance, amid an atmosphere of profound tranquility. As the shrine's filming crew finished capturing the procession, I departed with them, contemplating the upcoming performance of the

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kagura [Shinto music and dance dedicated to deities] secret song that would be performed exclusively during the late hours.

Encountering the earnest dedication of the shrine priests serving the series of rituals of Shikinen Sengū and witnessing their joyous faces upon the flawless completion of all tasks, I was compelled to ponder how Ise Jingū has endured the trials of time and what the true essence of the sacred ritual music, a unique feature performed only during the Shikinen Sengū, entails. Through research, it became apparent that Ise Jingū has faced numerous challenges throughout history, notably during the Meiji Restoration (1868-1889). During the turbulent years from the end of the Edo period (1603-1867) to the Meiji Restoration, waves of Westernization and modernization also reached the shrine, resulting in significant changes in the organization and rituals with the Jingū reformation of 1871. Thus, faced with novel challenges, how did the shrine demonstrate resilience during the tumultuous Meiji era?

The purpose of this paper is to focus on a pivotal moment in the modern history of the shrine, the Shikinen Sengū in 1889, and to understand the perspectives and strategies of the shrine priests at the time in upholding the continuity of shrine rituals amidst modernization. To achieve this, the paper will examine the sacred music (*mikagura*) and the kagura secret song (*hikyoku*) specifically brought from the Imperial Court to the 1889 Shikinen Sengū. While kagura broadly signifies music that is dedicated to deities and performed at Shinto shrines, *mikagura* signifies the specific type of kagura primarily performed at the Imperial Palace Sanctuary (*naishidokoro*). The rite of *mikagura* consists of the performance of about 20 ancient songs called kagura *uta* [songs].<sup>3</sup>

This paper explores two main questions. Firstly, how did the shrine priests of the Meiji era position and interpret the newly introduced rite of *mikagura* and the kagura *hikyoku* within the continuity of shrine traditions? Secondly, what insights can be gleaned from Mikanagi Kiyonao (1812-94), a prominent shrine priest deeply involved in the 1889 Shikinen Sengū, through his composed Shinto prayers (*norito*)? The analysis will be based on data from the Imperial Household Archives, the National Archives of Japan, Mikanagi Kiyonao's shrine studies spanning from the end of the Tokugawa period, his composed prayers for the 1889 Shikinen Sengū, and interviews with current shrine priests.

The forthcoming 63<sup>rd</sup> Shikinen Sengū is scheduled for 2033. Through this paper, it is hoped that the historical accumulation of the shrine priests' internal endeavors to continue learning the shrine traditions correctly and their resilience, as evidenced by the adaptability and continuity of the shrine, will become apparent.

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<sup>3</sup> There are English-language references on the Japanese imperial court music (*gagaku*) (Garfias, 1959; Malm, 2000), including English translations of some selected kagura songs (Harich-Schneider, 1973). There is no prior English-language work on the kagura secret song and its ritual contexts.

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## 2. *Shikinen Sengū of 1889*

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This chapter will examine the crisis of ritual inheritance faced by Ise Jingū following the Jingū reformation of 1871 and discuss the characteristics of the newly introduced sacred music ritual and the kagura secret song.

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### 2.1 *The Meiji Restoration and the Jingū reformation of 1871*

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The Shikinen Sengū, initiated by Emperor Tenmu's decree in 690 AD, has faced several crises of confusion and inheritance throughout history. During the Warring States period (1467-1615), prolonged warfare and financial difficulties within the imperial court made it difficult to conduct the Shikinen Sengū every twenty years. This led to a hiatus of over one hundred twenty years and put its continuity at risk. However, the shrine priests managed to cope with temporary and partial renewal ceremonies and to overcome the crisis.

The next turmoil came with the Jingū reformation of 1871. The reform of the Ise Jingū's organization triggered a crisis in the inheritance of rituals in the extensive Ise Jingū complex, which encompasses one hundred twenty-five shrines, including Naikū [Inner Shrine of Ise Jingū] and Gekū [Outer Shrine of Ise Jingū]. The enshrined deity of the former is Amaterasu while that of the latter is Toyouke. Firstly, on May 14, 1871, an imperial edict was issued to abolish the hereditary system of both the Naikū and Gekū. The abolition of the hereditary system of shrine priests meant that priests who had served for centuries, primarily from the Arakida family of the Naikū and the Watarai family of the Gekū, would have to leave the shrine. Consequently, individuals unfamiliar with shrine rituals, appointed as shrine priests by the central government from outside Ise Province, disrupted the inherited succession of shrine rituals in both families.

To understand the specific disruptions that occurred in rituals, excerpts from the daily ritual diary *Rekiinki* of Magofuku Hiromasa (1830-1905), a shrine priest, are provided. He served as a priest of the Naikū from the late Edo period to the Meiji Restoration and subsequently served as a priest of both shrines after the reforms. He hailed from a lineage that had served as priests of the Naikū for generations and was well-versed in shrine rituals.

Magofuku Hiromasa mentioned in the diary the confusion caused by the discrepancies between the reforms of 1871 and the calendrical reforms of Meiji 5 (1872). "Since the abolition of the previous titles, there is confusion about who will directly serve the morning and evening offerings at the Gekū" (Yoshikawa et al., 2023: 73-74). "Many members are unfamiliar with numerous rituals before the harvest ceremony called *Kanname-sai*" (Yoshikawa et al., 2023: 77). His lamentations were frequent in the entries for 1872 and 1873. In 1888, on the eve of

the Shikinen Sengū of 1889, he mentioned that many could not perform the etiquette for the ritual wand. “After the reforms, many people from other provinces were added to both shrines, and there were complaints about the lack of decorum in the rituals due to the mixing of aristocratic class and commoners” (Yoshikawa et al., 2023: 359-60). In this way, the Jingū reformation of the early Meiji era brought about much confusion, and with the approach of the Shikinen Sengū of 1889, pertinent parties feared the loss of ancient customs in shrine rituals.

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## 2.2 Momentum for the revival of ancient customs and the introduction of the sacred music ritual and the kagura secret song to the Shikinen Sengū of 1889

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Ise Jingū’s first Shikinen Sengū after the Meiji Restoration took place in 1869, but since it was conducted before the abolition of hereditary positions, preparations were completed as usual with shrine rituals carried out by hereditary shrine priests as before (Jingū Shichō, 1987: 437-465). The real challenge arose later with the Shikinen Sengū of 1889.

On July 12, 1875, Prince Asahiko, for the first time as a member of the imperial family, assumed the role of highest priest at Ise Jingū (Jingū Shichō, 2005: 218). Under his leadership, the revival of ancient customs progressed at the shrine.

Amidst the momentum for the revival, the revitalization of the kagura of the shrine progressed, and *mikagura* and the kagura secret song were introduced from the imperial court. The rite of *mikagura* has a long historical significance dating back to the late Heian period (794-1185) and has been performed at the Imperial Palace Sanctuary. It is important to note the significant roles played by Prince Asahiko and Mikanagi Kiyonao, and their ideologies.

Before his appointment as the highest priest, Prince Asahiko had valued the imperial rituals honoring Amaterasu and had been well aware of the significance of the sacred ritual music in praying for national peace (Kōgakukan kanshi hensanshitsu, 2011; Urita, 2015). This significance was evidenced by Emperor Kōmei's performance of a Japanese zither called *wagon* at the rite of *mikagura* during the national crisis at the end of the Edo period.<sup>4</sup> Kiyonao also already understood the unity of ancient Japanese songs and dances in both the imperial court and the Ise Jingū, which he recorded as part of his shrine ritual studies (Jingū Shichō, 2006: 759-761). Thus, Kiyonao, like Prince Asahiko, recognized the importance of *mikagura* dedicated to Amaterasu.

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<sup>4</sup> Emperor Kōmei performed the most sacred instrument *wagon* at the rite of three-night *mikagura* on March 17th, 18th, and 19th, 1866 (Kunaichō shoryōbu [Imperial Household Archives], 512-174). He passed away the following year 1867.

Generally, among shrine priests, there is a tendency to have a vague understanding of the significance of kagura in Shinto rituals. The main reasons for this are twofold. First, historically, there has been a division between those who perform music and those who conduct rituals in hereditary positions. For example, before the Meiji Restoration, those responsible for performing *mikagura* at the imperial court were court nobles who sang and played the Japanese zither (*wagon*), and musicians who played wind instruments such as the *kagura-bue* flute and *hichiriki* oboe, as hereditary positions. Since the Meiji period, the performers of the sacred ritual music in the imperial court have been the predecessors of the musicians of the present Department of Ceremonies of the Imperial Household Agency. They are responsible for music but never for reciting prayers to the deities in rituals. This separation of musicians and ritual performers remains unchanged in both the current imperial court and shrine rituals.

Second, from ancient times to the present day, the structure of rituals has consisted of purification by ritual performers and offerings to the deities, followed by the presentation of prayers, and then followed by kagura (Motozawa, 2006: 4). In the order of rituals, kagura is a part of the Shinto ritual, and the central element is the prayers recited by shrine priests; so for shrine priests, kagura remains just one element of the ritual. However, what distinguishes the *mikagura* is that the music becomes the main focus of the ritual. In the rite of *mikagura*, the performance of ancient Japanese songs and dances themselves becomes the ritual, dedicated to Amaterasu at the Imperial Palace Sanctuary. Prince Asahiko and Mikanagi Kiyonao were aware of this fact, as they valued the imperial rituals and understood the significance of the music, which is why they introduced the sacred music ritual and the kagura secret song to the Shikinen Sengū of 1889.

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### 2.3 Characteristics of the rite of *mikagura* and the kagura secret song

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This section examines the ritual and musical characteristics of *mikagura* and the kagura secret song. The sacred music ritual is performed for over six hours from the evening until well past midnight, and dedicated to the sacred mirror, the divine object of Amaterasu. Before the Meiji Restoration, *mikagura* continued for three nights in relation to selected rituals of great importance, while the kagura secret song was performed mainly during the middle of the three nights at the Imperial Palace Sanctuary. The specific contexts were primarily related to the relocation of the sacred mirror during renovations or reconstruction of the Imperial Palace Sanctuary, as well as for special occasions such as abdication or enthronement ceremonies.

The relocation of the sacred mirror involved performances during the ritual of moving the mirror to a temporary hall and then returning it to the main hall. The performance of the kagura secret song after enthronement ceremonies was conducted during the reigns of all emperors in the pre-modern period. During the Edo period, the kagura secret song was exclusively passed down and performed by both the

Jimyōin and the Ayanokōji families. They were responsible for its performance, and the lyrics were recorded in the transmission documents and musical scores of both families. Since the Meiji Restoration, the three nights of *mikagura* at the Imperial Palace Sanctuary were discontinued, and now only one night remains, but the performance of the sacred music and the kagura secret song associated with enthronement ceremonies continues to this day (Urita, 2018).

The sacred music ritual at Ise Jingū is divided into two parts: the first act known as the *mae-yaku* and the second act known as the *ato-yaku*. The *mae-yaku* starts at seven in the evening and lasts for a few hours. After that, all performers leave the performance area. Then, five musicians enter to perform the kagura secret song. Five musicians include the *kagura-bue*, the *hichiriki*, and *wagon* players, as well as the main singer and the second singer. Even dignitaries such as the envoy or the highest priest cannot be present during the performance of the kagura secret song (Urita, 2015). The secret song lasts about half an hour.

The most prominent characteristic of the kagura secret song is its performance technique, called *bi-on* where the performers exhale but do not produce sound. Here “*bi*” means subtle or small while “*on*” means sound. Even if someone is present, it is impossible to hear the lyrics. It will be explained in more detail later in the paper. Additionally, at the end of the performance of the secret song, there is a recitation of congratulatory words spoken in a low voice by the senior musician, which corresponds to the recitation of prayers (Urita, 2018). Although it is unusual for musicians, rather than shrine priests, to recite prayers, the presence of this recitation indicates that the performance of the kagura secret song is an independent ritual, and the music itself is not a part of the ritual but the essential ritual itself. Curiously, the prayers recited by the court musicians are created by the Imperial Household Agency rather than the shrine, and they are not included in the collection of prayers for Ise Jingū's Shikinen Sengū.

In summary, from the perspective and interpretation of Ise Jingū priests in 1889, the performance of the sacred music ritual and the kagura secret song at the Shikinen Sengū was considered a new ritual compared to the shrine's two-thousand-year tradition and the thirteen-hundred-year history of the Shikinen Sengū. Yet, from the perspectives of Prince Asahiko and Kiyonao, the performance of the *mikagura* and the kagura secret song at the Shikinen Sengū was recognized as fundamentally consistent with the shrine's main purpose of enshrining the sacred mirror of the ancestral deity Amaterasu. This will be examined further in the next chapter through the prayers composed by Kiyonao.

### 3. What can be inferred from Mikanagi Kiyonao's Shinto prayer (norito) of 1889?

In this chapter, I will examine what sacred principles can be inferred from the *mikagura-mike-norito* [Shinto prayer for offering sacred food for the rite of *mikagura*] composed by Mikanagi Kiyonao (1812-1894) in 1889. Kiyonao was not only a Shinto priest who served at the Gekū for generations, but he was also a distinguished scholar who studied Shinto rituals and practices from the end of the Edo period.

#### 3.1 The text of the *mikagura-mike-norito* from 1889

*Norito* is a unique form of expression primarily in archaic language that the presiding priest recites to pray to the deities during a ritual. While some historical Shinto texts of *norito* are fixed, there are *norito* that can be composed spontaneously by Shinto priests according to the specific occasion. Typically, a prayer starts with the invocation of the deity or deities involved in the ritual, followed by the narration of the mythological or historical background of a ritual, the presentation of offerings, and the expression of prayers or wishes (Table 1). Therefore, *norito* can be a great source to understand the origin and significance of the ritual. Let's take a look at the content of the *mikagura-mike-norito* in 1889:

*I humbly speak in the solemn presence of the Great Sovereign Deity, Amaterasu Ōmikami. Her offspring, the Emperor is pleased that Amaterasu has moved to a new shrine building, and the sacred music and the kagura secret song are to be performed following the origin and history of performing music for her throughout the night after enshrining Amaterasu for the first time in a shrine in Kasanui village during the period of Emperor Sujin's reigning at the Mizugaki Palace in Shiki. Before court officials perform the sacred music, we first arrange and present offerings such as sumptuous meals, sacred sake, and offerings, laid out like a mountain, and burn a bonfire in the garden. They then joyfully play music with songs and flute tunes, hoping that the Great Deity will accept them peacefully and serenely, enjoying the festivities. I humbly speak.* (Jingū Shichō, 2010a)

**Table 1. Structure of the *mikagura-mike-norito***

Section		Content
First Part	1 Name of the Deity	Amaterasu Ōmikami
	2 Origin of the Ritual	Festivities and performances of sacred music were conducted during the reign of Emperor Sujin, when the first relocation to a separate palace in Kasanui Village took place.
	3 Offerings	Sumptuous meals, sacred sake, and offerings

Section		Content
Second Part	4 Prayer	Hoping that Amaterasu will joyfully and serenely accept the secret melodies of the sacred ritual music.

The point to note here is the origin of the ritual in the first half, and the content of the prayer in the second half, which pertains to the purpose of performing the sacred music. We will analyze this in detail in the following sections.

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### 3.2 Basis 1: Mythology depicted in the *norito* in 1889

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The basis for the performance of *mikagura* and the kagura secret song in 1889, as gleaned from the prayer, is sought in the context of the mythology depicted in the first half of the *norito*. Specifically, Kiyonao interpreted the scene of performance of the music at night in Kasanui Village during the reign of Emperor Sujin, when the original Yata no Kagami, the sacred mirror representing Amaterasu, was first taken out of the imperial court. This scene is quoted from the *Kogoshūi* [Gleanings from Ancient Stories], and Kiyonao interprets it as the origin of the newly introduced sacred music and the kagura secret song in Ise Jingū. In other words, the performance of the kagura secret song is considered to be a reproduction of the original movement of the divine mirror, symbolizing the Sun Goddess, in the imperial court.

What is noteworthy is the context of the performance of music in Kasanui Village. It was a significant event as it was the first time the divine mirror had been moved out of the imperial court by imperial decree. Finding a suitable new location to enshrine Amaterasu was crucial, and the performance of the ancient song in Kasanui Village aimed to entertain Amaterasu, appease the divine spirits, and pray for peace in the realm, thus avoiding calamity. The divine mirror's departure from the imperial court violated one of the Three Great Imperial Edicts, enshrining the sacred mirror at the Imperial Palace. This violation was a risk taken due to the numerous plagues and famines during Emperor Sujin's reign, which showed no sign of improvement. Therefore, the imperial courtiers who participated in the performance of the music in Kasanui Village took the event seriously as an important ritual.

The performance of the kagura secret song after the relocation of Amaterasu at Ise Jingū is a reenactment of the performance of the ancient song in Kasanui Village on the first night of the divine mirror's movement. By reenacting this event, priests of Ise Jingū aim to worship the divine spirits respectfully, avoid calamity, and pray for peace in the realm, thus returning to the origin and recalling the fundamental principles. Kiyonao indicates this in the prayer.

Now, let us further consider the performance method of the kagura secret song and its intentions. There is a record that indicated that in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Ayanokōji Aritoshi first performed the kagura secret song in *bi-on*. As mentioned in the previous chapter, “*bi*” means subtle while “*on*” means sound. So, the term *bi-on*



means small sound, but in actual performance, it involves only breathing without producing sound. While the reasons for this performance method are not explicitly stated in the transmission records or documents of the hereditary court nobles, some interpretations are possible. It may be considered a supreme sacred offering that even the performers refrain from hearing. There is a recognition that deities can perceive things beyond human physical senses, making it a sublime offering. These interpretations align with modern sensibilities.

On the other hand, I would like to propose a mystical perspective based on the context of the performance and the meaning of the Chinese character "bi[微]" of *bi-on* as analyzed by Shirakawa Shizuka in his book *Setsumon shingi* [New Interpretation of the Setsumon shingi] (Shirakawa, 1969). First, the character "bi[微]" implies ritual violence to weaken the power by striking a female with long hair, who is a medium or shaman.<sup>5</sup> This leads us to a possible archaic effect of the voiceless performance of the kagura secret song. The urge to perform in such a manner arises from the need to soothe the divine spirits, especially in the context of the relocation of the sacred mirror, which is not an expected or typical situation but an irregular, alarming situation. The purpose is to entertain and soothe the divine spirits, who may be most agitated otherwise, during the transfer of the sacred mirror from the old shrine to the new one.

In other words, the voiceless performance of the kagura secret song as the supreme offering can be understood as aiming for a ritualistic effect of weakening the divine power, seeking to soothe the potent divine spirits at the time of breaking the stable situation of the sacred mirror. The disturbed deity may not be pacified enough by simply offering the sacred music performed aloud, thus aiming for an esoteric effect by means of *bi-on*.

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### 3.3 Basis 2: Ancient language used in the *norito* in 1889

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In this section, I will examine the latter part of the prayer and in particular, focus on the ancient words "sayake [clear, pure]", "ana tanoshi [oh joyful]", and "ana omoshiroshi [oh interesting]" that appear at the end, and explore Kiyonao's intentions. In the latter part of the *norito* (Table 1), the specific offerings dedicated to the deities are listed in section 3, and in section 4, it is hoped that Amaterasu would enjoy the meal and the music. The prayer concludes with the customary phrase "May Amaterasu enjoy it with a calm heart". Additionally, Kiyonao inserts ancient words *sayake*, *ana tanoshi*, and *ana omoshiroshi* to describe how the deity should enjoy the song and music.

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<sup>5</sup> The advice to investigate the meaning of the character "bi" according to Shirakawa Shizuka's research on studies on Chinese characters, comes from Dr. Mizuno Yūji, researcher of RINRI Institute of Ethics in Tokyo on December 8, 2023.

From this, two main intentions of Kiyonao can be pointed out. Firstly, he situates the origin of kagura in the rock cave myth, and secondly, by using the ancient language mentioned in the myth in the prayer, he emphasizes and presents the historical continuity from ancient times. Significantly, the words *sayake*, *ana tanoshi*, and *ana omoshiroshi* used in the prayer are words found in the description of the rock cave myth in the *Kogoshūi*. When Amaterasu emerged from the cave and saw the joyful faces of the deities, their faces lit up with rapture, which is described as “*omo* [face] *shiroshi* [white with light]”. The song performed by the deities at that time is described as *sayake*, meaning clear and pure. From this, we can see that Kiyonao considers the sacred music and the kagura secret song as broadly encompassing all forms of ancient songs and dances, and he traces their origin to the rock cave myth, referring to the *Kogoshūi* in composing the prayer.

One of the letters he wrote in 1845 signifies that he had already formed his view more than twenty years before the Meiji Restoration.

*Kagura are such songs and dances that soothe the hearts of the raging deities. The origin of kagura is the story of the rock cave myth. The deities blew on the green bamboo of the blue mountain and struck wood together to create rhythm, and Goddess Uzume danced, which melted the anger of Amaterasu, causing her to emerge from the rock cave.* (Jingū Shichō, 2010b: 960)

The essence of kagura is to perform singing, music, and dance to please the deities, dispel manifested disasters, prevent potential disasters, and bring bliss.

Continuing, Kiyonao discusses the ancient music of the shrine: “For this reason, Ise Jingū, in the three annual festivals, solemnly offers the *Yamato-mai* and *Tonago-mai* dances” (Jingū Shichō 2010b: 961). Thus, Kiyonao emphasizes the importance of the history of kagura performance at the shrine. From this perspective, it can be said that the first performance of the sacred music and the kagura secret song in the vicennial renewal of 1889 signified the revival of kagura of the shrine.

As for the second point of Kiyonao’s intention, let us take a look at the ancient words *sayake*, *ana tanoshi*, and *ana omoshiroshi* quoted from the *Kogoshūi* in the important conclusion of the prayer. *Kogoshūi* was compiled by Inbe Hironari in 807, and these words also frequently appear in the *Manyōshū*, which is Japan’s oldest existent collection of poetry compiled between the late 7th and the late 8th century. The meanings of these words will be looked at in the *Nihon kokugo daijiten* [Japanese dictionary] and the *Jikun* [dictionary of characters]. Selected poems from the *Manyōshū* will be also analyzed.

“*Ana*”: According to the *Nihon kokugo daijiten*, it is a word uttered when one is moved or surprised by something, with an example from the *Kogoshūi*. In modern language, it is equivalent to “ah”.

“*Tanoshi*”: This word is in classical Japanese and corresponds to “enjoyable” in the modern language. According to the *Nihon kokugo daijiten*, in ancient times, this term mainly represented spiritual pleasure or the satisfaction of being full, and during the Heian period, it began to indicate material wealth. The *Jikun* suggests that this word originates from the *Kogoshūi*, which describes reaching out one's hand in joy. The *Jikun* defines it as a stable and comfortable state of pleasure. The usage of the *Kogoshūi* corresponds to spiritual pleasure in ancient times.

These ancient words were incorporated into the prayer to evoke a sense of reverence and convey the idea of enjoying the performance to please the deities.

*Manyōshū* 5: 815 by a nobleman from Ki province

“Mutsuki tachi haru no koraba kakushikoso ume o okitsutsu tanoshiki oeme  
[When spring comes in the new year, let us enjoy the plum blossoms to the fullest].”

“*Omoshiroshi*”: According to the *Nihon kokugo daijiten*, it is used to express something interesting or emotionally moving. It quotes “*aware, ana, omoshiro, ana tanoshi, anasayake, oke*” from the *Kogoshūi*. From this, we can see that *ana tanoshi* and *ana omoshiroshi* are expressions directly linked to the *Kogoshūi*. Kiyonao was consciously using them in the prayer. In *Jikun*, *omoshiroshi* refers to feeling bright and cheerful with a clear mind. The meaning of this word is derived from external brightness to feeling pleasant in the heart, and it can be used for both beauty and intellectual stimulation. Here, the ancient song from the *Kogoshūi* describing the hiding of the rock cave is quoted.

*Manyōshū* 4: 746 By Ōtomo Yakamochi

“Ikeru yo ni warewa imada mizu kototaete kaku omoshiroku nueru  
fukurowa  
[Since I was born into this world, I have never seen such a magnificently  
sewn bag that defies words].”<sup>6</sup>

“*Sayake*”: According to the *Nihon kokugo daijiten*, this term means to be pure, with sounds or voices being clear and refreshing, pleasant resonances, a clear and crisp sound, or something audible and clear. In the *Jikun*, it describes the sound as clear, using an onomatopoeic expression for the clear sound of bamboo leaves. The term *sayake* also denotes visually bright and pure conditions. The *Jikun* quotes examples from the *Kogoshūi* where the sound of bamboo leaves is mimicked.

*Manyōshū* 7: 1112 Unknown Author

“Hanekazura imasuru imoo urawakami iza isakawa no oto no sayakesa

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<sup>6</sup> In *Manyōshū chūshaku* [Annotations on the *Manyōshū*, Volume Four], Omodaka (1965) cites three examples of the use of *omoshiroshi* in this poem and analyzes the term *omoshiroshi* as being rich in interest, referring to a deeply interesting aspect.

[Since the girl with a hair ornament is so youthful, I feel inclined to invite her with an “Iza (Come now). The sound of the rushing Izakawa is so clear].”

Kiyonao’s thought is clear that the use of archaic terms is linked to the rock cave myth in the *Kogoshūi*; thus, it emphasizes the continuity from ancient times. Furthermore, the *Manyōshū* is characterized by its wide range, with contributions from emperors to farmers, spanning from the Tōhoku region to Kyūshū. It has been widely appreciated throughout the history of Japan as the most ancient surviving anthology of Japanese poetry. With his expertise in waka poetry, Kiyonao incorporated ancient language frequently found in works such as the *Manyōshū* and *Kogoshūi* into the prayers, providing a basis for the sacred music and the kagura secret song, aligning with the essence of shrine rituals and emphasizing the continuity of kagura of the shrine from ancient times.

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#### 4. Conclusion

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Amidst the rapid modernization, shrine priests exerted efforts to balance the revival of ancient rituals while preparing for and conducting the Shikinen Sengū ceremony in 1889. The performance of the sacred music and the kagura secret song during the Shikinen Sengū of 1889 can be interpreted as aligning with the essence of shrine rituals as is evident from the prayers, despite being new rituals. Just as Kiyonao constantly researched shrine rituals to uphold their essence, current shrine priests also strive to learn shrine traditions, transcribe shrine priests' diaries, and faithfully inherit traditions. During an interview with shrine priests, they emphasized the importance of continuing rituals under any circumstances and adapting to the current situation. The Shikinen Sengū of 1889 exemplifies this adaptability, as shrine officials and priests of that time considered and executed the ceremony under the circumstances amidst modernization and restoration of ancient traditions. This adaptability represents the high resilience of the shrine. It is anticipated that the 63<sup>rd</sup> Shikinen Sengū scheduled for 2033 will also demonstrate adaptability and be conducted reliably.

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