GOTÔ BARAMON KITE AS EMBLEM

by

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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The Baramon is a handmade kite from the Gotô Islands in Nagasaki Prefecture, Japan. Its motif features a fierce ogre biting an ornate warrior's helmet. Today, the Baramon is widely recognized as a unique Gotô product. However, nearby regions of Nagasaki also produce similar traditional kites. How and why was the Baramon's exclusive connection to Gotô cultivated and how does it affect notions of regional identity in contemporary Gotô? This thesis argues that while the Baramon belongs to the broader repertoire of Nagasaki kite types, the people of Gotô have gradually appropriated it as a regional symbol by selectively associating particular aspects of Gotô culture and history with the kite's iconography and shape. Consequently, it has become an officially recognized emblem of Gotô. Moreover, the playful transmutation of the Baramon continues in the tourist industry's continuous efforts to revitalize Gotô's image by promoting local history and culture.

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For my family

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CHAPTER I
THE BARAMON AND BARAMON-RELATED SCHOLARSHIP
Introduction

Before tall buildings and power lines monopolized the skies, painted kites were flown in rural and urban communities throughout Japan (see Appendix for a brief history of kite flying tradition in Japan). Today, handmade kites are less common than in the past, but they still appear in festivals and holiday displays.[1] They have also become renowned for their craftsmanship and beauty. However, the conceptual meaning and history that begets the riveting aesthetics of traditional Japanese kites remains an understudied topic in English language art historical discourses. This thesis examines a painted kite called the Baramon[2] that is unique to the Gotô archipelago (五島列島, Gotô rettô, hereafter Gotô) off the coast of southwestern Japan in Nagasaki prefecture (figs. 1 & 2).[3] The Baramon kite-making tradition has existed there for generations and is ingrained in Gotô culture. In recent decades its meaning and utility have expanded to the extent that the Baramon is a ubiquitous year-round presence on Gotô's largest and most populated island called Fukue.

As exemplified by the enormous kite in figure 3, which is inscribed with the kanji characters for "Gotô," the people of Gotô have claimed the Baramon as a symbol of local culture. However kite scholars discuss the Baramon in terms of it being derivative of either traditional Nagasaki kites or the kites of the nearby islands. This thesis shows that above all else the various historical and contemporary modes of engaging with the Baramon make it a unique cultural phenomenon.

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[1] In particular kites appear on Children's Day and around New Years.

[2] Because the term "baramon" can describe other Kyûshû kite-making traditions, I use the capitalized tem Baramon to refer specifically to Baramon kites made in Gotô or by kite makers from Gotô. The spelling used in Gotô is inconsistent. "Baramon" can be written with Chinese characters or with the phonetic katakana alphabet. The versions are 婆羅門 and バラモン respectively.

[3] Unless otherwise noted photographs used in this thesis were taken by the author.

Figure 1

Baramon with dragon motif

The workshop of Nohara Gontarô Nohara Kenji

Purchased December 2012

Figure 2

Exemplary twentieth century Gotô Baramon

(Tawara, *Tako daihyakka Nihon no tako sekai no tako*, 97)

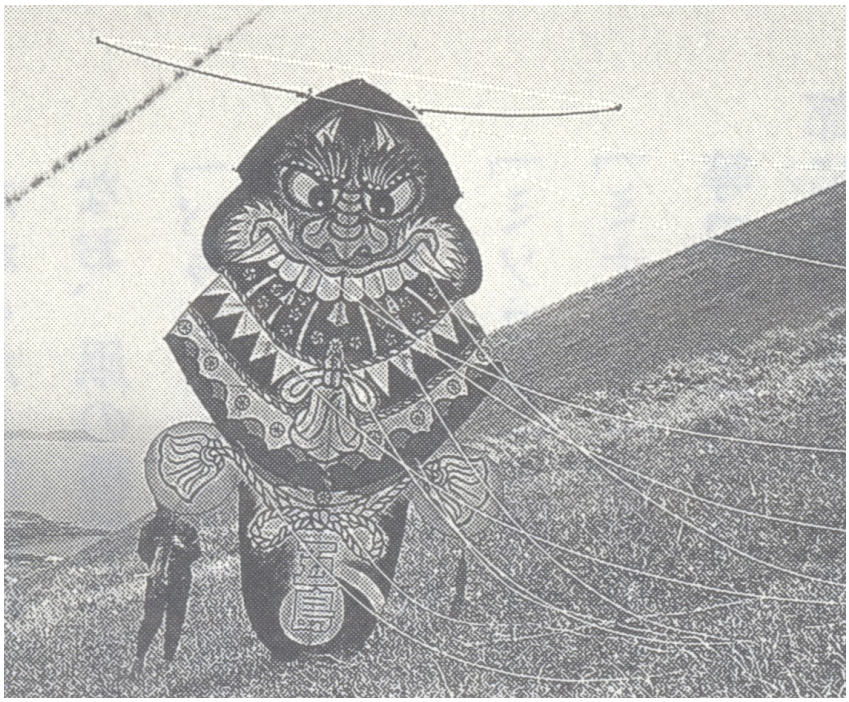

Figure 3

Baramon on Onidake Mountain, Fukue

Photograph from the Gotô Tourism Association (五島観光協会, Gotô Kankô Kyôkai)

(Fukue Shishi Henshû Iinkai, *Fukue shishi*, 855)

I argue that while the Baramon kite belongs to the broader repertoire of Nagasaki prefecture kite types, the people of Gotô have gradually appropriated it as a symbol of their region by selectively associating particular aspects of Gotô culture and history with the kite's iconography and shape. As a result, the Baramon kite is presently an officially recognized emblem for the Gotô Islands. This thesis also demonstrates through contemporary examples how the playful transmutation of the Baramon continues even today in the tourist industry's continuous efforts to revitalize Gotô's image by promoting local history and culture.

The following five chapters unpack the various ways in which the Baramon is entwined with Gotô culture. Each chapter uses pertinent historical documentation of the

Baramon and similar regional kites to analyze the discourse surrounding the contemporary Baramon. Chapter II begins with key events in Gotô's pre-Edo and Edo-period history (the period lasted from 1603 to 1868). The second part of chapter II demonstrates the ways in which popular interpretations of the Baramon's origins utilize select history to showcase Gotô's unique heritage. Chapter III introduces the oldest extant records of kites resembling the Baramon and discusses their place in contemporary interpretations of the Baramon. Chapter IV compares traditional kite culture and rituals associated with kite flying in China and Nagasaki with contemporary Baramon kite culture in Gotô. Chapter V explains the folklore associated with the Baramon and other related kites from northern Kyûshû. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the Baramon's current relationship with folklore, which has shifted towards a Gotô-centric interpretation.

About the Baramon Kite

Like most Japanese kites, the Baramon's body consists of bamboo and painted paper. Kite makers bend and bind bamboo strips into a frame referred to as "bones" (骨, *hone*). Several varieties of Japanese kites exist and because frame types tend to be specific to a given region, kites are often categorized structurally rather than by motif. In general, the Baramon belongs to a group of kites found in northwestern Kyûshû likely introduced by the Chinese and often referred to as *tôjindako* or "Chinese kites"(唐人凧).[4] Kites from geographic regions in trading routes surrounding China including Malaysia, Cambodia, and Micronesia may have also influenced so-called *tôjindako*.[5]

In terms of structure, the Baramon is comprised of three stacked tiers (fig. 4). The upper and middle tiers resemble two lemons with their horizontal contours overlapping in a vertically oriented Venn diagram. The middle tier is wider while the top tends to be taller. The bottom tier is shaped like a downward-pointing tongue and is about half as

[4] Saitô, *Nihon no tako*, 195-6.
The term *tô* spelled with the character 唐 literally means "Tang" and is used as a prefix to describe a variety of goods imported from China. *Tôjin* means roughly "Chinese person," but is pejorative and could be more accurately translated as "Chinamen" depending on the context.

[5] Modegi, *The Making of Japanese Kites*, 17.

wide and equally as long as the middle tier. Each outer vertical side of the kite has a small thumb shape wedged between the top two tiers. The thumb shapes adhere to the upper tier of the kite and point downward. Two small circles hang from the underside of the middle tier, flanking the bottom tier. One thick vertical bone traverses the three tiers like a spine and protrudes slightly at the top and bottom. An X-shape often reinforces the top two tiers. The bones forming the X begin at the top of the kite on either side of the spine and run diagonally across the spine to the outer contour of each small circle.

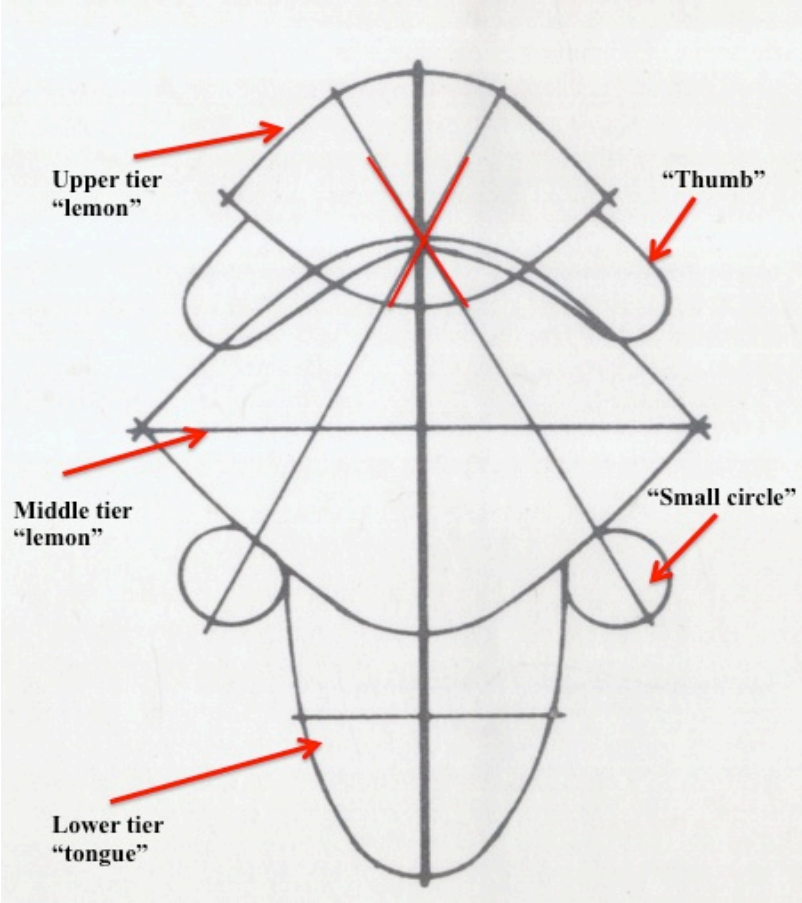

Figure 4

Baramon bone structure before 1970

(Tawara, *Nihon no tako*, 147)

Annotations mine

After affixing paper to bone, Baramon kite-makers use traditional calligraphy-type brushes to decorate their work. Like most Japanese kites, the Baramon features

bright, bold colors articulated with black ink.[6] The kite's complex motif follows a consistent pattern and has become associated with well-known folkloric tales of brave warriors slaying demons.

Like the bone structure, the Baramon motif has three sections (each corresponding to a structural tier). Consistent color saturation, undertones, and values unite the three regions of a given kite but the pallet varies from kite maker to kite maker. For instance, some Baramon have rich colors with cool undertones while others are characterized by paler, warmer hues. Allowing for some slight variation between kites, each section has several consistent visual characteristics.

A frontal depiction of the top half of a symmetrical face belonging to an *oni* (鬼, roughly an ogre-like supernatural being with demonic physical features) occupies the top third of the kite. The prototypical Baramon's *oni* face is red with yellow horns, large eyes, a wide nose, bushy eyebrows, patches of furry hair, and large white teeth. The horns usually sit directly above the eyebrows, which are thick and jagged. Most eyebrows are delineated with a smooth bottom line and a frayed top line, as if the hairs have been combed upwards. A row of dots may be superimposed on each eyebrow to further suggest hair-like texture. Baramon *oni* have round or oval eyes that are medium-sized and close-set. Eyeballs are white with constricted black pupils. The *oni* bears a grin-like expression that pushes its round cheeks up below its eyes. (The small thumb shapes in the bone pattern create bulging cheeks.) A tuft of furry hair spurts from each cheek. Kite makers render the tufts with brushstrokes that stylistically mimic the *oni*'s eyebrows, though the color of the tufts (often yellow) never matches that of the eyebrows. The *oni*'s nose has flared nostrils. The corners of its grinning mouth begin adjacent to the nostrils and are connected by a thin upper lip outlined in black or rendered with another solid color such as yellow. The upper teeth form a row of large, white, and closely spaced incisors flanked by a set of long dagger-shaped canine teeth. They bite down on the helmet, obscuring the *oni's* jaw and chin.

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[6] An exception to the prototypical painted kite is the Nagasaki City *hata* (旗 or ハタ) a diamond shaped South Asian fighting kite that was introduced to Japan during the Edo period (1603-1868). Unlike the majority of traditional Japanese kites, *hata* are decorated with colored paper. Kite makers cut designs and apply them with glue.

The middle region of the Baramon consists of a bell-shape representing the helmet. It follows the contours of the central section of the bone pattern, demarcating the boundary between the middle and lower tiers. Helmet motifs draw from the same family of hues used for the *oni* face. They are intricate and demonstrate great variation from kite-maker to kite-maker. Generally, horizontal bands of color decorated with geometric designs comprise the helmet. The bands tend to alternate between light and dark colors, and round and angular shapes. Decorative tassels adorn the center of many helmets (see figs. 1 and 3). The bottoms of helmet motifs usually include two strings representing helmet ties. Strings are tied in bow or knot that occupies the lower tier. Their frayed ends splay out onto the spaces created by the two circles on either side of the bottom tier. Alternately, these regions may feature more abstract tassel-like ornaments.

The lower tier commonly depicts a tendril representing a warrior's ponytail or a dragon (figs. 1 & 5). Tendrils are tapering black curls that spiral upward. The dragons are snake-like and arranged in a vertical S-shape. Their bodies, never fully depicted, wind across the picture plane. Some dragons clutch a golden orb in the three talons of their right claw. In addition to the standard tendril and dragon motifs, original designs now appear on the bottom region of select Baramon kites. Specialty Baramon, such as the one in figure 3 can also be over six feet tall.

When the people of Gotô fly Baramon, they affix a bow-shaped noise-making device to the bones. The noise-making devices are generally called *unari* and are roughly as wide as the kite is long. They reverberate as air passes over them, generating an oscillating, droning hum. Baramon also utilize tails for stability.

The meaning of the name "baramon" is not preserved in historical records. "Baramon" can be written with Chinese characters: 婆羅門. In this case the name literally means "Brahmin," or Hindu priest. Other kites in northwestern Kyûshû also incorporate the "baramon" term and characters into their names, and it has been suggested that "baramon" simply refers to kites with buzzers.[7] However the origins of this kite name remain a mystery.

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[7] Culin, *Games of the Orient*, 16.

Figure 5

Detail of Fig. 1, Nohara Baramon (with dragon motif)

Baramon-related research involves certain challenges. Kites are by nature fragile, are prone to damage when flown, and were not made professionally in the past. Thus they are regarded as ephemeral objects to be used or displayed until ruined. Consequently people did not carefully preserve their kites and very few, if any antique kites survive. Moreover, a lack of primary documents necessitates reliance upon a small number of historical records with vague kite-related entries. Illustrations and accounts of kites and kite flying found in eighteenth and nineteenth century Nagasaki records provide the earliest examples of kites resembling the Baramon. The oldest documentation of the Gotô Baramon appears in a 1934 work on Gotô history and culture entitled *Gotô minzoku zushi* (*五島民俗図誌*, *Diagramed Chronicles of Gotô Customs*). Finally, many of the first kite scholars who wrote in the 1970s and 1980s did not document the ages of the kites that appear in their works.

Culin does not quantify this statement, however his observations holds true today. *Games of the Orient* was originally published by the University of Pennsylvania as *Korean Games with Notes on the Corresponding Games of China and Japan* in 1895. *Games of the Orient* is a photo-reproduction.

State of the Field: Kite Scholarship

In the following section I review the state of the field in Western and Japanese kite scholarship. The first relevant information appears in illustrated Edo-period (1603-1868) guidebooks to the regional customs of northwestern Kyûshû. These texts are known as *meishô zue* (名所図絵) meaning "illustrations of famous places." Early twentieth century sociological studies on Gotô and the surrounding region also contain useful kite-related entries.[8] Finally, an 1895 book by American ethnologist Stewart Culin originally entitled *Korean Games With Notes on the Corresponding Games of China and Japan* (now *Games of the Orient*) contains early observations of Meiji period (1868-1912) Nagasaki kite culture.[9]

A lack of historical records does not impede a typical Western kite study because Western kite scholars deal heavily with contemporaneous kites and their work is not art historical in the traditional academic sense. Many Western kite scholars are themselves artists/collectors who appreciate the formal qualities of kites and/or kite enthusiasts with personal kite collections. Often they strive to promote awareness of Japanese kite making and living kite makers. To that end, Western kite historians and enthusiasts typically classify kites first by region and then by kite maker, focusing mainly on twentieth century specimens while the scope of their writings targets the general public. This approach successfully advocates for kite appreciation by framing kites as traditional art objects made by local artists/craftsmen. None have written more than a few sentences about the Baramon. Nonetheless, their writings offer invaluable insight into kite making in past decades and have paved the way for further research.

In 1962 the American artist David Kung self-published his book called *Japanese Kites: A Vanishing Act*. Kung selected extant kite-making traditions and traveled to meet and interview the kite makers. *Japanese Kites* set the tone for later Western kite research and Kung's work is cited in most English language kite books.

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[8] The *Gotô minzoku zushi* (Hashiura Yasuo) and the *Ikinoshima minzokushi* (Yamaguchi Asatarô) both from 1934 contain short but informative passages documenting the Baramon and Iki Island's *Ondako* respectively.

[9] The original work (published by the University of Pennsylvania in 1895) was reprinted photographically and released by Tuttle as *Games of the Orient* in 1958.

Today Hiroi Tsutomu, Tal Streeter, Modegi Masaaki, and Scott Skinner dominate English kite scholarship on Japanese kites. The four frequently contribute to each-others' works as well as works published by American and Japanese kite associations. Streeter's *The Art of the Japanese Kite* is arguably the most famous English language book on Japanese kites. Like Kung, Streeter is a professional artist. He also collects kites. *The Art of the Japanese Kite*, based on Streeter's travels, consists of short essays devoted to kite makers. Streeter is interested in how contemporary Japanese kite-makers interpret their own work, but does not discuss the history of kite-making traditions in detail, nor does he give instructions for making kites at home. Rather Streeter's book is a " . . . personal . . . book, which though nominally about Japanese kites, is also a reflection of a Westerner's attempt to immerse himself in the spirit and life of Japanese culture."[10]

Hiroi has published books about Japanese kites in both Japanese and English. Hiroi's 1978 book *Kites Sculpting the Sky: A Practical and Aesthetic Guide to Making Kites* gives a basic history of world kites, a selection of iconic Japanese kites organized structurally, and instructions for kite making. In addition to his contributions to kite scholarship, Hiroi makes his own kites and is a founding member of the Japan Kite Association.

The 1997 book, *Kites: Paper Wings Over Japan* edited by Scott Skinner (also an artist) and Ali Fujino provides another useful survey of Japanese kites that emphasizes living kite-makers, and, like Skinner and Hiroi's earlier works, explains how various kites are made. Skinner, Streeter, Modegi, and Hiroi contributed essays that comprise the bulk of the text.

Modegi is the author of *The Making of Japanese Kites: Tradition, Beauty and Creation*. In keeping with the above works, this book offers a broad survey of Japanese kites, kite history, and kite-making instructions. In addition to his work as an author, Modegi runs the Kite Museum (凧の博物館, Tako no Hakubutsukan) in Tokyo. The museum's collection consists of over 3,000 kites. Modegi inherited the core collection from his father Modegi Shingo (who ran a well-known restaurant in Tokyo).

The Kite Museum is also the Japan Kite Association's headquarters. The organization publishes a journal on kite history and contemporary kite events such as

[10] Streeter, *The Art of the Japanese Kite*, back jacket.

festivals (in Japanese). The American counterpart to the Japan Kite Association is the Drachen Foundation, now led by Skinner who serves as president. Notably, the Drachen Foundation helps to publish English kite books, including *Kites: Paper Wings Over Japan* and *Japanese Kite Prints*.

Another English language kite resource is John Stevenson's *Japanese Kite Prints*. Stevenson worked as a curator of Chinese art at the Seattle Art Museum and has published multiple works on Japanese woodblock prints. *Japanese Kite Prints* details the Skinner collection of kite-related prints, focusing on the iconography of Edo-period kites and their symbolic and allegorical function in printed images. The text, which is organized chronologically, gives much insight into the history and cultural significance of Edo-period kites. However, it is not a study of kite making traditions per se.

In sum, Streeter, Skinner, Modegi and Hiroi provide useful documentation of kite traditions, kite flying, and kite collections from the second half of the twentieth century. However, they focus on kite makers and kite construction rather than the historical characteristics of a given kite. This approach is problematic for Baramon research because traditionally artisans did not make Baramon, and as this thesis will demonstrate, its usage has also evolved. Therefore their methodology could be applied to discuss the Baramon's contemporary makers (the Nohara, 野原) but not Baramon kite making as a longstanding folk tradition.

Japanese kite scholars have published several kite texts, most of which were written during the second half of the twentieth century. Their works vary in content and include: historical surveys, coffee-table books with many photographs, and instructions for building kites. Japanese kite scholarship tends to be more extensive than Western kite scholarship, perhaps because authors typically utilize all available literary and primary documents related to a given kite. Books predominantly featuring kites from the main island are more abundant than texts devoted to Kyûshû kites. However the popularity of Nagasaki fighting kites called *hata* (ハタ) generates a fair amount of Nagasaki-oriented scholarship.

Nagasaki hata-kô (*長崎ハタ考*), written by Watanabe Kurasuke in 1959 discusses Nagasaki kites that resemble the Gotô Baramon. Watanabe usefully focuses on Edo-period texts that describe kites from the Nagasaki City region. *Nagasaki no hata*

zuroku (*長崎のハタ図録*)- a contemporary book edited by Harada Hirotsugu- also provides useful information about the city's historical kites. Finally, *Nihon no tako* (*日本の凧*) by Tawara Yûsaku, and Sonobe Kiyoshi (1970) contains the oldest photo documentation of non-*hata* Nagasaki prefecture kites.

Many Japanese kite books that discuss the Baramon are encyclopedic histories containing entries about hundreds of kites. In these works scholars identify historical trajectories of kite evolution and sort kites into broad groups comprised of aesthetically similar kite making traditions that began around the same time. They then circle in on specific kites within a given group.

The aforementioned *tôjindako* is one pertinent example of a broad category kite scholars employ. The term *tôjindako* is commonly used structurally for kites with overlapping oval sections. However, because many such kites are ostensibly of foreign origins the term is essentially a catchall for a wide selection of kites. Consequently, kite scholars often lump the Baramon with other regional kites under this appellation. This categorical approach proves useful for a generalized academic text but is not a viable prototype for discussing a single kite because it emphasizes shared rather than unique characteristics.

Today, Saitô Tadao and Hike Ichirô are two leading scholars of Japanese kites. They have both published extensively and are regular contributors to Japanese Kite Association publications. Saitô has written several books including *Nihon no tako daizenshu: iro to katachi no mingei* (*日本の凧大全集: 彩と形の民芸*) and *Furusato no tako*(*ふるさとの凧*). His books feature a survey of Japanese kites presented with high quality photography. He includes the Baramon in the aforementioned *tôjindako* category in order to investigate a group of kites with foreign origins that share similar structures. Saitô's research utilizes historical documents, interviews, and oral traditions, providing a holistic examination of the folk culture surrounding kite-making traditions. With regards to the Baramon, he argues that it likely originated in Nagasaki but that the history has become too obscure for a concrete attribution.[11]

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[11] Saitô, *Nihon no tako daizenshû*, 195-6.

Hike compiled an encyclopedia of Japanese and world kites called *Tako daihyakka: Nihon no tako, sekai no tako* (*凧大百科: 日本の凧・世界の凧*), which is organized by region. He places the Baramon in the *onidako* (鬼凧) category, or kites bearing *oni* motifs, found in Iki (壱岐), Hirado (平戸) and Gotô.[12] He argues that the Baramon and other *onidako* did not originate in Nagasaki. Rather, Chinese pirates or merchants brought structurally similar kites to Hirado at the end of the sixteenth century. According to this theory kite makers began using the *oni* motif after the kites were transmitted to Japan. *Onidako* then spread from Hirado to Iki and finally to Gotô. Hike uses primary documents and empirical historical evidence to piece together a plausible historical narrative.[13]

Despite Hike and Saitô's contributions to kite scholarship, their publications do not provide sufficient investigations of the Baramon. The Baramon kite making tradition has many unique characteristics that are muted when it is grouped with other kites under the *onidako* and *tôjindako* appellations. Furthermore, the Baramon tradition has expanded significantly in recent decades, meaning that the contemporary Baramon differs from Baramon made in previous stages of the kite's evolution when Hike and Saitô published their books. My approach to Baramon kite scholarship is predicated upon the observation that healthy kite traditions such as the Baramon have expanded over time in response to their local climate and tend to be geographically and culturally isolated. In fact, the Baramon's perceived uniqueness is a key factor in its current success.

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[12] I transliterate this term as "*onidako*" rather than "*ondako*" to avoid confusion with the Iki *ondako*.

[13] Hike, *Tako daihyakka*, 22-24.

CHAPTER II
ASSOICATING THE BARAMON WITH GOTÔ'S HISTORY
Introduction

Records of kite flying in Gotô date back to at least the seventeenth century, however no one knows when Baramon kites first appeared. The common understanding is that the Baramon did not originate in Gotô and local sources often attribute it to Gotô's unique climate of international and cultural exchange. From the twelfth to the early seventeenth century, dynamic nautical communities dominated Gotô and the surrounding region, exposing northwestern Kyûshû to a diverse spectrum of people. Visitors to the islands included envoys whose ships ported at Gotô before embarking on dangerous voyages across the sea, pirates who dominated the East China Sea, and Christians who worshiped in secret during the years of persecution. These people introduced new customs, ideas, and goods to Gotô, enriching the local culture. However, the Baramon is a folk object and as such does not appear in historical documents that would reveal its introduction or development in Gotô or the surrounding region.

The lack of historicity in turn opened doors for people to freely associate the kite with events in Gotô's past, generating many intriguing hypotheses about the origin of the kite that are plausible but not provable. The people of Gotô today seem to embrace a common narrative comprised of a hybrid of diverse (and often conflicting) hypotheses. The purpose of this chapter is not to debunk this narrative but rather to understand how theories about the Baramon are utilized in Gotô's effort to define its cultural identity. This chapter will argue that Baramon's associations unite select elements from Gotô's history creating a regional identity that can be utilized to promote solidarity among local communities and boost tourism. The striking appearance of the Baramon gives a memorable face to this regional identity. The first sections of this chapter outline key aspects of Gotô's geography and history in order to contextualize the final sections of this chapter, which analyze popular culture explanations of the Baramon's origins.

Gotô's Geography

The Gotô Islands form an archipelago located in the East China Sea one hundred kilometers west of Kyûshû. "Gotô" refers to the region's 140 plus islands, some of which are uninhabited. Five main islands comprise the archipelago: Nakadôri Island (中道島, Nakadôrishima), Wakamatsu Island (若松島, Wakamatsujima), Naru Island (奈留島, Narushima), Hisaka Island (久賀島, Hisakajima), and Fukue Island (福江島, Fukuejima), amounting to a total area of about 633 square kilometers (figs. 6-1, 7).[14] Today Gotô is a part of Nagasaki prefecture. Like Nagasaki, the islands belonged to the Hizen Provence from after the so-called Taika reforms in 645 until 1871 when the provinces became prefectures.

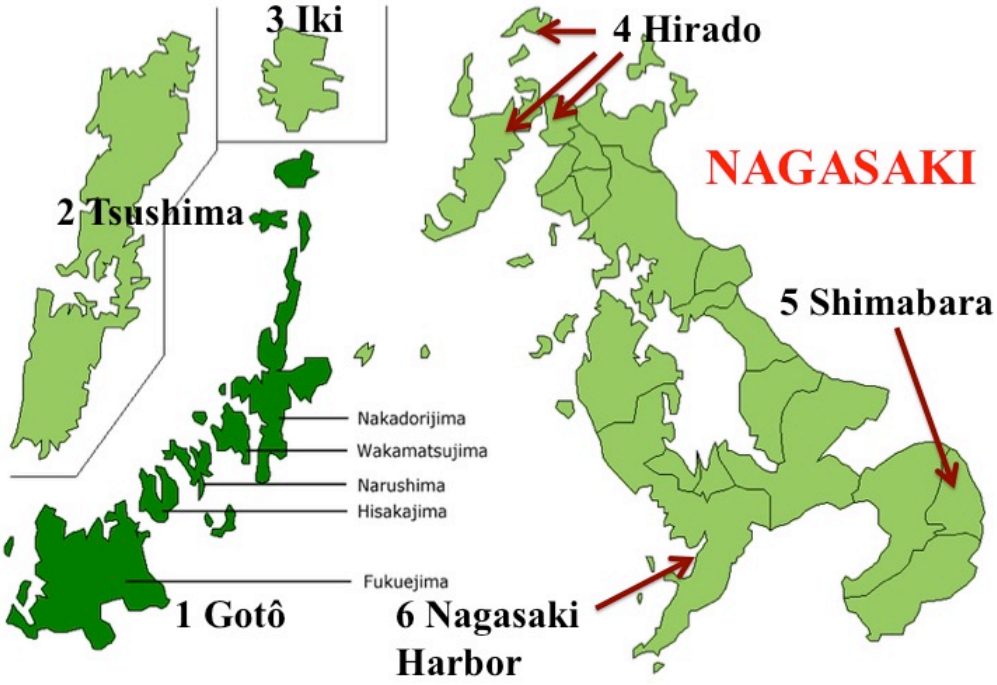

Figure 6

Wikipedia Map of Nagasaki Prefecture

(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gotō_Islands)

Numbered annotations and arrows mine

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[14] Whelan, "Japan's Vanishing Minority: The *Kakure Kirishitan* of the Gotô Islands," 434.

Figure 7

Google Map of Mainland Kyûshû

"Nagasaki" annotation mine

As of 2010, Gotô's total population was around 62,000.[15] Gotô City is the most populated town in the islands. It is located on the southwestern side of Fukue, which is Gotô's largest island.[16] The population of Gotô City is currently around 37,000.[17] However, the population has decreased steadily over the past five decades; in 1955 it was estimated to be around 90,000.[18]

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[15] Nagasaki Prefectural Website, "Gotô no purofui-ru," ("五島のプロフィール,") accessed February 6, 2013, http://www.pref.nagasaki.jp/sima/island/gotou/profile/index.html.

[16] Gotô City was known as Fukue City prior to 2004 and many documents refer to it as such.

[17] Nagasaki Prefectural Website, "Gotô no purofui-ru," ("五島のプロフィール,") accessed on February 6, 2013, http://www.pref.nagasaki.jp/sima/island/gotou/profile/index.html.

Fishing, beef ranching and the harvesting of camellia oil are among Gotô's commercial enterprises. Besides the Baramon kite, Gotô is famous for coral accessories and beauty products made from camellia oil. Tourism provides other sources of income for residents. Visitors to Gotô enjoy wide white sandy beaches, clear turquoise water, and plunging cliffs with scenic outlooks (fig. 8). In addition, cultural sites such as Catholic churches and Buddhist temples recall Gotô's dynamic history and add to charm to the meandering coastlines.

Tourism declined after 2008 (due in part to the recent decline of the Japanese economy). In response Gotô has increased and improved facilities available to tourists. For instance electronic rental cars and charging stations were introduced in 2010. Service industry jobs and other professions related to tourism such as restaurateur and hotelier continue to make up substantial percentages of the local economy.[19]

Figure 8

Takahama Beach in Miiraku-chô, Fukue

[18] Gotô City Profile Book: Nagasaki prefecture Gotô City Census Summary for 2011, 長崎県五島市 市勢要覧 2011年度版, "Population," ("人口,") accessed June 17, 2013, http://www.city.goto.nagasaki.jp/pc/policy/pdf/gotoushi.pdf.

[19] Ibid.

Medieval and Early Edo-Period History

Gotô abuts oceanic trade routes running between China and the Inland sea. This strip of ocean has provided a convenient and relatively expedient route to the political centers on the Japanese main island since the pre-modern era. Until about 1300 all international activity was routed to Dazaifu (太宰府) in Hakata (in present Fukuoka prefecture), meaning that Gotô has been in the path of foreign and domestic envoys since Japan's emergence as a diplomatic kingdom.[20]

From the seventh through the ninth centuries, Gotô hosted official Japanese envoys to Tang Dynasty (618-906) China called *kentôshi* (遣唐使). In total eighteen *kentôshi* envoys launched and they often stopped in Gotô on their way to and from China. The visiting ships dropped anchor in the deep waters of Gyôgasaki (魚津ケ崎), a natural harbor on Fukue, where they waited for fair weather, stocked up on provisions, made repairs, and bid their homeland farewell; Gotô represented the last view of Japan for these ancient sailors.[21] Conversely Gotô offered a first glimpse of Japan and a stopping place for Chinese envoys traveling to Hakata during this time.

Remnants of early missions between Japan and China remain throughout Gotô. For example, a temple called Daihôji (大宝寺) on Fukue is attributed to a Chinese priest who came with the envoys in 701.[22] According to a tourist board located outside Daihôji, Emperor Jitô (持統 645-703; r. 690-697) recognized it as an Imperial temple. The temple's foundation legend goes on to state that in the following century the founder of Japanese Shingon Buddhism, Kûkai 空海 (774-835) converted Daihôji to the Shingon school on his way back from China in 806 (which would effectively make this temple the first Shingon Buddhist monastery in Japan).[23]

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[20] Batten, *Gateway to Japan*, 8.

[21] Ibid., 106.

[22] This information appears on a tourist signboard outside of Daihôji, December 30, 2012.

[23] Ibid.

Gotô also received exotic visitors. In 945, a Chinese ship carrying about one hundred sailors and merchants docked at Kashiwa Island before sailing undetected to Hakata where the passengers were eventually granted permission to trade.[24] Wayward Japanese ships also found their way to Gotô, enriching the local culture. For instance, the small town of Taira (平) on Ukushima (宇久島) is named after a Taira clan member who turned up on the island after the 1185 battle of Dannoura.[25]

By the twelfth century the nautical climate had shifted somewhat and the regional lords known as the Matsura (松浦) controlled an affiliation of pirate-warriors. Gotô, along with the rest of the region, became increasingly involved in Matsura-led piracy. At first raids against Korea in 1220s resulted in swift punishment from the Kamakura shogunate. However, the scope and frequency of international voyages gradually increased in the years after the Mongol invasions of 1274 and 1281.[26] Raids resumed by the mid fourteenth century in part because the invasions weakened the Kamakura shogunate.[27] At the same time the Mongol empire began to decline, loosening its grip on Korea.[28] Korea's vulnerability and Japan's destabilizing central government were two key factors in the rise of unauthorized sea ventures. These activities ultimately escalated into a largely unchecked culture of piracy in the island hubs of western Kyûshû.

In 1384 Gotô officially joined the Matsura league (松浦党, Matsura-tô).[29] The league was an organization of coastal communities initially united by a desire to protect themselves and their interests.[30] Ranking members were formally regarded as naval protectors with warrior privileges and were permitted to tax ships. They operated in Gotô,

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[24] Batten, *Gateway to Japan*, 106.
All foreign visitors were received and boarded in Hakata during this time.

[25] Kalland and Moeran, *Japanese Whaling*, 34.

[26] Under Kublai Khan (1215-1294) the Mongols invaded Japan twice but were unsuccessful. See chapter V for an explanation of how the first invasion relates to Iki Island.

[27] Deal, *Handbook to Life in Medieval and Early Modern Japan*, 5-6.

[28] Hall, *The Cambridge History of Japan Volume 4*, 239-240.

[29] Hirayama, *Gotôshi to minzoku*, 537.

[30] Cobbing, *Kyushu: Gateway to Japan*, 123.

Iki, and the Matsura region on northwestern Kyûshû. Hirado Island was their geographic nexus.[31] High-ranking Matsura held government appointed military-steward titles called *jitô* (地頭).[32] As time passed, intermarriage between Gotô islanders and the Matsura family bolstered Gotô's ties to, and identification with Matsura activities.[33] The league grew powerful and controlled the seas of northwestern Kyûshû through the 1400s.[34] Though the league began to dissolve in the fifteenth century, dominant Matsura families vied for regional power.[35] They remained prominent warriors and pirates through the sixteenth century and their leaders became local lords known as *daimyô* during the Edo period.[36]

By the fourteenth century, the illicit Matsura ventures were connected to a broader network of pirates and raiders who frequently engaged in overseas plunder known as the *wakô* (倭寇). Members of the Matsura league were among the *wakôs'* founders and consequently *wakô* were active in Hirado, Iki, and Gotô.[37] Famine and slaving motivated early *wakô* activity, which was directed at Korea.[38] However, the *wakô* gradually shifted their focus to China.[39]

Ming Dynasty (1368-1644) trade policies encouraged piracy, albeit unintentionally. The fourth Ming emperor, Xuande (宣德, 1426-35) began an ambitious program of official trade excursions, severely restricting private trade junks.[40] Likewise, foreign trade vessels were required to pay tribute to the Emperor in the capital (modern

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[31] Hall, *The Cambridge History of Japan Volume 4*, 242.

[32] Moon, "The Matsura Pirate-Warriors of Northwestern Kyushu," 364.

[33] Moon, "The Matsura Pirate-Warriors of Northwestern Kyushu," 380.

[34] Ibid,, 365.

[35] Clulow, "From Global Entrepôt to Early Modern Domain," 4.

[36] Hall, *The Cambridge History of Japan Volume 4*, 262.

[37] Moon, "The Matsura Pirate-Warriors of Northwestern Kyushu," 371.

[38] Takeo, "Relations With Overseas Countries," 162.

[39] For an extensive history of *wakô* raids on Korea see: Hazard, *Japanese Marauding in Medieval Korea*.

[40] Honda and Shimazu, *Vietnamese and Chinese Ceramics Used in the Japanese Tea Ceremony*, 8.

day Beijing) following the guidelines of a complex bureaucratic system.[41] These regulations favored the merchant elite and stymied trade traffic in small ports. The absence of private trade created an economic void, which was quickly filled by illegal commerce including *wakô* activities.[42] Ironically, the Ming had adopted the isolationist policy in part to curtail the *wakô*.[43]

Piracy expanded and by the fifteenth century, the *wakô* were smuggling goods and conducting large-scale, highly organized raids on villages and coastlines. By this time the *wakô* were focused on China, (though they had raided China from at least the fourteenth century).[44] *Wakô* piracy reached a climax during the sixteenth century when large pirate armies with hundreds or sometimes thousands of men ravaged the Chinese coastline.[45] Records indicate that by this time, Japanese members had looted territory from Shandong to Fujian.[46] The Ming Court took effective action against the *wakô* in 1552 after the pirates began raiding cities.[47]

Wakô traveled to distant parts of China, Vietnam, and Southeast Asia and as they expanded their territory, their demographic diversified. The term *wakô* came to indicate men joined by their actions but representing a large spectrum of ethnic backgrounds.[48] By the sixteenth century, Europeans were also engaging in *wakô* activity.[49] The status of those involved in piracy was similarly diverse; for instance some Japanese *wakô* were official tribute bearers who raided China on the side.[50] Moreover, ethnic Japanese pirates

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[41] Honda and Shimazu, *Vietnamese and Chinese Ceramics Used in the Japanese Tea Ceremony*, 8.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Takeo, "Relations With Overseas Countries," *Japan in the Muromachi Age* 171.

[44] So, *Japanese Piracy in Ming China During the 16th Century*, 3.

[45] Ibid., 6.

[46] Fogel, *Sagacious Monks and Bloodthirsty Warriors*, 25.

[47] So, *Japanese Piracy in Ming China During the 16th Century*, 7.

[48] Ibid., 18.

[49] Batten, *To the Ends of Japan*, 151.

[50] Fogel, *Sagacious Monks and Bloodthirsty Warriors*, 20.

ventured great distances; by some accounts they traveled as far as the Philippines, Borneo and Bali.[51]

Wakô leadership was also shifting; Chinese sources indicate that during the sixteenth century native Chinese largely organized and controlled pirate forces.[52] Gotô felt the effects of changing pirate demographics when the notorious Wang Zhi (王直; Jp: Ôchoku) arrived at Fukue Island. Wang Zhi was a powerful pirate lord who established and protected a trade network that extended to Gotô and Hirado.[53] Gotô records state that Wang Zhi came to the islands to procure trade in 1540. Gotô's feudal lord at that time, Uku Morisada (宇久盛, dates unknown) welcomed Wang Zhi and established a "China town" with residences for Chinese merchants in the heart of what is now Gotô City.[54] Under Wang Zhi's direction, Gotô became a stronghold for smuggling operations.[55] The Chinese merchants and smugglers built Minjindô (明人堂, Ch: Mingrentang; reconstructed in 1999) and a hexagonal well that remains intact (figs. 9 & 10).[56] Fukue was subsequently developed as a trade harbor.[57]

After setting up the Chinese neighborhood on Fukue, Wang Zhi relocated to Hirado where he stayed involved with the Matsura and *wakô* activities until his death in 1559. His interaction with Gotô did not end on a positive note; Gotô historical records reveal that Wang Zhi's men were expelled from Gotô when Wang Zhi was executed in Hangzhou in 1559.[58] Despite the increase in Chinese pirate leaders, the Matsura region including Gotô and Iki remained central to pirate activity.[59] Moreover, by 1440 the

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[51] So, *Japanese Piracy in Ming China During the 16th Century*, 15.

[52] Ibid., 23.

[53] Souyri, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 152.

[54] The area is still called "China Town"(唐人町, *tôjinmachi*).

[55] Kodansha, "Ôchoku," ("王直,") accessed through Japan Knowledge, May 5, 2013.

[56] Visitors to Gotô city can see the well and the reconstructed Minjindô temple and read about their history on multi-lingual signs.

[57] Hirayama, *Gotôshi to minzoku*, 538.

[58] Ibid,, 539.

Hirado Matsura had become one of the dominant Matsura league families. During the Eiroku era (1558-1570) Matsura Takanobu 松浦 隆信 of Hirado became a *daimyô*, increasing Hirado's prominence.[60] After 1600 Hirado was an official a domain (藩, han) and the island's port flourished as a trading post.[61]

Figure 9 (left)
Hexagonal well, sixteenth century
Figure 10 (right)
Minjindô Temple, reconstructed in 1999

Gotô also received international ships that were not involved in piracy. After the shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (足利 義満, 1368-1407) accepted a degrading but lucrative

[59] Elisones, "The inseparable trinity: Japan's relations with China and Korea," 6.

[60] Clulow, "From Global Entrepôt to Early Modern Domain," 4.

[61] Ibid.

trade agreement with the Ming in 1401-2 Gotô revisited its role as a launching pad for envoys to China.[62] From 1404 through 1547, seventeen missions, a total of eighty-four tally ships, carrying between one hundred and two hundred people sailed for China. The vessels awaited fair winds in either Hirado or Gotô.[63]

Gotô also sustained contact with Europeans during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first Europeans to reach Japan came to a small island called Tanegashima (種子島, off the coast of Kagoshima) in 1542 when their boat shipwrecked. These Westerners were three Portuguese passengers in a Chinese junk that likely belonged to Wang Zhi.[64] Soon after, Catholic missionaries began arriving in Japan. The Portuguese Jesuit Francis Xavier (1506-1552), two Spanish Jesuits, and a Japanese convert arrived in Kagoshima in 1549.[65] More missionaries came in 1552 and the Catholic faith gained popularity. Because the missionaries had come from the south, and due to insufficient translations, the Japanese initially thought they were teaching a sect of Shingon Buddhism. Consequently, the Europeans were labeled "Southern Barbarians" (南蛮人, *Nanbanjin*).[66]

Missionary work on Gotô began in 1563 and the new religion attracted many followers.[67] Jesuit records show that some 2,000 Gotô islanders had converted to Catholicism by 1592.[68] The missionaries and converts generated mixed responses amongst the people of Gotô. For example, a fire broke out on Fukue in 1569, destroying about half of the town. The public responded by blaming Christians for provoking the punishment of Buddhist law.[69] However, as indicated by the high conversion rates, the

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[62] Souri, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 150.

[63] Takeo, "Relations With Overseas Countries," *Japan in the Muromachi Age*, 166.

[64] Souyri, *The World Turned Upside Down*, 152.

[65] Whelan, *The Beginning of Heaven and Earth*, 4.

[66] Ibid., 4-5.

[67] Whelan, "Japan's Vanishing Minority," 443.

[68] Ibid.

people of Kyûshû, who were accustomed to unfamiliar people and ideas, remained open-minded about the new religion.

The bustling Hirado domain became the primary European trading hub during the early 1600s. Due largely to the efforts of the Matsura, the port attracted Europeans including the English, Portuguese, and Dutch, as well as merchants from other Asian countries.[70] Hirado remained a hub until 1641 when international trade was relegated to Nagasaki and officially restricted to Dutch and Chinese merchants.[71]

In the greater Kyûshû region aggressive trade policies augmented Catholicism's popularity, and contributed to hasty and insufficient explanations of complicated religious doctrine. Religious teachings often accompanied intricate social and monetary transactions, as exemplified by the Portuguese: The Portuguese largely exchanged Chinese silks for Japanese silver.[72] The arrangement proved lucrative for both parties, increasing Japanese contact with Catholicism. Missionaries shrewdly convinced those who pursued trade to convert to Christianity by being baptized.[73] However this ritual could not adequately convey the complexity of the Catholic belief system. Moreover, translations of biblical texts were confusing and were not thoroughly or methodically taught to converts.

Most Christians did not endure the religious purges of the early Edo period, including the estimated 2,000 Gotô converts.[74] The first Catholics did however lay a cultural foundation for the *Kakure Kirishitan* (隠れキリシタン, Hidden Christians). The *Kakure Kirishitan* secretly practiced Christianity in Gotô and other isolated regions of Kyûshû such as Amakusa (now in Kumamoto prefecture) and Iki in the 1700s.[75] Gotô's

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[69] Hirayama, Gotôshi to minzoku, 539. The passage reads: 福江に大火あり、町の半分を焼く（世人はキリシタン渡来による仏罰となす (“A great fire broke out in Fukue, burning half of the town. People thought it was Buddha's punishment for the arrival of Christians”).

[70] Clulow, “From Global Entrepôt to Early Modern Domain,” 6.

[71] Ibid., 1.

[72] Whelan, *The Beginning of Heaven and Earth*, 4.

[73] Whelan, “Japan's Vanishing Minority,” 439.

[74] Ibid., 443.

[75] Ibid.

Kakure Kirishitan were refugees who fled from Hirado and the surrounding region following the executions of Christians in the opening days of the Edo period. They survived by pretending to be Buddhists. Some sources indicate that their population was significant. For instance, an 1805 survey conducted by the Tokugawa government estimated that the number of Christians was over 5,000.[76] Their practices evolved into a unique religion loosely based on Christianity. Many converted back to Catholicism after the Edo-period ban on Christianity was lifted and several Catholic churches were built. Today these churches are popular Gotô tourist destinations. Gotô is also known as one of the regions where small populations of *Kakure Kirishitan* continued to practice their homegrown religion through the late twentieth century.[77]

In sum, from the thirteenth century onward Gotô was embroiled in illicit and sanctioned nautical activity that brought islanders in contact with the people and culture of other regions of Asia. Catholicism and trade with the Europeans provided further exposure to foreign goods and ideas. During the Edo-period trade was relegated to Nagasaki, but Gotô became a refuge for *Kakure Kirishitan*. These historical phenomena make Gotô and the surrounding region's history remarkable.

Linking the Baramon's Origins to Gotô's History

The oldest records that reference the Baramon are not specifically devoted to kites and offer limited historical analysis. The *Gotô minzoku zushi* addresses the Baramon in the context of seasonal activities but does not attempt to explain the kite's origins. However, the kite-diagrams included therein show that kite culture was well ingrained by the 1930s (fig. 11).[78] Detailed discussions of the Baramon's history first appeared in the

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[76] Matsuda Kiichi, "*Kakure Kirishitan*," ("カクレキリシタン,") Shogakukan, accessed through Japan Knowledge, May 5, 2013.

[77] See Whelan "Japan's Vanishing Minority," for an account of populations living in Gotô in the early 1990s.

[78] Hashiura, *Gotô minzoku zushi*, 102-104.

second half of the twentieth century in kite books. The general lack of historical records regarding the Baramon leaves a void that can be filled with Gotô history.[79]

Tourist pamphlets, signs, and websites tend to position the Baramon within interesting chapters in Gotô's history. Such sources frequently pair the kite with pre-Edo nautical populations, and particularly *wakô*. For example, a tour book and matching website called *Nagasaki-ken Bunka hyakusen: Gotô hen* (*文化百選: 五島編*, *A Selection of One Hundred Cultural Things From Gotô*) states: "Because the Baramon is found only in a place connected to *wakô* and *kentôshi* it is said that perhaps *wakô* pirates introduced [the Baramon to Gotô] and in that case used it as a signal and to measure distances and the direction of the wind."[80] The packaging on a Baramon windshield charm purchased in December of 2012 bears a strikingly similar caption containing the following statement: "Baramon kites are from the only region connected to *wakô* and *kentôshi*. Therefore, there is a strong possibility that the *wakô* introduced [the Baramon] (fig. 12)."[81] The caption goes on to explain how the kites might have been used to measure distances and gauge the direction of the wind.[82]

The hypothesis that *wakô* introduced the Baramon is prevalent in Gotô and Nagasaki prefecture. However Kite scholars tend to attribute the Baramon's origins to the similar kites of nearby regions. The divergent conclusions reveal differing methodologies: local explanations of the Baramon examine Gotô's history for insight as to the Baramon's origins while outside scholars prioritize broader trends in material culture.

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[79] The *Fukue shishi* (which features the image of the gigantic kite in figure 2 and the recollections of elderly Gotô residents) does not offer a historical explanation of the Baramon.[79]

[80] Masahiro, "Baramon tako," *Nagasaki-ken bunka hyakusen, Gotô hen*, 166.

[81] Similarly, the Hirado *oniyôchô* is popularly linked to the island's stint as international trade hub and commercial literature often insinuates that Europeans played a role in introducing the *oniyôchô.*

[82] Unless otherwise noted all translations are my own. The windshield charm was manufactured by Fukushi no Sato.

Figure 11

Detail of a “Baramon” kite from a 1934 diagram with the caption “Islands’ Kites” (Hashiura, *Gotô minzoku zushi*, 103)

Figure 12

Front and back of Baramon windshield charm

Fukushi no Sato (福祉の里)

Interpreting the Baramon through Gotô's history may have also led to a trend whereby the Baramon is linked to the *Kakure Kirishitan*. According to this theory the *Kakure Kirishitan* interpreted the Baramon's shape or part of its motif as a crucifix.[83] For instance, a website that sells the kites states: "A feature of this Baramon kite is that it has a crucifix shape in its design and [it is from] *Kakure Kirishitan* islands that were also a base for armed ships. Gotô alone has this combination of historical characteristics. The origin of the kite is unknown but it is a thing of deep interest."[84] The Nagasaki prefecture

[83] The *Kakure Kirishitan* are not credited with inventing the Baramon.

website for local crafts makes a similarly ambiguous connection between the Baramon and the *Kakure Kirishitan* stating that: "Gotô is an island of *Kakure Kirishitan*. As for the Baramon kite, it is said that there is a crucifix shape in the motif."[85] The contemporary kite maker Nohara Kenji (野原健治) shares this view; he believes that the overall shape of the kite was interpreted as a cross with the outer circles representing two hands.[86] Alternately, contemporary Baramon often have small cross-like shapes in the helmet motif, which might contribute to the association.[87]

Significantly, the shortage of evidence lets multiple interpretations into discussions of provenance. The Baramon's connection to any combination of the above historical people and events cannot be proven or disproven because, as mentioned earlier, no antique kites or documentation of early kite-usage before 1934 remains. A lack of extant Chinese kites resembling the Baramon further complicates dating and attribution. Given that the Baramon could be paired with just about any aspect of Gotô's history, the events it is linked with give insight as to its role in contemporary society.

Popular explanations of the Baramon essentially curate regional identity by coupling the Baramon with exciting historical trends such as *wakô*, *Kakure Kirishitan*, and *kentôshi*. While these groups may indeed have shaped the evolution of the Baramon, the resulting discourses are as much discussions of Gotô filtered through the Baramon, as they are theoretical histories of the kite. After all, *wakô*, *Kakure Kirishitan*, and *kentôshi* are the more famous elements of Gotô's history.

Significantly, commentators are careful to use expressions such as "perhaps" and "it is said" meaning that they are making an effort to integrate the Baramon and Gotô history while making sure that the resulting narrative is a plausible historical explanation. Moreover, Gotô/ Baramon history is often positioned alongside events that are not

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[84] Gotô Island Market, "Gotô Baramon tako yurai," ("五島ばらもん凧由来,") accessed May 12, 2013, http://www.gim-601.co.jp/products/detail.php?product_id=206.

[85] The Nagasaki Product Promotion Association, "Gotô Baramon tako," accessed May 17, 2013, http://www.e-nagasaki.com/contents/catalog/contents/crafts/local_toy.html.

[86] Nohara Kenji and Nohara Chiyoko at Gotô Baramon Tako Hambaiten, interview by the author, December 29, 2012.

[87] Hike opines that the association between the Baramon and the *Kakure Kirishitan* is new (Hike, Tako daihyakka, 25). As for the oldest sources documenting the Baramon, the Gotô minzoku zue makes no mention of *Kakure Kirishitan* and texts devoted to Hidden Christians do not mention kites.

directly related to the hypothesis at hand. For example, the *Bunka hyakusen's* mention of *kentôshi* envoys is unrelated to their assertion that *wakô* introduced the Baramon, especially considering that hundreds of years separate the two groups.

This active association between the Baramon and Gotô's history coincides with the region's promotion of the kite as a tourist mascot and souvenir. In addition to casting Gotô's history in a flattering light, references to Christianity and the *kentôshi* advertise Gotô's tourist attractions. Today Gyôgasaki is a picnic and camping destination with cabins and signs in English and Japanese documenting and commemorating the *kentôshi* voyages. Nearby another tourist attraction devoted to the Tang Envoys called the Michi no Eki Kentôshi Furusatokan (道の駅遣唐使ふるさと館, Road-side Station Tang Envoy Hometown Center) houses *Kentôshi*-related exhibits as well as a giant Baramon kite. The kite's bottom tier is decorated with the establishment's logo, which is an envoy ship carrying cartoonish human figures (fig. 13). Interestingly, this kite is inscribed with both the name of the village where the Kentôshi Furusatokan is located, and the common poetic appellation of the ancient capital of Nara, "man'yô" (万葉; "ten-thousand leaves"), taken from the eighth-century poetry collection, *Man'yôshû* (万葉集; "Collection of Ten-thousand Leaves"). The kite calls Gyôgasaki the "Western edge of the home of *Man'yôshû*."[88] Sitting by the door of the center, this Baramon serves as a tourism ambassador by reminding visitors that they are at the western edge of Japan, and more generally by interweaving the Baramon with contemporary celebrations of local and national history.

In a similar vein, visitors to Gotô can purchase a variety of merchandise that visually associates the Baramon with Christianity. This evokes the many Catholic churches that are also promoted as tourist destinations. For example, gift shops, including the one in the Kentôshi Furusatokan, sell key chains comprised of a Kewpie doll dressed as the Baramon standing in front of packaging depicting a Catholic church (fig. 14).[89] Similar items depict the kite next to a church steeple and the Virgin Mary (fig. 15). This

[88] The *Man'yôshû* (*万葉集*, alternately *萬葉集*) is Japan's first anthology of poems and was comprised in Nara in the eight century. A park nearby the Kentôshi Furusatokan is also named "Man'yô."

[89] This Kewpie keychain is Gotô's version of "Gotôchi Kewpie" (ご当地 キュ-ピ) or "Local Kewpie." Gotôchi Kewpie are miniature Kewpie-doll souvenirs that wear costumes themed after regional customs or goods. For Gotô, Nun versions of the doll are also available.

type of imagery uses the Baramon to combine multiple histories, creating new combinations of local places and events.

In essence, the Baramon functions as a template for promoting local history. Multiple explanations of the kite's history increase the Baramon's perceived meaning, fusing the kite with an idealized version of Gotô's history. The Baramon attracts exciting and romantic interpretations, inspiring new historical amalgamations that it then comes to signify.[90]

In addition to the Kentôshi Furusatokan, many local businesses throughout Fukue also have Baramon displays that function as attention getters and expressions of local spirit. In central Gotô City for instance Baramon peek out from windows and hang above merchandise in a variety of shops including: sundry shops, grocery stores, hotels, museums, restaurants, souvenir shops and rental car agencies (figs. 16 & 17). Similarly, visitor centers, the Gotô City Ferry Terminal, and other public institutions feature Baramon exhibits. In general, these kites hang in prominent locations and many bear the name of the business they represent. As for the Kentôshi Furusatokan, in addition to its massive personalized Baramon, several small Baramon occupy windows on the building's entrance.

The public and private sectors also use the Baramon motif like insignia. Simplified versions of the motif grace public and private architecture including: manhole covers, street signs, tunnels, and bathroom signs (figs. 18 & 19). Businesses also incorporate aspects of the Baramon into their franchises. For example, the name of a local fried foods company, Hamada Chaya, has a product called Baramon age (ばらもん揚げ) that puns on the homophonous expressions "ageru," meaning both "to fly" and "to fry" (fig. 20). The franchise's delivery trucks juxtapose a picture of the Baramon kite and the phrase "Baramon age." Ephemeral products used in shops such as wrapping paper and plastic bags also bear the kite's motif (fig. 21). When used this way the Baramon motif

[90] An interesting theme in discussions of the Baramon is its ties to cultural and ethnic minorities. The Chinese merchants, *wakô*, and *Kakure Kirishitans* embroidered into the Baramon's image were geographically and socially removed from mainstream Japan. Compared to the majority of ethnic Japanese who dwelt contemporaneously in urban regions of Honshu that were fairly isolated from international activity, these groups might be labeled outsiders. The emphasis placed on these populations in popular discussions of the Baramon's origins demonstrates that the kite is still viewed in part as an exotic import. However, whether or not the people of Gotô actually regard these groups as cultural outsiders is a question for further research.

personalizes objects in the surrounding environment and expresses local pride. Those who use the Baramon in this way seem to contribute to the prevalence and perseverance of the Baramon tradition.

Figure 13

Kentôshi themed Baramon at the Michi no Eki Kentôshi Furusatokan

Figure 14 (left)

Kewpie with Baramon suit, ® Costume Kewpie

Figure 15 (right)

Baramon keychain (sold only in the Gotô islands)

Figure 16 (left)

Baramon in a display window

Figure 17 (right)

Baramon in a hotel staircase

Gotô City 2012

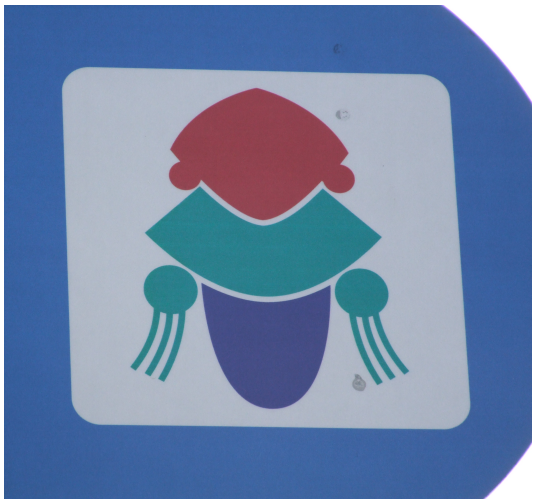

Figure 18 (left)

Baramon manhole cover (Gotô City)

Figure 19 (right)

Baramon street sign (Gotô City)

Figure 20

Van with Baramon Age advertisement

Figure 21

Baramon packaging

When applied to items such as the aforementioned key chains and charms, the Baramon motif turns everyday objects into tourist memorabilia that have no discernable connection to kite flying. They include: fans, cups, key chains, T-shirts, hats, cookies, and windshield charms (figs. 12, 15, 21, 22, 23). These items can be found in Fukue's many souvenir and local goods shops alongside traditional kites. The abundance of the Baramon theme on memorabilia compared to other common motifs such as camellia flowers and churches attests to the Baramon's prestige in contemporary society.

To summarize, the Baramon's commercial roles (display item, commercial and public logo, and souvenir) relate to its perceived history and meaning. The Baramon appears throughout Fukue in these various contexts because it has come to signify the region's heritage. This trend takes advantage of the Baramon's mysterious past, which is now interwoven with Gotô's history and culture. For tourists this makes the kite a powerful visual reminder of Gotô while for the people of Gotô the Baramon represents pride in local identity. Thus looking to Gotô's history for insight as to the historical Baramon has elevated the kite's stature and role in contemporary society. However the Baramon can be discussed in contexts besides Gotô's history. The following chapters

discuss Nagasaki kites and kite culture and the ways in which the Baramon is positioned within that heritage from academic and popular culture standpoints.

Figure 22 (left)

Baramon cup reading: “Gotô, islands of the sun”

Figure 23 (right)

Baramon fan reading: “Nature islands Gotô, Baramon”

CHAPTER III
NAGASAKI KITES AND THE *KABUTO-BARAMON*

Introduction

The Baramon's relationship with historical kites produced around Nagasaki harbor (contemporary Nagasaki City, fig. 6-6, 7) is one aspect of its broader heritage that can be examined thanks to Edo-period guidebooks. After 1641 all international trade was officially limited to Nagasaki harbor and this regulation lasted throughout the Edo period. Many of the exotic goods and people gathered there could only be seen in Nagasaki or by viewing guidebooks. Consequently, the city is better documented than the outlying regions, including Gotô. In the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century the culture of Nagasaki kite flying, too, drew the attention of travel literature authors.

Because texts only document Nagasaki's notable scenery and customs however, all insights gained are based on similarities between contemporary/ twentieth century Baramon, and Edo-period Nagasaki kites. Of all the Nagasaki kites documented, three types kites had structural characteristics in common with the contemporary Baramon. They are referred to in this thesis as "*baramon*-type kites." Today these kites are also generally placed in the structural *tôjindako* category. Scholars have noted that among these kites, one called the *kabuto-baramon* (兜婆羅門, helmet-baramon) closely resembles the Gotô Baramon in terms of both structure and motif.

Despite their similarities, the Baramon's ostensible ties to the Nagasaki *kabuto-baramon* are seemingly deemphasized in contemporary characterizations of the kite within Gotô. This chapter will assess the potential connection between the Nagasaki kites and the Baramon, and analyze the reasons why this particular aspect of the Baramon is not actively embraced in Gotô.

History of Nagasaki's China Town

Nagasaki grew from a small fishing town into Japan's designated international trade hub and the seat of regional power at the onset of the Edo period. The transition began when Portuguese ships arrived in 1571 and turned the city into official Jesuit

headquarters in 1580.[91] Seven years later the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi (豊臣秀吉, 1537-1598) conquered Kyûshû, (placing Nagasaki under the control of what would become a highly stable central government). Shortly thereafter the first Edo-period shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu (徳川家康, 1543-1616) decided to make Nagasaki the center for foreign trade.

In 1618 the shogunate restricted Chinese vessels to Nagasaki's port and the population of Chinese merchants there grew rapidly. Some historians estimate that over 2,000 Chinese expatriates were living in Nagasaki by 1618.[92] The government formalized strict trade regulations and restrictions in the 1630s.[93] At the same time, Japanese citizens were banned from overseas travel. In 1641 all international trade was regulated to Nagasaki and officially limited to Dutch and Chinese merchants. The Dutch relocated to the tiny island of Dejima in Nagasaki harbor, leaving behind the relative freedom they had enjoyed in Hirado.[94] The Chinese expatriates, with the exception of some Zen monks, were forced in 1689 to reside in a designated China town called *Tôjin Yashiki* (唐人屋敷).[95] Though the population of Chinese merchants in Nagasaki led restricted lives, they enjoyed more freedom than those living on Dejima.

Economic concerns prompted construction of the *Tôjin Yashiki*. The shogunate limited trade with the Chinese in 1684 in part to restrict the outflow of gold and silver. The number of trade ships permitted was based on a set amount of copper for export. Ships were turned away after all the copper had been traded. However, the number of Chinese ships coming to Nagasaki increased. This suggested that ships were not returning home with cargo intact, and prompted the shogunate to establish the *Tôjin Yashiki* to

[91] Jansen, *China in the Tokugawa World*, 8.

[92] Ibid., 9.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ôba, "Chinese Travelers to Nagasaki in the Mid-Qing Period," 111.

[95] Ibid.

combat secret trade.[96] In 1739 and again in 1742 the shogunate made restrictions on the number of Chinese vessels permitted to enter Nagasaki harbor.[97]

The Qing rulers who came to power after the fall of the Ming Dynasty (1644) also influenced the establishment of segregated Chinese trade communities in Nagasaki. In 1684 the second Qing emperor Kangxi (康熙, 1654-1722) forbade sea travel in an effort to control piracy.[98] However, this proclamation was neither effective nor fully enforced and piracy continued to plague the Chinese coastlines. The Chinese grew concerned that their subjects were secretly traveling to Japan to teach guarded Chinese customs such as military formations and Chinese rituals, while the Japanese worried about illicit trade. In response Japanese and Chinese authorities began to unofficially cooperate in their efforts to supervise ships. In 1728 the Kangxi emperor's ban on sea travels was revisited for the purpose of confining Chinese merchants to their official compound in Nagasaki.[99] The strict regulations on the one hand and the relative freedom compared to the Dutch at Dejima on the other resulted in a community of Chinese in Nagasaki that were physically segregated but influenced local culture, including kites.

Edo-Period Nagasaki Kites

Images and descriptions of *baramon*-type kites appear in three Edo-period publications that predate any known records of the Gotô Baramon. These images show that during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Nagasaki had at least fifteen kite varieties that can be roughly sorted into two distinct foreign kite families: kites attributed to China and kites from southern regions of Asia.[100] The family of Chinese kites included *baramon*-type kites. *Hata*, or diamond-shaped fighting kites decorated with colored paper

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[96] Ôba, "Chinese Travelers to Nagasaki in the Mid-Qing Period," 114.

[97] Ibid., 115.

[98] Howland, *Borders of Chinese Civilization*, 17.

[99] Ibid., 18.

[100] Harada, *Nagasaki no hata zuroku*, 4.

that resemble Indian *patang* fighting kites typified the second group.[101] Scholars disagree about when each kite was introduced and by whom, and early kite nomenclature is ambiguous. For example, a seventeenth century poem by Nishiyama Sôin (西山宗, 1605-1682) lists two types of kites: *ika-nobori* (いかのぼり) and *Nagasaki-nobori* (長崎のぼり). Mention of two kite types suggests that *hata* may have in use by this time, however some scholars argue that they were introduced much later.[102] This is significant because the possible existence of early *hata* complicates the interpretation of kite records pertinent to the Baramon.

Because *ika-nobori* is a general term, descriptive details assist in identifying references to particular kites. For instance, a record called the *Hadeusu* (*破提宇子*: Edo period, 1620) contains a postscript about giant *ika-nobori* kites in Nagasaki that were flown on Mount Inasa (稲佐) outside of the city. The large size indicates that they were of the Chinese variety, but does not amount to a positive identification.[103] The earliest known document containing illustrations appeared a century later.

The *Nagasaki saijiki* (*長崎歳時記*, *Annual Records of Nagasaki*: Edo period, late eighteenth century, hereafter *Saijiki*) contains early documentation of Nagasaki kites. It lists several kite types and includes illustrations of select bone patterns (fig. 24).[104] Among the illustrations are three oblong kites made up of several overlapping shapes: the *baramon* (婆羅門), *kabuto-baramon*, and the *kenmusô* (剣舞箏, roughly "sword dancing string instrument"). These are the *baramon*-type kites. Of the three, the *baramon* is the only one that is still made in Nagasaki today. (The *kabuto-baramon* and *kenmusô* only exist in the form of illustrations.)

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[101] Modegi, *The Making of Japanese Kites,* 17.

[102] Harada, *Nagasaki no hata zuroku*, 4.

[103] Ibid., 4.
Confusingly, *hata* is also a general term for kite.

[104] Miyamoto, "Nagasaki saijiki," *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryô shûsei,* 778-9.

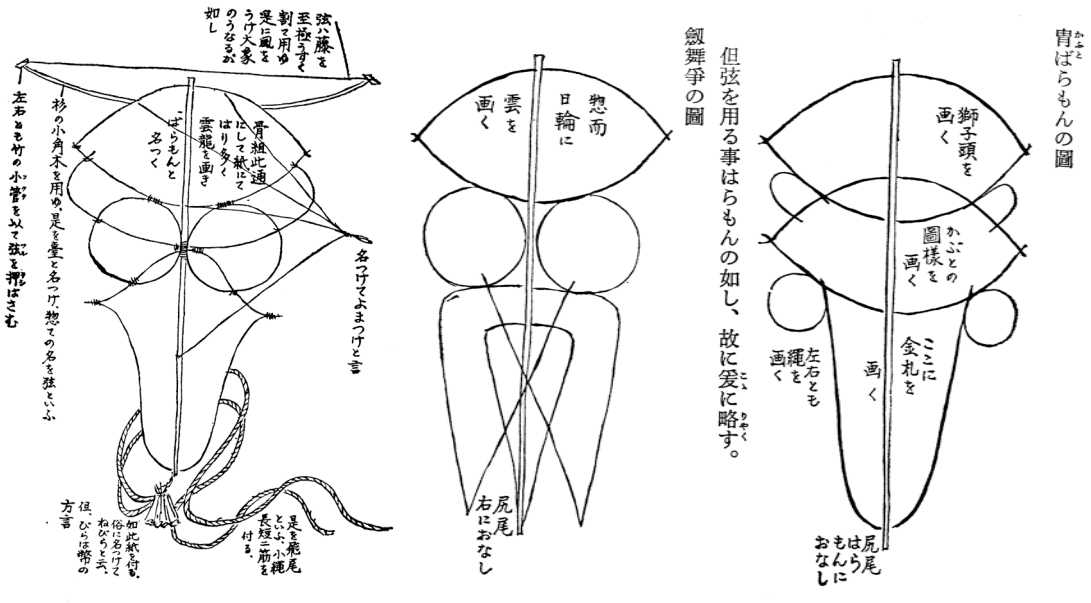

Figure 24

Edo-period Nagasaki kites from the *Saijiki*

From left to right: *baramon*, *kenmusô*, *kabuto-baramon*

(Miyamoto, "Nagasaki saijiki," *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryô shûsei,* 778-9.)

All three kites had three-tiered frames. They also shared a lemon-shaped upper tier and a thick spine that ran vertically down the center of each structure. The middle tiers of the *kenmusô* and the *baramon* consisted of two round circles wedged between the top and bottom tiers. The *baramon's* bottom tier resembled an elongated duckbill (as opposed to the Baramon's tongue-shaped lower tier). A short upper bone and a long bottom bone bent into an oval with a slight corner on either side where the ends meet formed the "duckbill." The *baramon* donned a bow shaped noise-making device labeled *sôkin* (箏琴). Two thick tails of unequal length trailed from the spine and kite lines extended from four points on the front of the kite. The lower tier of the *kenmusô* resembled a tripod made of three fat spikes. According to the caption the *kenmusô* had a tail, though none is depicted.[105] While the general construction of *baramon*-type kites has much in common with the Baramon, the *kabuto-baramon* most resembled Gotô's kite.

[105] Miyamoto, "Nagasaki saijiki," *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryô shûsei,* 778-9.

The bone structures of the Baramon and the *kabuto-baramon* are fundamentally the same, however small differences do exist: the *kabuto-baramon's* vertical bone did not have an X-shaped support, and unlike the Baramon, the middle and top tiers of the *kabuto-baramon* were approximately the same size. Furthermore, the two small thumb shapes lodged between the top two tiers pointed upward rather than downward on the *kabuto-baramon* and were affixed to the middle tier rather than the bottom contour of the upper tier.

The diagrams in the *Saijiki* include annotations describing each kite's motif. According to these annotations, the *baramon* predominantly bore a cloud dragon design that covered the entire kite. Clouds and a sun shape adorned the *kenmusô*. Like contemporary Gotô Baramon, the *kabuto-baramon* had a three-part motif with each section corresponding to a structural tier.

The *kabuto-baramon's* upper section depicted a Chinese mythological lion called a *shishi* (獅子). The middle section beneath the *shishi's* teeth had a warrior's helmet, though the annotations do not specify the helmet's orientation. A *kinsatsu* (金札) symbol for money occupied the bottom of the *kabuto-baramon*. Straw cords adorned the small flanking circles on either side of the bottom tier. The *kabuto-baramon* also had a tail and *sôkin* similar to those of the *baramon*.[106]

Pictures matching the structures and motif descriptions in the *Saijiki* appear in the *Nagasaki kokon shûran meishô zue* (*長崎古今集覽名勝圖繪*, *Illustrated Guide to a Collection of Scenic Places of Past and Present in Nagasaki*: Edo period, early nineteenth century, hereafter *Kokon meishô zue*). The book contains black and white woodblock printed scenes that capture the appearance and culture of Nagasaki. Like the *Saijiki*, the *Kokon meishô zue* illustrates a family of *baramon*-type kites. The bone patterns and motif of the *baramon*, *kabuto-baramon* and two *kenmusô* appear side by side (fig. 25). All of the kites are labeled "baramon."[107]

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[106] Miyamoto, "Nagasaki saijiki," *Nihon shomin seikatsu shiryô shûsei,* 778-9.

[107] Ishizaki, *Nagasaki kokon shûran meishô zue*, 244.

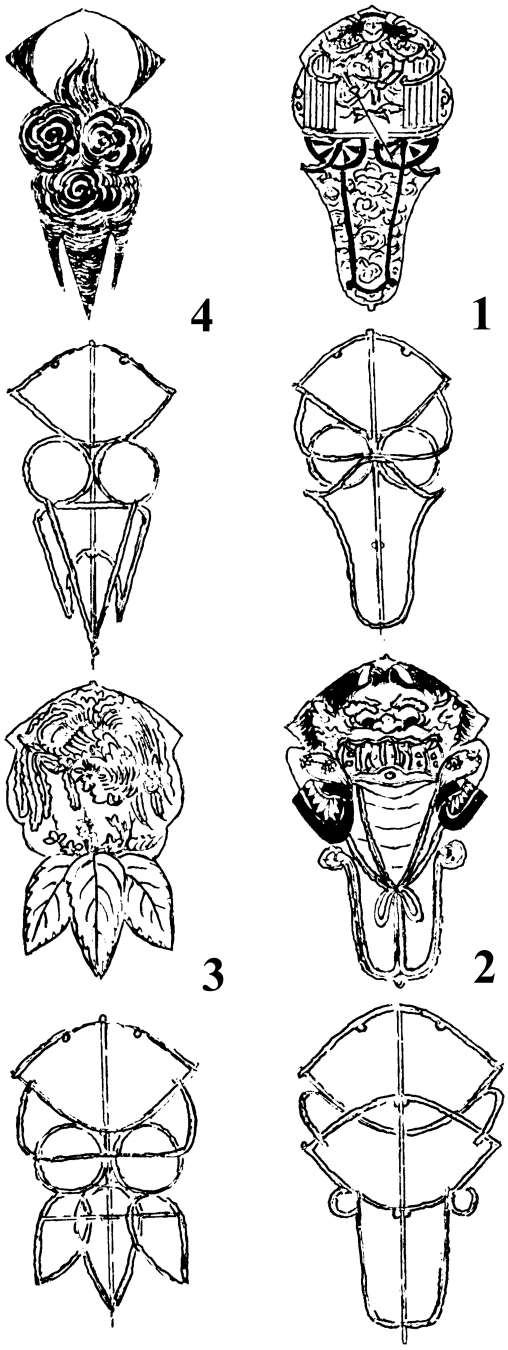

Figure 25

Kites, structures from the *Nagasaki kokon shûran meishô zue*

Clockwise from upper right corner: 1. *baramon,* 2. *kabuto-baramon*, 3. *kenmusô*, (with phoenix motif) 4. *kenmusô* (with sun-and-cloud motif)

Late eighteenth to early nineteenth century, woodblock print

Numbering mine

The illustrations of the kite types are small with no annotations. Based on the bone patterns depicted in the *Saijiki*, two of the kites can be identified as *baramon* and *kabuto-baramon*. The remaining two appear to be *kenmusô* because they have two circles for a middle tier and tripod bases. The *baramon* has a complex pattern of lines and geometric shapes superimposed on a cloud-like motif. The narrower of the two *kenmusô* has a sun-and-cloud motif while the other features a phoenix above a botanical motif.

The depiction of the *kabuto-baramon* (fig. 26) is more or less in keeping with the diagram and annotations in the *Saijiki*. The *kabuto-baramon* motif aligns with the structural tiers but does not completely fill the middle and bottom tier, leaving some white background space between the motif and the black outline that delineates the kite's structural border. The upper section bears the face of a *shishi* (or an *oni*), with two horns, anthropomorphic features, and parted black hair. The stringy ends of the creature's hair stand out against the white space between image and border. The face has furled eyebrows, large pale eyes with black pupils, and a small wrinkled nose. Two wide crumpled ears contrast with the black hair. The creature's mouth merges with a grill on the middle section of the kite alluding to a grimacing mouth filled with needle-shaped teeth.

The middle section appears to contain a front-facing helmet. Two sets of double flaps comprised of small leaf-like ovals above asymmetrical black flaps hang below the *oni*'s face (again there is a third line around the flaps created by the structure). These features resemble the sides of a helmet (fig. 27). Thin lines run horizontally across the space between the flaps where a face would be. Two strings (one on each side) descend from either side of the upper helmet and two more descend from below the flaps. These four strings are bound in a bow resembling chin ties. The bow roughly demarcates the division between middle and lower tiers.

The bottom region is bare except for the strings, which descend vertically to the bottom of the kite and run up along the outside of the lower tongue shaped section. Another string-like line running along the outer edge frames the bottom curve of the kite. The strings terminate in the flanking circles on either side of the bow, forming a W shape. Tassels fill the flanking circles.

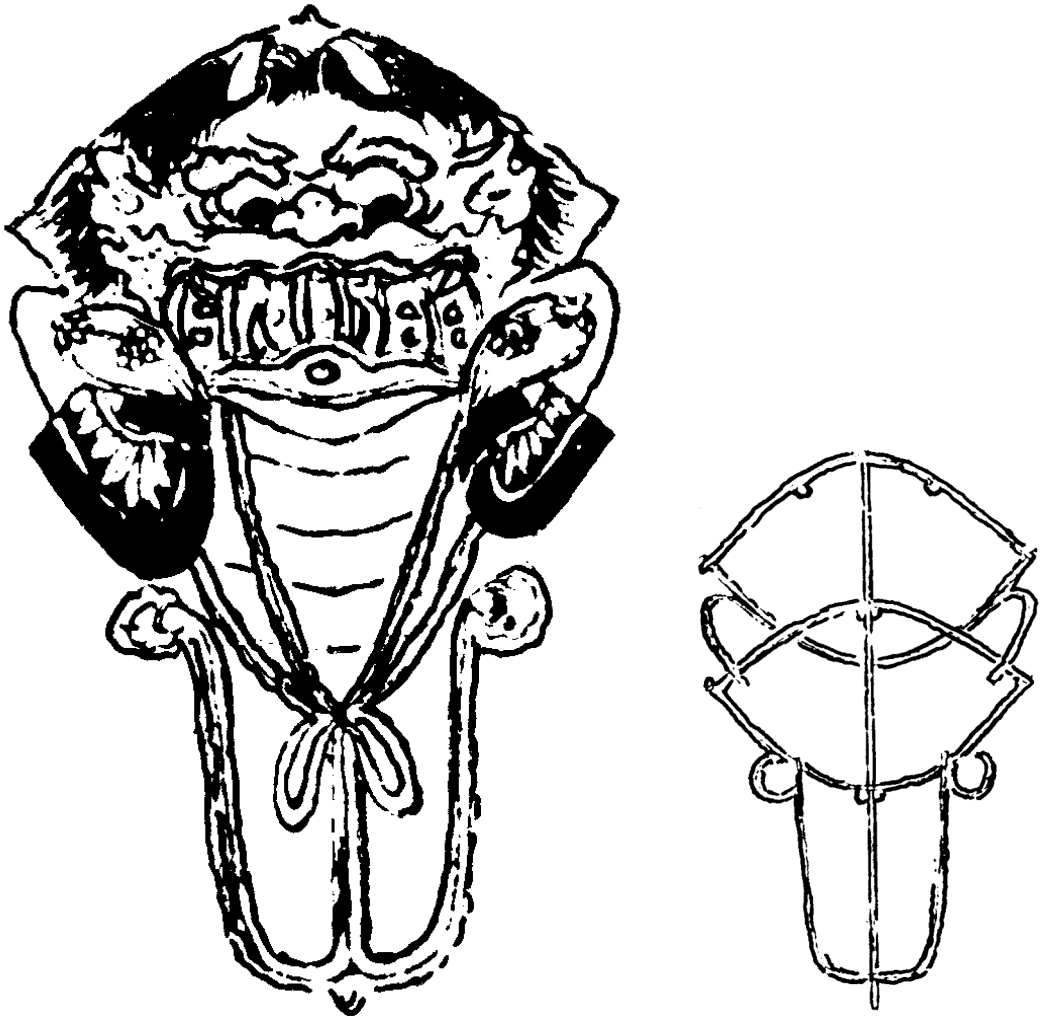

Figure 26

Detail of *kabuto-baramon* from the *Nagasaki kokon shûran meishô zue*


Figure 27 (left)
Frontal view of warrior's helmet
Figure 28 (right)
Back of a warrior's helmet
(Helmet constructed by Myôchin Munehara, mid 19th century.
Barbier-Mueller, *Art of Armor*, 278-9)

A similar *kabuto-baramon* kite appears in a second illustrated guidebook from the first half of the nineteenth century called the *Nagasaki meishô zue* (*長崎名勝図絵*, *Illustrated Guide to Scenic Places in Nagasaki*: Edo period, 1804-1830) (fig. 29).[108] The text accompanying the images lists types of Nagasaki kites including *baramon*, *kenmusô* and *kabuto-baramon*. According to the brief descriptions offered the *kabuto-baramon*'s helmet motif distinguishes it from the *baramon*, which usually features a cloud-dragon motif.[109]

Overall, the *kabuto-baramon* shown in the *Nagasaki meishô zue* resembles the *Kokon meishô zue* kite, though there are some key differences. The eyebrows and horns on the *Nagasaki meishô zue* kite's *oni*/*shishi* face are not discernable. (The representation is only about an inch long and appears in the background of a larger scene, described in chapter IV.) More importantly, as with the contemporary Baramon, the *oni*/*shishi's* grill-

[108] Nagasaki Shidankai, *Nagasaki meisho zue*, 484.

[109] Ibid.

like teeth appear to be biting down on the back of a warrior's helmet: Three thick, horizontally oriented bands form a bell-shape that echoes the reverse side of a helmet like the one shown in figure 28.[110] In addition, like the *Saijiki's baramon*, the *Nagasaki meishô zue* kite has a bow-shaped noisemaking device and a long forked tail, though a ruffle marks the place where the tail splits.

Figure 29

Detail of *Kabuto-baramon* in the *Nagasaki meishô zue*

Nineteenth century woodblock print

[110] The *Nagasaki meishô zue* kite is missing the string on its left side. However the right side string and a bow are depicted indicating that the absence of the string is due to negligence or mishap.

Edo-Period Nagasaki Kites in Discussions of the Baramon

The *Saijiki*, *Nagasaki meishô zue*, and *Kokon meishô zue* prove that large oval kites with complex structures, noise-making devices, and tails existed in Nagasaki by at least the eighteenth century. More to the point they provide the oldest extant representations and descriptions of a kite resembling the Baramon, (the *kabuto-baramon*), which predates the *Gotô minzoku zushi* kite by over one hundred years. Illustrations in the *Nagasaki meishô zue* also show that by the early 1800s versions of the Nagasaki *kabuto-baramon* had a reverse-facing helmet and *oni* motif. Finally, they reveal that the term "baramon" was in use by that time.[111] Faced with a lack of Baramon-related documents kite scholars turn to these records for insight as to the Baramon's history. Documentation of the *kabuto-baramon* appears in most Japanese language academic discussions of the Baramon as well as some English references such as Stevenson's *Japanese Kite Prints*.[112]

The similarities between the *kabuto-baramon* and the Baramon, as well as the relatively abundant documentation of Nagasaki *baramon*-type kites has led some scholars to conclude that the Baramon evolved from the *kabuto-baramon*. These scholars argue that the tradition came to Gotô from Nagasaki during the Edo period.[113] However, the *Saijiki, Nagasaki meishô zue*, and *Kokon meishô zue* are guidebooks devoted to characteristics of Nagasaki culture contemporaneous to their publication. As such they do not tell us whether the *baramon*-type kites existed in nearby regions, such as Gotô at this time or (if they did) how their development and use related to those from Nagasaki. Given the similarities in structure, motif, and the appellation, it is reasonable to assume

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[111] "Baramon" refers to the name rather than a particular kite.

[112] Stevenson, *Japanese Kite Prints*, 15.
Stevenson discusses the *Nagasaki meishô zue* scene.

[113] For example, an essay appearing in the Journal of the Japan Kite Association from the winter of 2011 opined that the *onidako*-type kites (kites with *oni* motifs and complex three-tiered structures) including the Baramon were transmitted from Nagasaki (See Semakawa, "Furusato no Baramon," 48-9). Staff members at the Gotô History and Sightseeing Museum and Archive and other scholars such as Saitô generally concur. (Gotô History and Sightseeing Museum, interview by author, December 28, 2013). In addition, even scholars who trace the Baramon to pre-Edo period kites reference the *kabuto-baramon*. For instance, although Hike does not believe that the Baramon came from Nagasaki he acknowledges that the Baramon resembles the *kabuto-baramon* (See Hike, *Tako daihyakka*, 26).

that the *kabuto-baramon* is related to Gotô Baramon in some way. Without any collaborating evidence, however, we cannot tell exactly how they relate.

In contrast to academic discussions of the Baramon's history, Gotô's publications do not seem to feature the Baramon's ties to *kabuto-baramon* even though Gotô is presently under the jurisdiction of Nagasaki prefecture (which includes the geographic area that produced the *kabuto-baramon* during the Edo period). Rather, descriptions of the Baramon's origins favor the Gotô-centric hypotheses discussed in chapter II. This is even true of the Gotô History and Sightseeing Museum and Archive (五島観光歴史資料館, Gotô Kankô Rekishi Shiryôkan, hereafter Gotô History Museum). The Baramon kite display at states only that the kite "came to Gotô long ago" and that its name comes from the local vernacular for "vigorous" and "healthy," highlighting the Baramon's development within Gotô traditions (fig. 30).[114] The *Nagasaki-ken bunka hyakusen* as well as other local sources also promote this hypothesis, connecting "baramon" to *baraka*, the local dialect for vigorous.[115]

The assertion that Gotô developed the name "baramon" from local slang is intriguing because as far as we can tell from the Edo-period guidebooks, the term "baramon" was used for kites with similar structures in Nagasaki. In addition, a kite reminiscent of the Nagasaki *kenmusô* that is currently known as the "Amakusa *baramon*" (天草バラモン) was produced in Kumamoto prefecture through the twentieth century. The existence of this kite suggests that use of the term "baramon" to refer to kites was a broader Kyûshû phenomenon.

Furthermore, scholars have proposed other plausible etymology for the term "baramon." For instance, according Culin, the term simply refers to Nagasaki kites with noisemakers, which were called "bara-mon" (or "bara-thing").[116] Hike postulates that the term "baramon" came from a Chinese word for a type of door pronounced in Japanese as

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[114] Gotô History and Sightseeing Museum, interview by author, December 28, 2013.
The Gotô History Museum officially accepts the connection between the name Baramon and the term *baraka* though it is only alluded to it the display.

[115] Masahiro, "Baramon tako," *Nagasaki-ken bunka hyakusen*, Gotô hen, 166.
[116] Culin, *Korean Games*, 16.

"banmon" (板門, "banmen" in Chinese) and was initially used in for the kites from Hirado and Iki as well as Gotô.[117]

Figure 30

Nohara Baramon display, Gotô History Museum

Photograph courtesy of the Gotô History Museum

It is important to emphasize that there is no source pinpointing how and when the Gotô kite came to be called "baramon." Therefore, just as the kite's origins are a mystery, all hypotheses about its appellation are ultimately equally plausible but unsubstantiated. However, The Baramon's likely connection to Nagasaki kites is the only assumption supported by historical documents. This is why it is significant that local discourse

[117] Hike, *Tako daihyakka*, 22.

surrounding the Baramon associates the kite with key aspects of Gotô's history, but is seemingly silent about its ties to the Nagasaki kites.

A twenty-minute film about the Baramon called *Baramon Skies* (バラモンの空, *Baramon- no sora*) screened at the Gotô History Museum encapsulates the selective presentation of the Baramon. The film features a young boy who has just moved to Gotô and is having trouble adjusting. He develops a strong connection to his new home after learning about local history and scenery. The sound of the kite's noisemaker and flashes of a flying Baramon appear throughout the film.[118] In the end the boy flies a Baramon and embraces his new home.

In effect, the film underscores what popular discourse suggests: the Baramon is directly linked to the cultural make-up of Gotô's identity and in turn to a person's relationship with Gotô. As such, the kite itself has the power to make Gotô part of a person's identity. Connecting the Baramon to the *kabuto-baramon* places it in the context of a larger regional trend, potentially obscuring the Gotô-ness of the kite.

It is important to emphasize that this selective presentation of the kite is by no means a misrepresentation of its history. Ultimately, the Baramon's resemblance to the *kabuto-baramon* does not diminish its Gotô-centric personality. Again, too many pieces of the puzzle are missing for us to understand how the Baramon and *kabuto-baramon* related to each other. Furthermore, the Baramon tradition survived while the *kabuto-baramon* tradition did not. This alone is a testament to the significance of this kite in Gotô; apparently the Baramon achieved a level of local reverence that *kabuto-baramon* did not enjoy in Nagasaki.

The Baramon as a Traditional Handicraft

In recent years, Baramon's close ties to Gotô have been acknowledged not only within the islands but also more broadly by Nagasaki prefecture. While confirming the Baramon's origins is a highly complex undertaking, Nagasaki prefecture has taken a very simple step to ensure that Gotô can fully claim the Baramon: The prefecture now

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[118] Gotô History Museum, December 28, 2013.

recognizes the Baramon a Gotô product, which enables it to officially represent Gotô. Central to this status are the contemporary kite makers, whose distinct Baramon is considered the official version.

In 1993 the Nagasaki Prefectural Government awarded the Baramon *Dentôteki Kôgeihin* (伝統的工芸品, roughly Traditional Handicraft) status. This designation recognizes traditional goods specific to one region in an effort to preserve and promote their daily use while enriching the local culture and economy. To qualify as *Dentôteki Kôgeihin* the handicraft must meet detailed criteria including production by local specialists who use simple raw materials and traditional techniques.[119] The prefecture conferred this status on Baramon made by the aforementioned Nohara Gontarô of Fukue Island.

When the Nohara Baramon became a *Dentôteki Kôgeihin*, Fukue Island still had six established Baramon kite makers.[120] Today the Nohara are the primary, and very likely the only family carrying on the tradition professionally.[121] The Baramon is thus doubly bound to the Nohara; the perpetuation of the tradition depends largely on them, and their legacy as kite makers combined with the *Dentôteki Kôgeihin* award gives Nohara kites revered brand-name recognition. Put simply, they are the talented stewards of a local legacy. In these ways the Nohara expand the kite's multifaceted identity and ties to Gotô.[122]

The representative version of the Nohara kite bears a signature helmet motif consisting of stacked horizontal bands with bold patterns. From top to bottom the layers include: a vertical white on green stripe pattern accentuated with white dots, a red and white string design, a layer of upward-pointing white triangles set against black, and a red

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[119] Laws Related to the Promotion of Traditional Handicraft Industries, (伝統的工芸品産業の振興に関する法律,) accessed April 9, 2013, http://law.e-gov.go.jp/htmldata/S49/S49HO057.html.

[120] Prior to the late twentieth century family members made Baramon for their descendents. For a table of kite makers still living throughout Nagasaki prefecture during the 1990s see: Hike, *Tako daihyakka,* 575.

[121] Baramon kite making is still practiced recreationally at the Buke Yashiki Dôri Furusatokan (武家屋敷通りふるさと館, discussed in more detail in the following chapter), however retail kites are made by the Nohara.

[122] In addition to the Nohara family, grandfathers and other practiced kite makers create their own versions of the Baramon. Visitors to Gotô City are also encouraged to try making a Baramon with provided materials at the Buke Yashiki Dôri Furusatokan's crafts center.

layer with white T-shapes.[123] A green, white, and black string pattern delineates the bottom of the helmet. The lower region of a prototypical Nohara Baramon contains a dragon or a black tendril of hair. Typically, these dragons are blue or green with serpentine bodies, flowing whiskers and long horns. The Nohara depict the dragon faces in three-quarter profile with mouths open to reveal sharp teeth. They have three talons and typically clutch an orb in their left claw. On kites with tendril motifs, the hair forms a thick spiral that ends in a single point. The hair often has blue accents. Precise black outlining, and bright pigments with cool undertones are two easily recognizable Nohara Baramon traits (see figs. 1 and 30).

Nohara Gontarô founded the family's kite shop called Gotô Baramon Tako Hanbaiten (五島ばらもん凧販売店, Gotô Baramon Retail Shop) in Gotô City (figs. 31 & 32). Nohara was born on Fukue Island in 1928 and learned kite making in junior high school from a friend's father after his own father died. He began making kites professionally in the 1960s and opened the Gotô Baramon Tako Hanbaiten in 1965. His workshop produced innumerable Baramon kites as well as Gotô's less famous *hinodezuru* kite (日の出鶴, Sunrise Crane kite).[124] Nohara passed away in January of 2012. During his lifetime, Nohara Gontarô was a celebrated kite maker. In addition to the *Dentôteki Kôgeihin* recognition, he participated in national product exhibitions and was featured in several magazines.[125]

Today Nohara Gontarô's son Kenji makes official *Dentôteki Kôgeihin* Baramon in the Gotô Baramon Tako Hanbaiten with his assistant, Nohara Chiyoko (野原千代子). They build and paint each kite by hand. Prior to Gontarô's death the Nohara began using cloth to increase the durability of kites longer than eighty centimeters but their production process otherwise utilizes traditional materials and techniques.[126] Baramon sold in their

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[123] Versions of this motif vary and some kites incorporate an extra layer.

[124] Interestingly, these kites are now given to girls much as Baramon are given to boys.

[125] A list of Gontarô's publications and more detailed biographical information can be found on the Nohara Baramon website entitled Gotô Mingei, (五島民芸,) http://gotomingei.web.fc2.com/yurai.html#takumi.

[126] Nohara Kenji and Nohara Chiyoko at Gotô Baramon Tako Hambaiten, interview by the author, December 29, 2012.

Figure 31 (top)

Gotô Baramon Tako Shop, Baramon stored in rafters

Figure 32 (bottom)

Photograph of Nohara Gontarô and inverted *ondako*, Gotô Baramon Tako Shop

shop range in length from twenty centimeters to one and one-half meters. A two-by-three meter kite is available by special order.[127] Nohara Kenji's kites adhere to his father's prototype, which demonstrates some unique modifications but follow the standard Baramon bone pattern and motif.

Local residents can commission Nohara Baramon to meet their specifications. The Gotô Baramon Tako Hanbaiten inscribes custom-made kites with the name of their owner, often to commemorate Children's Day. The name is usually integrated into the bottom section of kites with tendril motifs.[128] Likewise, companies and businesses can commission kites bearing their franchise name and sometimes a corresponding illustration beneath the helmet. The Nohara also fill the bottom of some specialty Baramon with a variety of images including zodiac animals, famous deities, and camellia flowers.

The more generic Nohara kites with tendril or dragon motifs are sold throughout Gotô City and in some rural tourist attractions. Retail locations vary from small shops to hotels, but are all affiliated with promoting Gotô products or tourism. The Gotô Baramon Tako Hanbaiten embraces this cooperative spirit by selling local camellia oil on their website and in their shop. Thus the retail approach is in keeping with the *Dentôteki Kôgeihin* designation because it emphasizes the kite's role as an official local product, reinforcing the commercial relationship between Gotô and the Baramon.

In sum, the Baramon's *Dentôteki Kôgeihin* designation distances it from broader regional kite history. The recognition made the Baramon a respected and recognizable emblem of Gotô for outsiders. The increased recognition in turn encouraged the kite to be associated with a variety of other Gotô goods, further contributing to its exposure. As a consequence, the Baramon is more renowned outside of Gotô today than the now extinct *kabuto-baramon*. Furthermore, any reference to the *kabuto-baramon* is superfluous, and even inappropriate in some cases because Nagasaki prefecture now defines the Baramon as officially belonging to Gotô. For instance, from a commercial standpoint, inclusion of

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[127] Gotô Mingei, (五島民芸,) "Sendai no takumi," ("先代の匠,") accessed May 11, 2013, http://gotomingei.web.fc2.com/yurai.html#takumi.

[128] In the interview that occurred on December 29th 2012 Nohara Kenji stated that because the lower regions displaying only the tendril are somewhat sparse without an inscription, he often chooses to depict a dragon instead.

the *kabuto-baramon* in popular Baramon discourse might undermine efforts to promote the Baramon as Gotô's local product.

CHAPTER IV
KITE CULTURE
Introduction

The previous two chapters examined the discourse regarding the origins of the Baramon kite. They demonstrated how the selective association of the kite with Gotô's history effectively bound it exclusively to Gotô's past. However, one must also consider the actual usage of the kite. In 1895 Culin observed that the Chinese residents in the harbor town of Nagasaki had their own varieties of kites separate from the *hata* fighting kites.[129] Culin's writings on the subject suggest that during the Meiji period the kites flown by the Chinese residents retained at least some of their original Chinese identity. Although the connection between what Culin records and the so-called Chinese kites is unclear, even today, the kites in the *tôjindako* category are understood to be somehow distinctly "Chinese." At the same time, the historic illustrations of kite flying from the *Nagasaki meishô zue* and the *Kokon meishô zue* indicate that the Japanese also flew Chinese-style kites (including *baramon*-type kites) alongside other kites at picnics and festivals. Thus while the association with China was certainly important to these kites, in practice they were being more or less integrated into local kite-flying customs.

This chapter first discusses the traditional, ritual and social characteristics of Chinese and Nagasaki kite flying as a foundation for subsequent examination of contemporary Baramon usage. In essence, the people of Gotô have blended common Chinese and regional practices with homegrown traditions to create a unique kite culture. This chapter will argue that contemporary usage emphasizes select traditions from the past to localize Baramon kite culture, merging kite flying with Gotô's community and culture.

[129] Culin, *Games of the Orient*, 15.

A History of Chinese Kite Flying

In *Science and Civilisation in Ancient China*, Joseph Needham and Ling Wang argue that all kites, including Japanese kites, originated in China.[130] While this may be true, Modegi points out that kites evolve through exposure to other traditions and argues that the Baramon could have come to Japan gradually from China and other locations such as Micronesia.[131] In any case, the history of East Asian kite making dates back to before the Common Era and anthropologists have found evidence of kites throughout China, Indonesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia.[132] The Chinese probably brought the first kites to Japan sometime during the Heian period (794-1185).[133] The broader transmission of language and religion that occurred between China and Japan, as well as the transmission of technology, and especially paper making (a fundamental component of East Asian kite making) supports this theory.[134] According to Hiroi the first words for "kite" used in Japan match Chinese terms, suggesting that kites spread from China.[135] Furthermore, documentation of kites in Japan does not occur until centuries after China had established rich kite-flying traditions.

Fortunately, literary references can help scholars to piece together a sketch of the evolution of Chinese kites from complex military devices to toys.[136] Accounts of the Han Dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE) glimpse the earliest precursors to Chinese kite flying.[137] According to the documentary text *Han Feizi* (韓非子, third century BCE) the Chinese

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[130] Needham and Wang, *Science and Civilisation in Ancient China*, Vol. 4, 576.

[131] Modegi, *The Making of Japanese Kites*, 17.

[132] Needham and Wang, *Science and Civilisation in Ancient China*, Vol. 4, 576.

[133] See Appendix A for a brief history of Japanese kites.

[134] Streeter, *The Art of the Japanese Kite*, 156.
Tal Streeter in particular points to Chinese papermaking as evidence that Japanese kites originated in China.

[135] Hiroi, *Tako sora no zôkei*, 15.

[136] My research drew from the text and bibliography in Hongxun's *Chinese Kites*.

[137] All dates before the Common Era include "BCE". All other dates should be understood as Common Era.

philosopher Mozi (墨子) invented what might loosely be deemed a kite in the fourth century BCE when he created a flying wooden eagle.[138] However biographic records kept by one of Mozi's students indicate that Mozi credited the engineer and philosopher Gong Shuban (公输般, also known as Lu Ban 鲁班, active 494 BCE – 468 BCE) with the invention of kites. According to legend, Gong Shuban fashioned a wooden magpie that stayed in the air for three days.[139]

The Records of the Court and People (seventh century) also explains how Gong Shuban created giant flying wooden eagles for travel and reconnaissance. Gong Shuban is further credited with inventing a human-sized spy kite to aid Chu armies in attacking the Song.[140] The Han general Han Xin (韓信) seems to have followed Gong Shuban's example; according the *Record of the Origin of Things* (written in the Song Dynasty, 960-1279) Han Xin used a kite to intimidate rival soldiers by lifting a flute-player above enemy troops.[141] He may have also used kites as devices to measure distances in order to tunnel under a fortress in battle.[142] Sung scholars writing in the thirteenth century referred to Han Xin's device as a "paper kite" (纸鸢 or 紙鳶, "kami tobi" in Japanese), although paper that was produced during Han Xin's time was not likely used as a material for kite making.[143]

The utility of kites continued to evolve. Tang Dynasty (618-907) soldiers used kites for communication in battle. For instance, in the year 781 a general signaled his troops with a kite while besieged, and was subsequently rescued.[144] It was also during this time that the aristocracy came to enjoy kites. To give a particularly imaginative example, lavishly decorated tubular kites were strung together and fitted with candles.

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[138] Hongxun, *Chinese Kites*, 1.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Hongxun, *Chinese Kites*, 1.

[141] Ibid., 2.

[142] Hart, *Kites; an Historical Survey*, 25.

[143] Needham and Wang, *Science and Civilisation in Ancient China*, 577.
Needham and Wang question the availability of paper for Han Xin's "paper kite."

[144] Newman and Newman, *Kite Craft*, 577.

Air currents and heat from the candles lifted the kites into the air, resulting in a chain of floating lights.[145] Unfortunately, the lantern-kites started several fires, and were ultimately banned by the imperial court.[146] Early images of recreational kite flying appear in the paintings in the Dunhuang Mogao Caves 332 (completed circa 689 CE) and 148 (circa 776 CE).[147]

Kites came to be called "wind flutes" (风筝 or 風箏, "kaze koto" or "kaito" in Japanese) during the Five Dynasties period (947-951) when a kite-maker called Li Ye used a bamboo tube to create musical kites that sang in the wind.[148] Noisemaking devices likely predate Li Ye, but tenth century references to them are abundant.[149] Li Ye's kites were often made of silk and adorned with lanterns or elaborate tails. Because his kites were so extravagant, their use was restricted to the upper classes.[150] Kite making expanded to the lower classes during the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279).[151]

Though detailed records of kites and kite making are scarce, some gripping accounts have endured the ages. For example, at the end of the thirteenth century Marco Polo wrote kites from Fujian Province, China. According to Polo's account humungous manned kites were thought capable of predicting the success of maritime voyages. Polo described a custom whereby during very windy weather a "fool or drunkard" was lashed to a kite that was then flown in the air to determine the potential success or failure of a sea voyage.[152]

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[145] Hongxun, *Chinese Kites*, 3-4.

[146] Ibid., 4.

[147] Needham and Wang, *Science and Civilisation in Ancient China Vol. 4*, 578.

[148] Hongxun, *Chinese Kites*, 4.
Hongxun does not provide the Chinese term for "wind flutes."

[149] Needham and Wang, *Science and Civilisation in Ancient China Vol. 4*, 578.

[150] Hongxun, *Chinese Kites*, 4.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Needham and Wang, *Science and Civilisation in Ancient China*, Vol. 4, 587.

China also has many festivals involving kites. For hundreds of years China's designated kite festival has taken place on the ninth day of the ninth month.[153] On this day, often called the Double Ninth Festival, families gather on hillsides to picnic, fly kites and enjoy chrysanthemum flowers.[154] The Chinese also fly kites on New Years and on fifth day of the fifth month. The latter is the Dragon Boat Festival held in honor of the poet Qu Yuan (屈原, 343- 278 BCE) who drowned himself in protest of corrupt government officials. During the festival people commemorate Qu Yuan by rowing boats, and flying kites to bring luck and ward off misfortune.[155] This practice is in keeping with the traditional superstition that kites can carry off evil and disease.[156] To give a final example, in recent decades Weifang in Shandong province has become a renowned kite-flying region and has held an annual kite festival every April for almost thirty years.[157]

In sum, early Chinese kite-like objects had militaristic functions. True kites were used in battle and then evolved into objects for leisure and ritual. Like the Nagasaki kites believed to be of Chinese origin, Chinese kites often had tails and noisemakers. Many Chinese festivals, including one that occurs on the fifth day of the fifth month, feature kite flying.

Edo-Period Nagasaki Kite Culture

Nagasaki has its own distinct kite culture that dates back to the Edo period and shows traces of Chinese influences. The people of Nagasaki flew kites recreationally in the spring months and these practices are fairly well preserved. One reason for this is that the aforementioned *hata,* which are decorated with colored paper (usually blue and red),

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[153] Hart, *Kites*, 26.

[154] Hongxun, *Chinese Kites*, 13.

[155] Ibid.

[156] Hongxun, *Chinese Kites*, 13.

[157] Ibid.

became extremely popular.[158] *Hata* were flown competitively and generated large, rowdy crowds of men and boys. Consequently, some of the earliest documentation of Nagasaki kite flying exists in the form of prohibitions. In 1781 for example the Nagasaki magistrate regulated kite flying to outlying areas after unruly crowds trampled fields in pursuit of fallen kites.[159] However illicit kite flying continued and the magistrate banned kite flying again in 1801 and in 1849. After the Meiji period began in 1868 laws relaxed and festivals were established.[160] According to Culin's 1895 account, kite flying in Nagasaki occurred on the third, tenth, fifteenth, and twenty-fifth of the third month.[161] Contemporary sources published by Nagasaki confirm that the festivals were indeed prescheduled by the early Meiji period and that they took place in designated locations in March and April.[162] Today Nagasaki City's annual kite festival is held on the first Sunday in April.[163]

Illustrations found in the *Kokon meishô zue* and the *Nagasaki meishô zue* as well as a painting by Kawahara Keiga offer glimpses of Edo-period kite culture as it related to *baramon*-type kites. Evidentially the people of Nagasaki City gathered to fly *baramon*-type kites much as they did to fly *hata*. The *Kokon meishô zue* and the *Nagasaki meishô zue* focus on a specific Nagasaki *baramon* while Kawahara's painting portrays a more general scene. Collectively, these sources indicate that both adults and children flew *baramon*-type kites at social gatherings during the springtime and that the gatherings took place outside the city, requiring time and preparation.

The *baramon* featured in the *Kokon meishô zue* and the *Nagasaki meishô zue* belonged to a temple of the Pure Land sect called Jôanji (浄安寺). A priest named Seiyo (誓譽) from Karatsu (唐津, north of Nagasaki in Saga prefecture) founded the temple in

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[158] *Hata* are still popular today. Their colors are associated with the Dutch flag and "hata," which is spelled with the phonetic katakana alphabet can mean flag. Consequently many believe that the Dutch introduced *hata* to Dejima.

[159] Harada, *Nagasaki no hata zuroku*, 5.

[160] Ibid., 6.

[161] Culin, *Games of the Orient*, 18.

[162] Harada, *Nagasaki no hata zuroku*, 6.

[163] Ibid., 7.

1624.[164] It still stands at the edge of the foothills amid a promenade of temples called Temple Row (寺町, Tera-machi).

Jôanji's thirteenth abbot Jûyo Shinpô (住譽津邦, active during the eighteenth century) loved kites and flew a gigantic *baramon* kite, catching the attention of *meishô zue* chroniclers.[165] According to a written description from the *Chûryô manrokû* (*中陵漫録*, roughly *A Collection of Miscellaneous Essays:* Edo period, late eighteenth to early nineteenth century) Jûyo Shinpô flew his kite for pleasure. The passage reads: "The chief priest of a temple called Jôanji in Nagasaki loved kites as a child . . . He is now sixty-some years old. Every year from New Years to the fifth month he flies [a kite], if it gets dark he puts a lantern on his kite and flies it."[166]

The Jôanji kite does not remain, but the *Kokon meishô zue* and the *Nagasaki meishô zue* both contain illustrations of Jûyo Shinpô's impressive *baramon*.[167] In fact, of all the *baramon*-type kites in the *Kokon meishô zue* and the *Nagasaki meishô zue*, depictions of his kite receive the most space and detail and appear to be the only ones based on a real-life counterpart.[168] A two-page spread in the *Kokon meishô zue* shows several men and a few young boys flying the kite at a picnic while Jûyo Shinpô (who is

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[164] *Shomin seikatsu shiryô shûsei,* 778-9.
See also: Nagasaki Shidankai (長崎史談会, Nagasaki Historical Association) "Tera machi sanpo," (寺町散歩,) No. 8 November 2010, accessed on May 18, 2013, http://nagasakishidankai.web.fc2.com/2011/shidankai_dayori/2011/201011_shidandayori.pdf.

[165] Ibid.*,* 778-9.
See also: Nagasaki Shidankai (長崎史談会, Nagasaki Historical Association) "Tera machi sanpo," (寺町散歩,) No. 8 November 2010, accessed on May 18, 2013, http://nagasakishidankai.web.fc2.com/2011/shidankai_dayori/2011/201011_shidandayori.pdf.

[166] Hike, *Tako daihyakka,* 316.
See also: Satô, Chûryô, and Nobumitsu Kurihara. *Chûryô manroku*. Tôkyô: Yoshikawa Kôbunkan, 1995.

[167] Undoubtedly due to his expertise, Nohara was commissioned in the early 1980s to replicate the Jôanji *baramon*. The project was documented in an NHK television program that aired in the 1980s. Saitô and Hike both reference the NHK television show but do not give exact dates. Similarly, when I traveled to Jôanji temple in December of 2012 and January of 2013 I was told the reconstruction was made about thirty years ago. However it appears in Saitô's *Furusato no tako*, meaning that it was completed by 1982. The finished replica is three meters long, but according to Saitô, the original was much larger. Saitô, *Furusato no tako*, 117-8.

[168] By the time of Nohara's reconstruction the kite had disintegrated to its bone structure, but remained at the temple. Saitô's *Tako no minzokushi* has a photograph of the reconstruction next to the original structure on page 196.

dressed eccentrically) looks on. The image is labeled: "An illustration of the abbot of Jôanji flying *baramon*" (fig. 33).[169]

Figure 33

Jôanji *baramon* in the *Nagasaki kokon shûran meishô zue*

Late eighteenth or early nineteenth century woodblock print

The *baramon* appears to be the size of a small building. Its motif consists of a serpentine dragon with a winding abdomen, three talons, long horns and wavy whiskers. The kite looms above thirteen figures. They are gathered next to an elaborate picnic that is spread out on a blanket. The Jûyo Shinpô figure wears pale Chinese-style baggy pants, a dark vest, pointed slippers, and a straw hat. The hem of his outer garment is tacked to the waste. He stands smoking a long pipe and gesturing towards a seated figure. Jûyo Shinpô appears again in similar garb in the *Nagasaki meishô zue*.

The aforementioned depiction of the *kabuto-baramon* in *Nagasaki meishô zue* is actually part of a larger scene depicting the flying of Jôanji's *baramon* (fig. 34). The

[169] Ishizaki, *Nagasaki kokon shûran meishô zue,* 242-3.

kabuto-baramon flies in the middle ground on the right side of the scene. Another kite resembling a *kenmusô* soars behind it. Four men, including Jûyo Shinpô, appear in the foreground. Jûyo Shinpô smokes his long pipe as he walks uphill with his hands clasped behind his back. Three male figures walk in front carrying a long pole that supports the *baramon*. The other figure shoulders a lumpy bundle and cradles a large ball of string. The *baramon* has a dragon motif that is similar to the one in the *Kokon meishô zue* but the kite appears to be somewhat smaller.[170]

Figure 34

Jôanji *baramon* in the *Nagasaki meishô zue*

Early nineteenth century woodblock print

The Jôanji kite was not the only *baramon* immortalized by artistic media. Another *baramon* kite appears in a painting by Kawahara Keiga. The work (from between 1818 and 1830) captures a relaxing picnic scene (fig. 35).[171] In the painting, a group of three

[170] This kite differs slightly from the *Kokon meishô zue* kite; in addition to appearing to be smaller, it has a cloud motif that runs horizontally through the center of the instead of a swirling spiral. It is unclear why the *Nagasaki meishô zue* illustrator chose to portray Jyûyo Shinpô in the same clothing depicted in the *Kokon meishô zue* but changed the spiral motif on the kite to a cloud motif.

young boys fly a kite next to two men seated on a picnic blanket. They are gathered adjacent to a flowering tree on a hill above Nagasaki City. The boys' kite is *hata*-like with bundles of streamers attached to its bottom and side corners. Multiple *hata* dot the sky in the background and small male figures wait on the rooftops below to catch falling kites whose strings have been severed. A lone *baramon* and a *yakkodako* (奴凧, or a "servant kite" shaped like a samurai's attendant) stand out amongst the many diamond-shaped kites. The *baramon* is black with white lines and a large red dot in the center of the upper region. It has four red streamer-tails and a noisemaker. The kite's owner does not appear in the scene but its line reveals that he is amongst the *hata* flyers.

Figure 35

Kite Flying by Kawahara Keiga

Mid-eighteenth century, painting

(*Kawahara Keiga ten: Sakoku no mado o hiraku, Dejima no eshi*, fig. 20)

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[171] Harada, *Nagasaki no hata zuroku*, 5.
Harada provides the date for this painting, however a better reproduction of the work appears in this collection of Kawahara paintings:
Kawahara, Keiga, *Kawahara Keiga ten*, fig. 20. (No page numbers given.)

Collectively, these sources show that *baramon*-type kites belonged to a vivid and diverse culture. *Baramon*-type kites were of course considered Chinese, and *hata* and the *yakkodako* are associated most closely with Europeans and the city of Edo respectively, which hints at the variety of kite traditions found in nineteenth century Nagasaki. Moreover, the inscriptions in the *Chûryô manrokû* and the *Kokon meishô zue* indicate that flying *baramon*-type kites such as Jûyo Shinpô's *baramon* occasioned an excursion into the foothills that provided hours of entertainment. These documents, as well as Kawahara's painting also reveal that males of all ages and social classes partook in kite flying at similar festive picnics.[172] Just as in China, the practice of kite flying in Nagasaki was festive. The motif of warrior's helmet in *kabuto-baramon* and the practice of "fighting" *hata* kites also distantly relate the Nagasaki kites to the traditional military function of kites in China. Understanding kite-flying traditions in regions closely tied to Gotô is significant because we can detect similarities in the Baramon-related practices in present day Gotô. What is interesting, however, is that Gotô's Baramon-related discourses seem to stress the uniqueness of homegrown kite-flying customs.

Baramon Kite Culture

Baramon kite flying is most commonly associated with "Children's Day," which is a national holiday observed on May fifth. It was traditionally called *Tango no sekku* (端午の節句, literally "festival on the first 'day of the horse' in the month") or *Shôbu no sekku* (菖蒲の節句, "Festival of Irises") and was observed on the fifth day of the fifth month according to the lunar calendar. Traditionally prayers were made for the health of young male children on this day.[173]

The Baramon's role in Children's Day fosters local identity in both children and adults, overshadowing the aspects of kite-flying culture that are related to broader regional customs. *Tango no sekku* is one of the so-called five sacred festivals in Japan,

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[172] In addition to a replica of the kite, Jôanji Temple houses an antique lunchbox like the one depicted in the *Kokon meishô zue.* When I visited the temple in January of 2013 the caretaker kindly brought the box out from storage and pointed out a built-in flask for *sake*.

[173] It is sometimes translated in English as the "Boy's Day" for this reason.

which are known as *Gosekku* (五節句, Five Festivals).[174] *Tango no sekku* originated in China, and evolved into a holiday for young boys before solidifying into a standard set of practices during the Edo period.[175] The festival now takes place annually on May fifth.[176] On this day, male children and their families engage in activities to ward off sickness and evil and to instill warrior-like qualities in their sons.[177] For instance, families with young boys erect poles outside their homes affixed with long windsocks decorated to resemble carp called *noborigoi* (幟鯉, literally "ascending carp"). They represent strength and perseverance because carp (*koi*, 鯉) are said to swim upstream and are associated with dragons. Furthermore, the term *koi* is a homonym for "purpose" and "love" and as such signifies fruitful efforts and filial devotion.[178] This practice began in the Edo period and continues to posterity.[179]

Tango no sekku is also a traditional day for kite flying throughout Japan.[180] Many of the kites have warrior-related themes that encourage boys to be fierce and strong. Households also display *musha ningyô* (武者人形, warrior dolls), which are often accompanied by armor and military accoutrements. Famous warriors such as Minamoto no Raikô (源頼光, also pronounced Minamoto no Yorimitsu, 948-1021) and semi-mythological heroes such as Kintarô (金太郎) inspire these displays as well as several kite designs.[181]

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[174] Shogakukan, "Sekku," ("節句,") accessed through Japan Knowledge May 2, 2013.

[175] Casal, *The Five Sacred Festivals of Ancient Japan*, 61-78.

[176] Because Japan used a lunar calendar until 1873 the fifth day of the fifth month did not align with May fifth on the Gregorian calendar. (The traditional fifth day of the fifth month fell in early summer.)

[177] Casal, *The Five Sacred Festivals of Ancient Japan,* 61-78.

[178] Ibid., 71.

[179] Ibid., 70-71.

[180] Shintani Takanori, "Tango no sekku," ("端午の節句") Shogakukan, accessed through Japan Knowledge, June 16, 2013.

[181] Casal, *The Five Sacred Festivals of Ancient Japan*, 75.

The parents of newborn baby boys also observe *Hatsu zekku* (初節句) on *Tango no sekku*. *Hatsu zekku* is a child's first annual festival when parents take the baby out to meet the world.[182] A girl's *Hatsu zekku* occurs on the third day of the third month, which is also one of the *Gosekku* holidays called *Hina matsuri* (雛祭り, Doll Festival) or *momo no sekku* (桃の節句, Peach Festival). In Gotô Boys' *Hatsu zekku* had its own special traditions involving the Baramon and it appears that *Hatsu zekku* rituals dictated the Baramon's early use.

Baramon were traditionally made especially for boys' *Hatsu zekku* and this is one of the kite's most celebrated and well-documented characteristics. For instance, the elderly Gotô residents interviewed in the 1990s for the *Fukue shishi* recalled that in the past families who had welcomed the birth of a son asked older relatives to make a kite on the boy's behalf.[183] Other sources indicate that this ritual was reserved for firstborn sons, but the general association between the Baramon and *Hatsu zekku* is strong.[184] As mentioned in Chapter III, Baramon are still given to young boys in observance of their first festival.

What makes Gotô's *Hatsu zekku* unique (aside from the Baramon) is that while *Tango no sekku* and a boy's *Hatsu zekku* typically occurred on the same day throughout Japan, this was not the case in Gotô. Instead of practicing *Hatsu zekku* rituals on the fifth day of the fifth month, the people of Gotô held their sons' *Hatsu zekku* on the third day of the third month (*Hina matsuri*).[185] It is unclear why *Hatsu zekku* was observed on this date and local theories vary. The Nohara hypothesize that based on the traditional lunar calendar the third day of the third month was around May fifth. [186] However according to the *Fukue shishi, Tango no sekku* celebrations occurred on the fifth day of the fifth

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[182] Shogakukan, "Hatsu zekku," ("初節句") accessed through Japan Knowledge July 26, 2013.

[183] Fukue *Shishi* Henshu Iinkai, *Fukue shishi*, 854.

[184] Buke Yashiki Dôri Furusatokan, December 29th 2012.

[185] Fukue *Shishi* Henshu Iinkai, *Fukue shishi*, 854.

[186] Nohara Kenji and Nohara Chiyoko at Gotô Baramon Tako Hambaiten, interview by the author, December 29, 2012.

month, while *Hatsu zekku* celebrations happened on the third day of the third month, indicating that the two festivals were in fact separate.

Today, the people of Gotô fly Baramon in conjunction with Children's Day festivities, but continue to associate it with traditional *Hatsu zekku* rituals. That the two are now combined in one event on the same day results in some conceptual overlap, making it difficult to assess how the Baramon's *Tango no sekku* usage differs from its *Hatsu zekku* usage. However, some characteristics of Baramon kite flying have obvious connections to *Hatsu zekku*, while others recall the masculine ideals characteristic of national *Tango no sekku/* Children's Day practices.

In many ways the Baramon's ritual usage in *Hatsu zekku* remains relatively unchanged. Gotô grandparents still give Baramon to baby boys to commemorate their *Hatsu zekku*, (though professional kite makers now produce Baramon specifically for this occasion). The kite itself maintains its association with health and masculine attributes such as vigor and bravery, which pertain to the goal of raising a healthy son. The ideal of a vigorous Gotô child also evokes a spirit of local patriotism.

The Baramon's association with raising healthy children appears on public displays overseen by local government as well as in more substantial texts. For instance, according to the *Nagasaki-ken bunka hyakusen* "In Gotô there is a custom whereby grandfathers give their eldest grandsons a Baramon. [Baramon] are flown high in the sky as a prayer that the child will grow up strong and healthy and enjoy a successful adulthood."[187] Similar phrases appear in a variety of locations including a display at the city-run Buke Yashiki Dôri Furusatokan (武家屋敷通りふるさと館, Hometown Center on the Street for Traditional Samurai Residences, an interactive center for preserving local traditions), the Gotô History Museum, and in literature produced by the contemporary kite makers. [188]

At the same time the ideal of masculinity present in *Hatsu zekku* traditions recalls the military usage of early kites and national *Tango no sekku* practices. These values are paired with recognized characteristics of the kite's motif and can appeal to people of all

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[187] Masahiro, "Baramon tako," *Nagasaki-ken bunka hyakusen*, Gotô hen, 166.

[188] Buke Yashiki Dôri Furusatokan, December 29th 2012.

ages. Generally speaking, the theme of a warrior battling an *oni* promotes strength and bravery. Accordingly the Baramon can evoke celebrated military figures from classical Japan (discussed in detail in the following chapter). Furthermore, locals interpret the reverse helmet motif as a mark of exceptional courageousness because the warrior is facing the *oni* rather than turning away, the implication being that the people of Gotô are courageous like the warrior. This interpretation is in keeping with the popular understanding of the etymology of the word "baraka."

Associating the name "baramon" with *baraka* ties Gotô to broader cultural tropes related to masculinity and Boy's Day.[189] For instance, according to the Buke Yashiki Dôri Furusatokan: "In Gotô dialect, *baraka* [can mean] vigorous and wild [while] 'baramon' can mean reckless, but [*baraka* is] not just 'baramon,' it can also have the connotation of one who pursues a path that he believes to be true and righteous even if he has to pursue it all by himself. It is a word with unique nuance."[190] This explanation fuses the values inherent in the term *baraka* with the Baramon kite, and by extension the people of Gotô. The melding of Gotô's iconic kite and the local slang that expresses Gotô's vitality and vigor can even be conflated to the extent that the word "baramon" can be a substitute for *baraka*; as discussed in chapter III the display in the Gotô History Museum eliminates *baraka* from its explanation of the Baramon and simply states that "baramon" means "vigorous" and "healthy" in the local dialect.[191]

The Baramon and Nagasaki Kite Culture

While aspects of the Baramon's early usage certainly reflect the influences of its role in *Hatsu zekku* and *Tango no sekku*, Baramon kite flying was also a social activity that had much in common with Edo-period Nagasaki kite culture. As discussed above,

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[189] Masahiro, "Baramon tako," *Nagasaki-ken bunka hyakusen, Gotô hen*, 166.

[190] Buke Yashiki Dôri Furusatokan, December 29th 2012.
五島の方言で「ばらか」. . . がむしゃら、荒々しい、「ばらもん」. . . 向こう見ずの意味がありますが、ただの「ばらもん」だけでなく、正論、正義の主張で正しい筋を通すためには、我ひとりでも行くという含みがあり、独自のニュアンスのある方言です。

[191] Gotô History and Sightseeing Museum, December 28, 2013.

Nagasaki kites were (and still are) flown in the third month because spring was the traditional kite-flying season. In addition to *Hatsu zekku's* ties to kite culture, it may also be that the Baramon was traditionally flown on the third day of the third month because spring festivities were generically linked to kite flying customs.

According to the *Gotô minzoku zushi*, the Baramon was flown alongside other types of kites. These kites had no apparent connection to *Hatsu zekku*, besides that fact that flying them was a pastime reserved for boys and men. The *Gotô minzoku zushi* also states that the third day of the third month was the day for "tako age" (凧上げ, kite flying).[192] On this day, boys gathered to fight different types of kites. In total the *Gotô minzoku zushi* depicts four kite-types beside the Baramon. A round kite labeled "misokoshi" (ミソコシ, 味噌漉, miso strainer), and the *hinode* (日の出, sunrise, similar in appearance to today's *hinodezuru* 'sunrise crane') are large with round contours (figure 36).[193]

The remaining two kites are smaller and diamond shaped, resembling *hata*. The first of these is labeled "minatako*"* (ミナタコ, slang for "small shell") and the second is called "kômori" (コーモリ, bat).[194] Significantly, the description of the *kômori* states that it was made from colored paper (as were *hata*).[195] In addition, according to Hike, the *kômori* and the *minatako* existed elsewhere in Nagasaki prefecture, namely Shimabara and Iki respectively (see figs. 6-5, 6-3, and 7).[196] That the *kômori* and the *minatako* were found in other nearby regions indicates that they belonged to a wider set of cultural practices in the greater Nagasaki area. Their familiar diamond shape and use in kite fighting further suggests that the Gotô's kite culture had much in common with Nagasaki's in terms of kite variety and usage.

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[192] Hashiura, *Gotô minzoku zushi*, 102.

[193] For a more detailed explanation of these kite names see: Hike, *Tako daihyakka*, 335.

[194] Hashiura, *Gotô minzoku zushi*, 102.

[195] Ibid., 104.

[196] Hike, *Tako daihyakka,* 335.

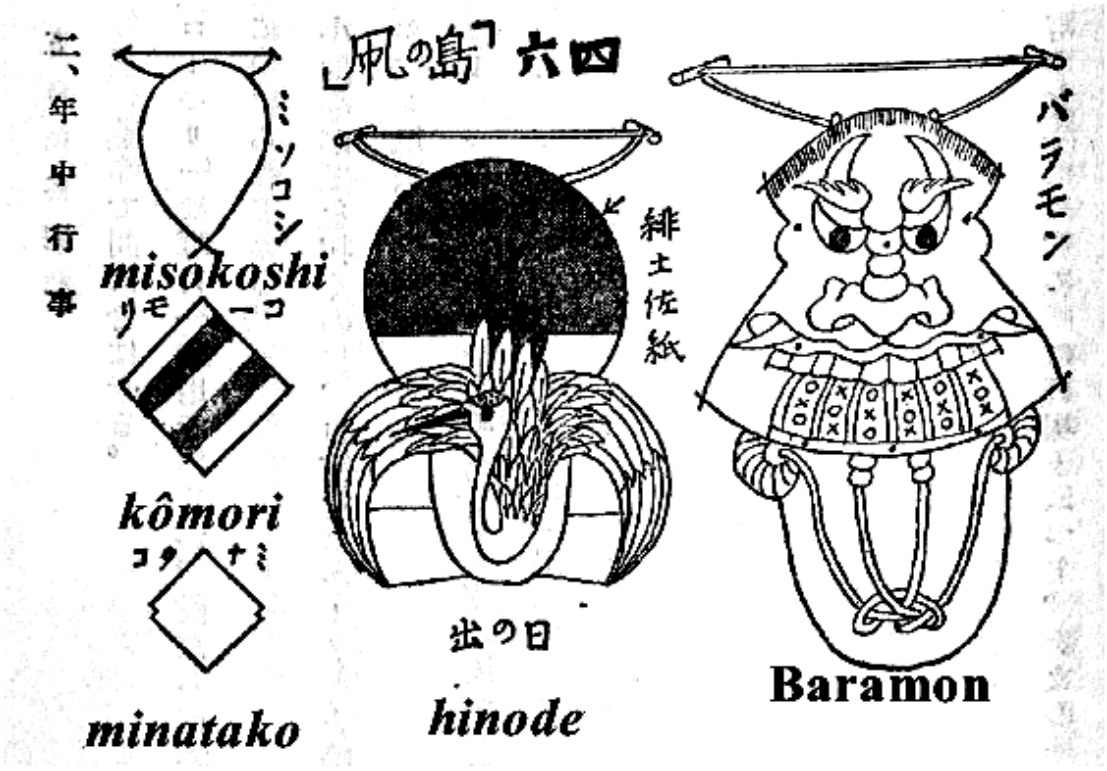

Figure 36

"Islands' Kites" circa 1934

(Hashiura, *Gotô minzoku zushi*, 103)

English annotations mine

Weather patterns also played a role in establishing habitual kite-flying days. Large kites such as the Baramon, as well as fighter kites, require strong winds and fair weather. Some sources indicate that ideal conditions occurred around the time of the *Hatsu zekku* festival. For instance, the *Fukue shishi* notes that winds were good for kite flying on the third day of the third month. This further suggests that *Hatsu zekku* was not necessarily the chief incentive for flying kites during that time.[197]

Today Gotô has its own festival devoted to kite flying called the Baramon Flying Festival (ばらもん揚げ大会, Baramon age daikai). The event occurs chiefly during the first week of May (around Children's Day) and is combined with the Children's Nature

[197] Fukue *Shishi* Henshu Iinkai, *Fukue shishi*, 854.

Park Festival (こども自然公園大会, Kodomo shizen kôen daikai).[198] In total Gotô has observed thirty-one Baramon Flying Festivals. The festivals are essentially community picnics where children and adults eat packed lunches while enjoying the Baramon and other types of kites amid Gotô's beautiful scenery. Children have the opportunity to build their own kites (see fig. 37) and fly fighter kites. Other events include musical performances and giant Baramon demonstrations.[199] Baramon kite-flying festivals are not limited to May however; in 2013, there was also a Baramon Kite Flying Festival held in March, (prior to the Children's Day festival) in conjunction with the blooming cherry trees.[200]

The Baramon Flying Festivals (and Baramon kite flying in general) take place on the slopes of a conical grassy volcano that rises above Gotô City known as Onidake (鬼岳, Oni cliff). The mountain's beauty and advantageous natural attributes are important components of Baramon Flying festivals. Onidake offers sweeping views of the ocean from an attractive park-like setting. Its sides are burned each year resulting in smooth grassy slopes that are ideal for the picnics that accompany the events (figs. 37 & 38). More importantly, the location is suitable for kite flying because Baramon are often several meters long and require strong wind and open space.

Significantly, the activities offered at Baramon Flying Festivals recall traditional Nagasaki kite culture. Just as in the Edo period, locals trek to a mountain located outside their city and gather to enjoy kite flying. People socialize while eating picnic lunches and, as in Kawahara's painting, enjoy natural scenery such as flowering trees. However, what is important is that the dates for the Baramon flying festivals do not seem to be chosen because they correspond to the traditional seasonal kite events observed in Nagasaki, or

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[198] Gotô City Tourism Association, (五島市観光協会,) "Baramon age daikai," (ばらもん揚げ大会,) Accessed May 10, 2013, http://www.gotokanko.jp/siki-spring.htm.

[199] Gotô City Tourism Association, (五島市観光協会,), "Onidake de asobô dai 31 kai 'Kodomo shizen kôen daikai'," (五島鬼岳で遊ぼう第回「こども自然公園大会], Let's Have Fun on Onidake, 31st 'Children's Nature Park Festival'," accessed June 30, 2013, http://www.gotokanko.jp/topics/sizen/topics2010.htm.

[200] Gotô Navi, (五島ナヒ) "2013 Baramon Age Taikai," (2013 五島バラモン揚げ大会) accessed May 9, 2013, navi.gotoshi.net/contents/detail/index.php?id=566.
The PDF for the event can also be downloaded from Gotô City's website: http://www3.city.goto.nagasaki.jp/topics/477/baramon.pdf.

any other regions in the greater Kyûshû. To the people of Gotô, the dates are chosen, and are significant because they correspond to the natural cycle of the islands, and the symbolic function of the kite expressed in the Gotô dialect. To participate in these kite-flying festivals is in effect to be one with the natural characteristics of Gotô (the change in the wind, coming of spring, etc.) and its topography (Onidake overlooking the city and the ocean).

Figure 37 (left)
Children building kites at the Baramon Kite Flying Festival
(Gotô Navi, http://navi.gotoshi.net/contents/detail/index.php?id=402)
Figure 38 (right)
View of Onidake
(Gotô City Tourism Association, http://www.gotokanko.jp/sizen-fukue.htm)

Though Baramon kite-flying practices are not unique to Gotô, flying a Baramon on a boy's annual festival in conjunction with national Children's Day festivities symbolically links the child's health and future success to Gotô. Similarly, Gotô children who grow up around the Baramon will develop bonds to their hometown through Baramon Flying Festivals because they will associate the kite with Gotô's scenery, and memories shared with friends and family. Older participants who gather together to fly their kites on Onidake are also experiencing community building activities related to Gotô. Moreover, unlike Baramon-themed souvenirs and Baramon kites that can be purchased and removed from Gotô, participating in a Baramon Flying Festival is an

experience that one can only have on Onidake. From this standpoint, the Baramon's ties to Nagasaki kite culture seem less important than the locality of its usage.

In sum, contemporary Baramon kite culture is reminiscent of Edo-period Nagasaki. However, the people of Gotô reinterpret the Baramon through localized values and rituals. The Baramon's role as a *Hatsu zekku* talisman promoting the *baraka* attitude and the health of young boys supersedes its connections to regional and trans-regional kite customs. The emphasis placed on the local characteristics of holidays and customs related to the Baramon also distances the kite from the militaristic kite flying practices of the ancient Chinese that are inherent in traditional Baramon flying. Moreover, use of the Baramon amid Gotô's outdoor scenery recalls Nagasaki kite customs, but the experience of flying a Baramon on Onidake makes the practice unique to Gotô. The duality of Baramon kite flying can be related to Gotô's dual identity: Gotô as a place with significant foreign and outside influence, and Gotô as a place with a unique local culture. The two self-images both present Gotô as a historically and culturally important place that is worth visiting, and protecting.

CHAPTER V
FOLKLORIC TRADITIONS
Introduction

The previous chapter made clear that the Baramon's helmet motif is symbolic of a boy's health and brevity. How about the *oni*? As we saw in chapter III the warrior's helmet in the *kabuto-baramon* was combined with a creature that is either an *oni* or a *shishi*. By contrast, the Baramon and two similar Nagasaki prefecture kites with warrior-*oni* motifs have had connections to specific *oni*-related folklore from at least the beginning of the twentieth century and very likely earlier. In this respect, the Baramon belongs to family of kites that kite scholars often refer to as "onidako" or "*oni* kites."[201] The other two members of this group are the *ondako* (鬼凧, *oni* kite) found in Iki Island (figure 39) and the *oniyôchô* (鬼洋蝶, the name literally means "monstrous occidental butterfly," but is sometimes translated as "terrible bite") from Hirado (figure 40).[202]

The term *onidako* emphasizes the kites' most recognizable generic visual traits and common *oni* theme. The three kites, however, have few identical traits and each kite is interpreted differently. This chapter will demonstrate the particularity of the Baramon's reception in Gotô by comparing its association with folklore (or lack there of) to that of the Hirado *oniyôchô* and the Iki *ondako*. Although the three kites share the general motif of an *oni* biting a warrior's helmet, unlike the *oniyôchô* and the *ondako*, only the Baramon portrays the back of the helmet. The Baramon's ties to folklore are also ambiguous. Consequently, the faceless warrior without definitive ties to any one warrior or story has become anonymous, enabling the *oni* to become the most iconic element of the kite.

The two sections following a brief explanation of Iki and Hirado's geography outline the *oniyôchô* and the *ondako*'s historical documentation and visual characteristics.

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[201] Hike in particular uses this categorization. See: Hike, *Tako daihyakka*, 24.

[202] "Ondako*"* is a general term; the contemporary Iki *ondako* made by Hirao Myôjyô 平尾明丈 is known as an "Isshû-*ondako*" (壱州鬼). Also, "ondako" is sometimes pronounced "onidako," (as in figure 41). However I use "ondako" because it is the common pronunciation.

Then I will introduce the folkloric traditions linked to each kite, analyzing the relationships forged between kite motifs and regional culture.

Figure 39

Iki *ondako*, Katsumoto-machi

Early 1990s

Figure 40

Hirado *oniyôchô*

Early 1990s

Geography of Iki and Hirado

Iki City (hereafter Iki) lies northeast of Gotô (figs. 6-3 and 7). Iki belongs to Nagasaki prefecture, though the nearest port is in Saga prefecture directly north of

Nagasaki City.[203] Iki is about seventeen kilometers long with a total area of 138.5 square kilometers.[204] In 2012 the total population was around 29,000, with 11,000 islanders occupying the largest township called Gônoura (郷ノ浦).[205]

Hirado (also part of Nagasaki prefecture) includes about forty small islands (many of which are uninhabited) and the tip of northwestern Kyûshû (figs. 6-4 and 7). The total area of Hirado City is 235.63 square kilometers.[206] Like Iki, the population is around 30,000. A channel spanned by a long suspension bridge separates Hirado Island from mainland Kyûshû.[207] As discussed in chapter II, Hirado was historically linked to Gotô and Iki by trade networks and the Matsura.

Characteristics and Extant Documentation of *Onidako* Kites

As with the Baramon, the ephemeral nature and lack of detailed records documenting the *ondako* and *oniyôchô* obscures the kites' history. Historians are divided as to whether the *onidako* tradition began in the outlying islands of Nagasaki prefecture (Gotô, Iki and Hirado) before the Edo period isolation edicts that began in 1641, or whether it began in Nagasaki with the *kabuto-baramon* during the Edo period. Hike in particular defends the first standpoint, arguing that the Chinese introduced the Baramon's progenitor to Hirado, and from there it spread to Iki and Gotô in the context of trade and piracy.[208] He ascribes the emergence of these kites to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when the Matsura controlled the region and Hirado was an international trade

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[203] "City" (市, *shi*) indicates Iki and Hirado's local governments rather than populated urban environments.

[204] The English language website of Iki City, "Outline of Iki City," accessed April 25, 2012, http://www.city.iki.nagasaki.jp/lang/index_e.php.

[205] "Shisei jyôhô," (市制情報, Municipality Information) accessed April 25, 2012, http://www.city.iki.nagasaki.jp/modules/policy/index.php?content_id=1111.

[206] Hirado City Official Website, "Hirado-te don na tokoro?" ("平戸ってどんなところ?") accessed April 25, 2012, http://www.city.hirado.nagasaki.jp/city/info/prev.asp?fol_id=3782.

[207] Hirado City Official Website, "Shi no shôkai," (市の紹介,) accessed April 25, 2012, http://www.city.hirado.nagasaki.jp/city/info/prev.asp?fol_id=6263.

[208] Hike, *Tako daihyakka*, 22.

hub.[209] Though plausible, Hike's argument remains hypothetical due to a lack of historical documentation. As for the second hypothesis, since the earliest documentation of an *onidako*-like kite is the Nagasaki *kabuto-baramon*, there is more concrete evidence for arguing that *onidako* originated in Nagasaki. However as discussed in chapter III, the Nagasaki kites were recorded because the city was a source of interest. Similar kites might have existed nearby in less documented regions.

Many Meiji era (1868-1912) kite books that possibly contained old images of *onidako* are now out of print. The oldest known diagram of Iki kites appears in a book published in 1934 devoted to regional culture entitled the *Ikinoshima minzokushi* (*壱岐島民俗誌*, *Chronicle of Iki Island Customs*) (fig. 41).[210] Because the purpose of this book was to introduce Iki's long-established customs rather than new trends, it is safe to assume that the diagram of the *ondako* (labeled "onidako") is representative of kites from at least the beginning of the twentieth century. The record confirms that the basic structure of the early twentieth century *ondako* resembled that of the contemporary kites, but does not offer a detailed illustration of an *ondako* motif. The earliest available image of the Hirado *oniyôchô* that the author was able to locate is an undated photograph from a 1970 kite book entitled *Nihon no tako* (fig. 42).[211] Therefore the formal analysis provided in the following section is based on contemporary versions of *oniyôchô* and *ondako* kites.

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[209] Reproductions of this photograph also appear in later kite books including Hike's *Tako daihyakka*. Hike, *Tako daihyakka*, 22.

[210] It is possible and indeed likely that older records do exist. However, I was unable to locate any.

[211] Tawara, and Sonobe, *Nihon no tako*, 138.

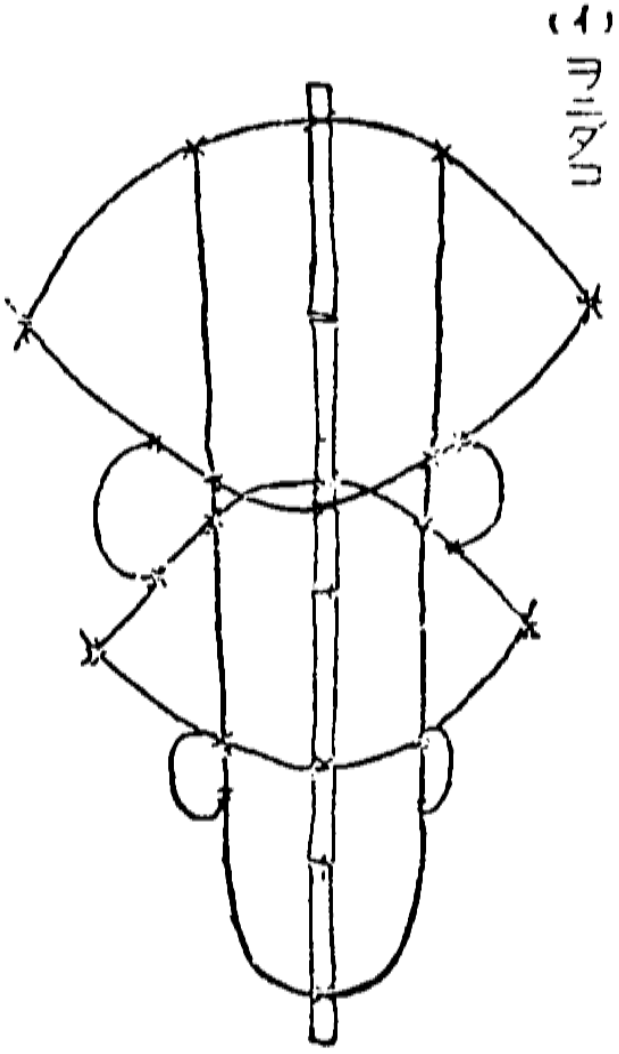

Figure 41

Diagram of an *ondako* bone structure from 1934

(*Ikinoshima minzokushi*)

Figure 42

Hirado *oniyôchô*

Before 1970

(Color photograph of the kite captured in black and white in *Nihon no tako*, Saitô, *Furusato no tako*, 118)

Formal Analysis of the *Oniyôchô* and *Ondako*

The Baramon, *oniyôchô*, and *ondako* share the same fundamental three-tiered structure but each has a unique bone pattern (figs. 43 & 44). The upper sections of the *oniyôchô* are an inverted version of the Gotô Baramon's top two sections; the *oniyôchô's* top tier is bigger and wider than the middle tier. Its lower tongue-shaped tier is shortened and tapered giving the overall structure a cone shape. The circles on either side of the bottom tongue-shaped tier are smaller than those of the Baramon and the small thumb-shaped knobs between the upper and lower tiers face upwards like those of the *kabuto-baramon*.

The *ondako's* structure more closely resembles the Baramon's. However, unlike the Baramon, the three sections of the *ondako* are similar in width and the kite's body is only slightly wider at the top, while the bottom tier is longer. The small thumb-shapes between the middle two tiers on either side of the kite face upward or are round. Furthermore, they are larger than those of the other *onidako* kites; each is roughly one-third as large as the top tier. Conversely, the small circles below the middle tier of the kite are reduced in size.

The *oniyôchô*, *ondako*, and Baramon also have similar motifs. The top section of each kite contains the upper two-thirds of an *oni's* face portrayed frontally, much like the now-lost *kabuto-baramon*. Formal analysis reveals that the *oniyôchô*, *ondako*, and Baramon all share certain commonalities with each other however, they are not identical. The structural differences described above seem to accommodate differences in the composition of the warrior-*oni* motifs that are depicted on the surface of each kite.

When the kites are examined side by side the following characteristics demonstrate the most pronounced similarity: The top of the *oni's* head is generally a black dome and the face is red. Two darkly rimmed pale eyes with black pupils sit in the middle of the upper section. The face has a clearly outlined nose with wrinkles between the eyeballs and flared nostrils. A slightly concave horizontal line of white teeth spans the width of the upper middle section of the kite.

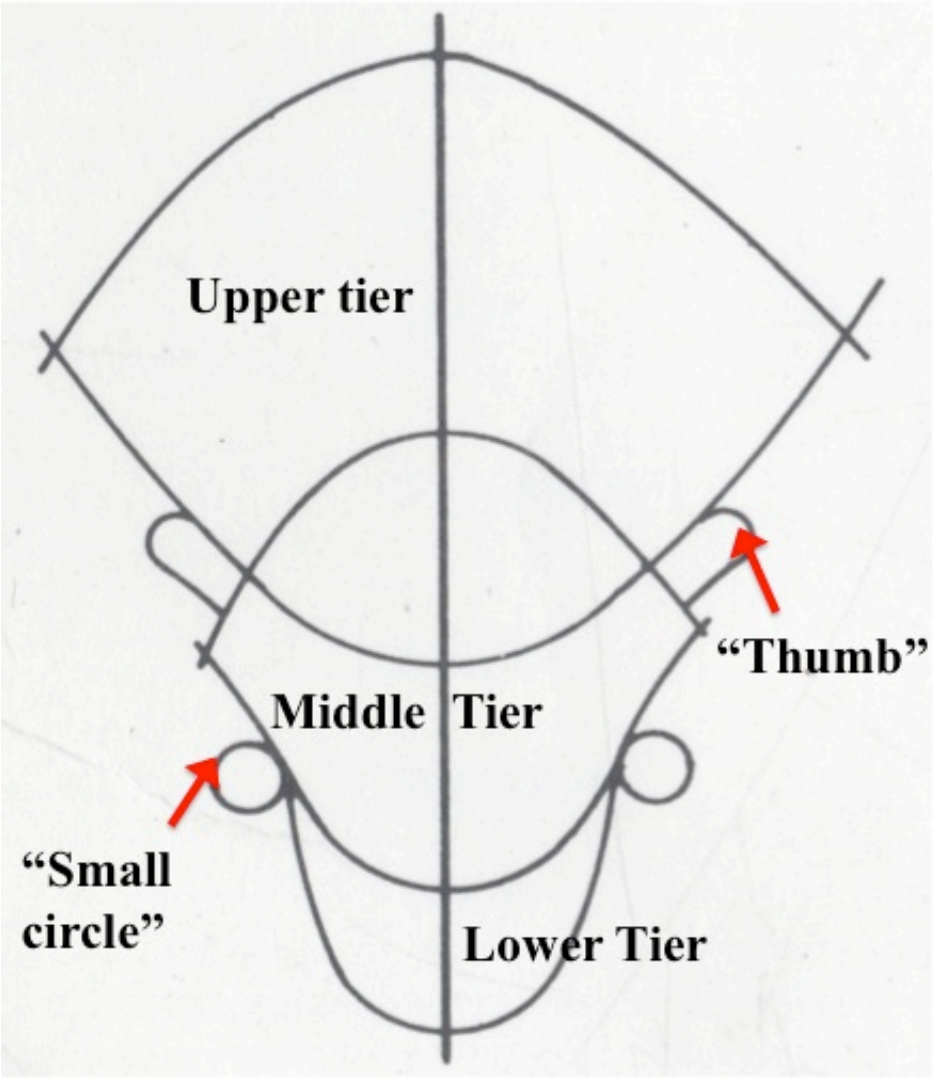

Figure 43

Oniyôchô bone structure

Before 1970

(Tawara, *Nihon no tako*, 153)

Annotations mine

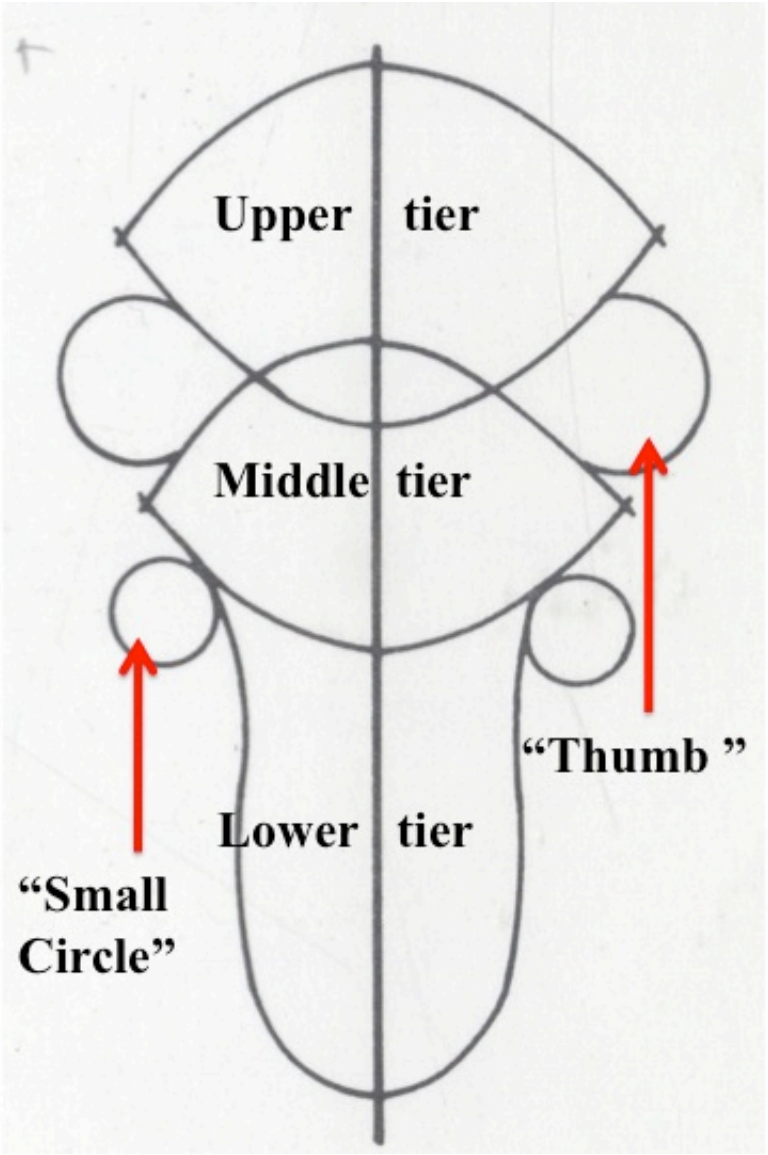

Figure 44

Ondako bone structure

Before 1970

(Tawara, *Nihon no tako*, 153)

The distinguishing characteristics of the *oni* depicted on *oniyôchô* are its broad cranium, thick black forehead, and bulging eyes (figs. 40 & 42). Its two eye sockets are superimposed against the dark forehead, which extends down from the top of the *oni's* head to its ocular region. The stark contrast of the white eye-cavities against the black cranium makes the top of the head resemble a black lemon-shaped helmet. Moreover,

because the top tier of the kite is large, the *oni's* face dwarfs the warrior portrayed on the middle and lower tiers.

Of the three kites, the *oniyôchô's oni* has the largest eyes. The two white orbs that comprise the eyes contain small black pupils. A black line rims the bottom of each eye creating a border between red skin and pale eyeball. The line becomes progressively thinner as it moves upward, tapering off midway up the eye where the white eyeball contrasts against the black forehead. On some *oniyôchô* the tapered line trails into the tear duct as if to express anger. Unlike the Baramon and the *ondako*, the *oniyôchô* has no horns or eyebrows. Similarly, the jowls do not have tufts but rather suggest the recesses of the *oni's* oral cavity. The teeth are small, widely spaced and pointed. Some *oniyôchô* have exaggerated canine teeth on either side of the mouth.

Two types of *ondako* exist: versions that resemble the Baramon (fig. 39) and those that resemble the *oniyôchô* (fig. 45). In the case of the former, the *oni* face is predominantly red without a black helmet shape. The face has bushy eyebrows and jowl tufts. The latter have black on the upper region, large white eyes and usually no eyebrows. However, despite these similarities, the *ondako's* unique characteristics differentiate it from the other kites.

In general the *ondako* appears more elongated and slender than the Baramon and the *oniyôchô*. *Ondako* have horns and if eyebrows are present they are either rendered with a series of linked circle that form arches, or with thick, black calligraphic brush strokes. The *ondako's* jowls protrude out from either side of the eyes resembling ears. Like the Baramon, the jowls have hair, and if the hair is depicted as a bushy tuft it is often green. The *oni* frequently displays a wide upper lip or gums. The teeth are curved like pointed tusks and are longer than those of the *oniyôchô*. The features of the face are rendered with combinations of pink and red. Like the Baramon and *oniyôchô*, no lower jaw is depicted.

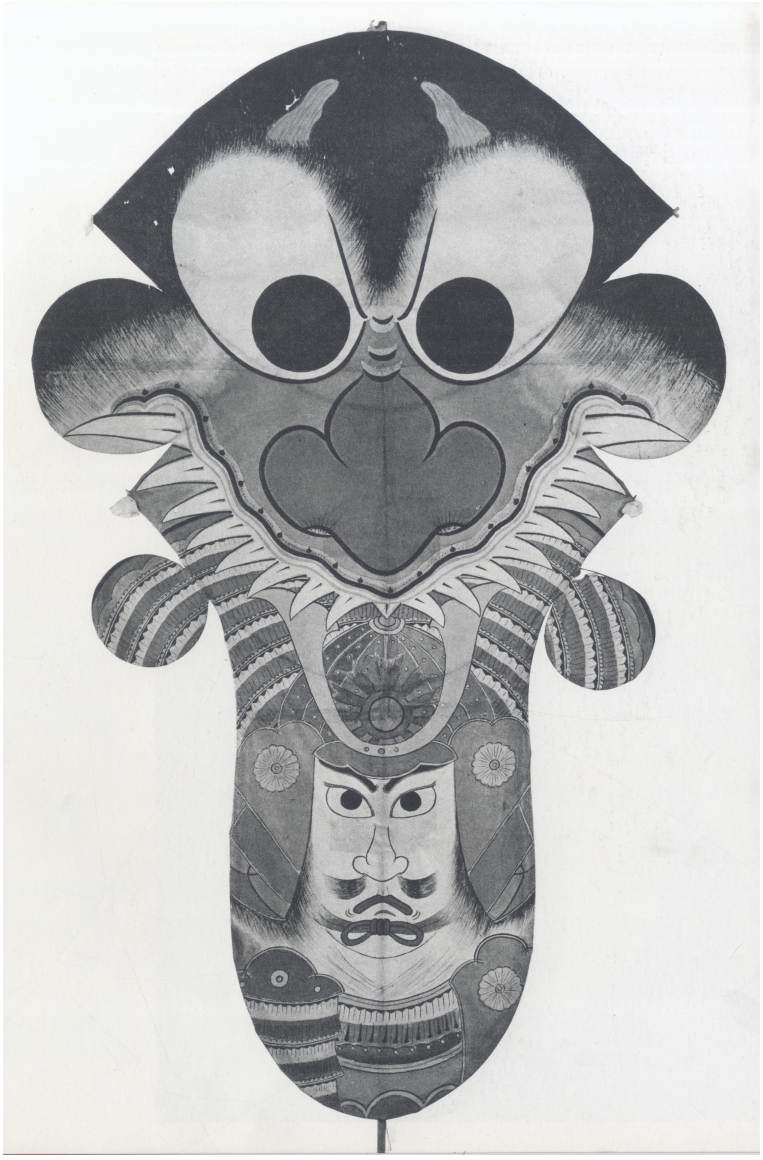

Figure 45

Ondako, before 1970

(Tawara, *Nihon no tako*, 139)

While an *oni* motif comprises the upper section of all kites, the lower regions of the three kites display more variation. Unlike the Baramon, the *oniyôchô* and *ondako* motifs are divided into two registers: an upper *oni* section and a lower warrior section. Both kites position a warrior's face beneath the *oni's* teeth.[212] As a rule, the warrior

[212] Many kite historians including Hike and Saitô discuss a theory whereby during the Edo period a kite owner's class determined the motif on the lower region of Baramon, *ondako* and *oniyôchô*. According to

depicted on the *ondako* consists of a frontal portrait of a warrior face. The face typically has pale pink skin, thick black eyebrows, sideburns, and clearly outlined features. The pupils meet the top of the eye as if he is straining to see the *oni* atop his head. A colorful motif representing a helmet appears just below the *oni's* teeth on either side of the face. The helmet motif is often carried onto the two small circles beneath the middle section of the bone structure. Alternately the small circles can contain the frayed ends of helmet ties. The *oni's* head is about twice the size of the warrior's head.

By contrast, the *oniyôchô's* warrior is smaller in proportion to the *oni* and is usually rendered from the chest up. The warrior wears a helmet and often wields a sword above his head, in which case the sword overlaps part of the *oni's* nose and teeth, creating the illusion of depth (see fig. 42). The warrior's face tilts upward or is shown in three quarter profile. His features tend to be expressive: he bites his lower lip or scowls. Depictions of the warrior are often asymmetrical and do not follow the contours of the kite, lending dynamism to the warrior figure while the *oni* appears stationary. The warrior's garments have elaborate designs, however the color and motif vary. Two strings bind the warrior's helmet to his head and form a bow beneath his chin. Their frayed ends splay out onto the two lower circles created by the bone pattern.

When compared to the *ondako* and *oniyôchô*, the Baramon's defining characteristics in terms of appearance are the relationship between its structure and motif, and its helmet. Like the *kabuto-baramon*, the Baramon motif has three distinct sections (an *oni*, a helmet, and a lower region), which correspond with the three tiers of its structure. The reverse-helmet motif and the bright geometric pattern contained therein belong exclusively to the Baramon.

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this theory kites with a warrior's face were reserved for the warrior class while the townspeople flew kites with a reverse-helmet motif. An extant *oniyôchô* with two green discs instead of a warrior's face suggests that there indeed may have been both types of *oniyôchô* at one point, however today the kites do not deviate from the motifs described above. Saitô points to a second theory whereby the reverse-helmet motif represents bravery, and dismisses both theories as unfounded.[212] I do not discuss the class-based theory because I did not encounter it in Gotô or find extensive and convincing documentation of it in other sources including kite books. However it is not altogether unlikely given that the Tokugawa shogunate enforced strict class-based sumptuary regulations.

Folklore Associated with the *Oniyôchô*, *Ondako*, and Baramon Kites

The so-called *onidako* kites are all associated with folklore that has an *oni* antagonist and a warrior protagonist. The human figure in the *oniyôchô* always represents the warrior Watanabe no Tsuna (渡辺綱, 953-1025), who appears in many artistic and literary works.[213] As a historical figure, Tsuna belonged to a group of four samurai under the command of Minamoto no Raikô that were employed by the aristocratic Fujiwara (藤原) family. Because of their military might, the four warriors were known as Raikô's "Shitennô" (四天王) which equates them with the "Four Heavenly Kings" that mark the four cardinal directions in Buddhism. Watanabe no Tsuna battled famous monsters and *oni* alongside Raikô and the other members of his "Shitennô" in various legends. The *oniyôchô* motif represents one of Tsuna's best-known *oni* conquests.

In the story, Tsuna vanquishes a menacing *oni* by slicing off its arm. The tale draws inspiration from early literary works such as the *Konjaku monogatarishû* (*今昔物語集*, *Anthology of Tales from the Past*, Heian period, twelfth century) and has been interpreted in folklore, woodblock prints, and plays.[214] Though many versions of the tale exist, the two most familiar versions evolved out of the "Swords" chapter (剣の巻, "Tsurugi no maki") of the *Heike monogatari* (*平家物語*, *Tales of the Heike*: Kamakura period, thirteenth century).

In one version, Minamoto no Raikô sends Watanabe no Tsuna to Modoribashi (戻橋, Modori Bridge) in the Heian capital (present Kyoto) to complete an errand. Thinking that the area might be unsafe, Raikô lends Tsuna his sword. At Modoribashi Tsuna agrees to assist a beautiful woman who is stranded. As Tsuna lifts the woman on his horse she turns into an *oni*, grabs Tsuna's topknot and tries to carry him off to Mount Atago (愛宕山). However, Tsuna retaliates by slicing off one of the *oni's* arms.

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[213] The literary works discussed in this chapter have many versions, some of which have specific titles. I use italics only when referring to a specific title. Otherwise, references to folklore should be understood as descriptions rather than titles.

[214] Mori, "Konjaku Monogatari-Shû," 151-2.

The tale often takes place at Rajômon (羅城門, the gate at the southern entrance to Kyoto, the Heian capital). An orally transmitted folktale version of the story is as follows: Raikô is conversing with a nobleman named Fujiwara no Yasumasa (藤原保昌, 958-1036) over a meal. A debate about the existence of an *oni* dwelling in Rajômon arises and Raikô expresses his skepticism to Fujiwara. To prove his point, Raikô orders Tsuna to go to Rajômon and post a slip of paper to show that Tsuna successfully approached the gate, and by extension that the *oni* does not exist. Tsuna carries out the task but the *oni* attacks him just as he is turning to leave. In the skirmish that follows Tsuna cuts off the *oni's* arm and the creature disappears.

The tale of Tsuna and the *oni* became the nô play *Rashômon* (*羅生門*) in the sixteenth century and the kabuki play *Modoribashi* (*戻橋*), which debuted in 1890. Like earlier storytellers, the nô play's author Kanze Nobumitsu (観世信光, 1435-1516) based his work on the "Swords" chapter of the *Heike monogatari*.[215] Today the *oniyôchô* is commonly paired with Rajômon versions of Tsuna's conquest. [216] However, longer explanations of the *oniyôchô* motif tend to borrow from several versions of the tale.[217]

Some details of the *oniyôchô's* motif seem to have been included specifically to convey Tsuna's tale. The large size of the kite's upper tiers compared to its lower tier make the *oni* appear to loom behind the warrior like the stealthy *oni* in the various versions of the story. Furthermore, the warrior's dynamic pose shows that he is about to strike with his sword. The positioning of the warrior in relation to the *oni* is a key characteristic because Tsuna engages with a live *oni* whereas the folkloric episodes associated with the other kites occur after the warrior beheads the *oni*.

The *ondako* is associated with legendary events believed to have occurred in Iki, specifically an episode in the tale of Yuriwaka Daijin (百合若大臣). Yuriwaka defeated the Mongols in a popular epic legend of the same name. The tale was known by the

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[215] Rieder, *Japanese Demon Lore,* 16.

[216] This statement is based on my research and observations of and popular culture references such as merchandise and tourism websites.

[217] Email correspondence with Chiaki Matsuse of the Hirado Tourist Association, August 2012. The tale Ms. Matsuse described is a hybrid of several versions that takes place at Rashômon gate rather than Modoribashi.

beginning of the seventeenth century.[218] It was first transcribed in Kyoto in 1662 and many written versions exist.[219] The oldest transcribed Iki version likely dates from the seventeenth century.[220] Iki also has an oral tradition dating back to the Edo period whereby female soothsayers perform the tale.[221]

The *ondako* is associated with an episode appearing in select versions of the tale in which Yuriwaka and his men go on a mission to vanquish a group of *oni* living on Iki. At first, the *oni* repel the warriors with various tactics including huge windbags. Yuriwaka and his men eventually defeat the *oni* and Yuriwaka beheads their leader. However, the head flies into the air and lands biting down on Yuriwaka's helmet. Fortunately, the helmet is a gift from the gods and can withstand the *oni's* bite. In some versions, the remaining demons ascend into the sky.[222]

In addition to the Yuriwaka legend, the *ondako* can represent Watanabe no Tsuna and the Rajômon *oni*. The *Ikishima minzokushi* states that residents of Gônoura City in the southwestern part of the island interpret the warrior as Tsuna while Katsumoto-machi (勝本町) residents associate him with Yuriwaka.[223] However a pamphlet accompanying the 1990s *ondako* from Katsumoto-machi in figure 39 states that Katsumoto kites represent Tsuna. These discrepancies suggest that interpretations of the warrior and *oni* are either fluid or have evolved over time.[224] Today the tale of Yuriwaka is the "official" interpretation provided by the Nagasaki Prefectural Government.[225]

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[218] Hibbard, "The Ulysses Motif in Japanese Literature," 240.

[219] Ibid., 226.

[220] Ibid., 240.

[221] Ibid.

[222] This is a very simplified version of the story. The tale is also pertinent to a local ritual whereby dried soybeans are thrown to ward off *oni*. However this element of the tale is not directly related to kites. For a more complete version of the story see: Saitô, *Nihon no tako daizenshu,* 124-5.

[223] Yamaguchi, *Ikinoshima minzokushi*, 106.
The dual meaning could be due to the traditional boundaries of Matsura land holdings. Whether or not the *ondako* that resemble the *oniyôchô* were interpreted as Watanabe no Tsuna and produced in places controlled by the Matsura requires further investigation.

[224] Yûgen Kaisha, "*Onidako*," pamphlet accompanying a 1990s *ondako* from Katsumoto Machi, Iki.

Based on the position of the warrior relative to the *oni's* head, the *ondako* does appear to represent Yuriwaka rather than Tsuna because (as in figures 39 and 45) the *oni's* head seems to be on top of the warrior's helmet. The warriors are also less dynamic than those featured on *oniyôchô*, possibly because they are not actively engaging with the *oni*. However, that some *ondako* such as the one in figure 45 resemble *oniyôchô* supports the theory that some *ondako* represented Yuriwaka while others represented Tsuna.

Like the *ondako*, the Baramon can be paired with more than one tale. It is said to represent either Watanabe no Tsuna and the Rajômon *oni*, or the main characters from the tale of Shuten Dôji (酒呑童子, "Drunken Boy").[226] The basic framework of the latter was well known by the middle of the Muromachi period (1333-1573) and many forms existed. The story of Shuten Dôji evolved into two main versions, which were subsequently made into illustrated handscrolls around the fourteenth century.[227] In 1716 the story became a household folktale when it was published in printed book format.[228]

In the well-known story Minamoto no Raikô defeats the *oni* Shuten Dôji by beheading him. The protagonists are Raikô and his "Shitennô." Shuten Dôji is a hard-drinking *oni* who craves the flesh of young virgins.[229] The nobility calls upon Raikô and his men to vanquish Shuten Dôji and his cohort because the *oni* have been kidnapping noble maidens from the capital. The *oni* then bring the women to Shuten Dôji's lair to consume their flesh and make wine from their blood. The story's chilling plotline is enhanced by the fact that the *oni* do not kill the women outright. Instead they slowly cut away pieces of their victims' bodies until they die.

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[225] The Nagasaki Prefectural Government, "Nagasaki ken dentôteki kôgeihin," ("長崎県伝統的工芸品") accessed April 29, 2013, http://www.pref.nagasaki.jp/toukei/kids/_shoukougyou/dentoukougeihin/kougei/*oni*.htm.

[226] The identity of the warrior differs depending on the source. For instance, according to the *Fukue shishi*, the warrior is Minamoto no Raiko (Fukue *Shishi* Henshû Iinkai, *Fukue shishi*, 856). However it is often classified as Watanabe no Tsuna. Saitô points this out in *Tako no minzoku shi* (Saitô, *Tako no minzoku shi*, 199).

[227] Reider, "Shuten Dôji: "Drunken Demon," 209.

[228] Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore: Oni*, 33.

[229] Reider, "Shuten Dôji: Drunken Demon," 208.

In the printed book version, Shinto gods bestow special weapons on the warriors and Raikô receives a helmet. Assisted by the gods and Buddhist scripture Raikô and the Shitennô then journey to Shuten Dôji's mountain lair and rescue the maidens. At the climax Raikô beheads Shuten Dôji. As in the tale of Yuriwaka Daijin, the head flies into the air and lands biting down on Raikô's divine helmet.[230]

In some ways the Baramon motif recalls illustrations of the beheading scene from Shuten Dôji. Beginning around the sixteenth century illustrations of the tale such as the *Shutendôji emaki* (*酒呑童子絵巻*, *Shutendôji handscroll,* sixteenth century) began to feature a relatively anthropomorphic Shuten Dôji similar to the Baramon's *oni* (fig. 46). These renditions generally include a scene depicting Shuten Dôji's head landing on Raikô and engulfing the upper part of his helmet. Possibly the Baramon was paired with the tale of Shuten Dôji because the Baramon motif suggests that a decapitated *oni* head has landed on the warrior's helmet. However, in iconic illustrations of Shuten Dôji, Raikô typically faces outward, which is distinctively different from the depiction on the Baramon.

Moreover, the tendril and dragon found in the lower regions of Baramon do not relate specifically to any of the above folklore. The tendril is explicable given that it does represent a warrior's coif, however it is generally abstracted and more decorative than life-like. The dragon is completely unrelated to both stories. Furthermore, while the names "oniyôchô" and "ondako" reference folkloric themes because they contain the word "oni," the name "baramon" is more ambiguous. Thus the Baramon deviates from a literal representation of folklore more than the other two kites.

Interestingly, the *ondako* and *oniyôchô's* folkloric pairings connect to broader themes in local culture and history whereas the Baramon's do not. To begin with, the story of Watanabe no Tsuna relates to Hirado's heritage. Tsuna was an ancestor of the powerful Matsura who were based in Hirado and controlled the region for approximately 500 years.[231] The lineage is indirect; the Matsura clan began as an offshoot branch of the

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[230] Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore: Oni*, 34-5.

[231] Cobbing, *Kyûshû: Gateway to Japan*, 134.

Figure 46

Detail of beheading scene from the *Shutendôji emaki*

Illustrated handscroll, sixteenth century

(Yoshida, *Otogizôshi*, 65)

Watanabe clan, making Tsuna a distant forefather.[232] However, the tourism industry and online references to the Matsura widely promote the connection between Hirado and Tsuna.[233]

The events that inspired Yuriwaka's epic adventure occurred in and around Iki. The *oni* decapitation featured on the kite comes from an offshoot *oni* tale that takes place in Iki. Moreover, the broader theme of a Japanese warrior battling the Mongols relates to Iki's history. The Mongol invasions occurred in 1274 and 1281 during the reign of Kublai Khan (1215-1294). On both occasions the Mongols attempted to conquer Japan via Hakata bay, near present day Fukuoka City. In the first invasion they attacked from the Korean peninsula massacring the people of Tsushima (対馬, located between Korea and Kyûshû, see 6-2) and then Iki before reaching the mainland.[234] In Hakata a combination of stormy weather and Japanese defense forces caused the Mongols to abort their attack.[235] Thus other regions of Kyûshû were spared the devastation wrought on Iki and Tsushima.[236] Though hundreds of years have passed since the massacres, Iki's longstanding Yuriwaka traditions suggest that the mythological hero who stopped the Mongols still resonates.[237]

Iki has now come to embrace the connection between Yuriwaka and the *ondako*, foregoing the tale of Tsuna and the Rajômon *oni*. Yuriwaka strikes a particular chord with local businesses. For example, the website for the Ikikoku Museum (一支国博物館, Ikikoku Hakubutsukan) promotes the association between the *ondako* and Yuriwaka instead of the Watanabe no Tsuna interpretation.[238] A local distillery even produces an

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[232] Tomoji, *Hirakareta gotôshi*, 29.

[233] For example see the Wikipedia page for Matsura Tô 松浦党
"Matsura Tô," accessed May 11, 2013. http://ja.wikipedia.org/wiki/松浦党.

[234] Batten, *Gateway to Japan*, 103.

[235] Ibid., 47.

[236] The thematic relationship between the *ondako* and the Mongol invasions is a question for further research.

[237] Hibbard, "The Ulysses Motif in Japanese Literature," 223-224.

alcohol called "Yuriwaka" with an *ondako* on the label. The Nagasaki City Ferry Terminal contains a display of local products including an *ondako*, an *oniyôchô*, and a Baramon that also helps to make the *ondako* and Yuriwaka pairing official. Each of the kites comes with a short introductory caption. Iki's Tourism Bureau created a placard for the *ondako* with the following statement: "In the Legend of Yuriwaka Daijin, a tale from long ago, Yuriwaka Daijin vanquished *oni* in Iki. The Iki *ondako* bears this motif; it shows a young man battling an *oni*. As such, it is a popular hometown toy."[239] Finally, like the Baramon, the *ondako* has been awarded *Dentôteki Kôgeihin* status and related explanations of the *ondako* associate the kite with Yuriwaka.[240]

Compared to the *oniyôchô* and the *ondako*, the Baramon's associations with folklore are relatively weak. One of the stories paired with the Baramon (Watanabe no Tsuna and the Rajômon *oni*) relates to regional history via the Matsura, but neither protagonist has a specific connection to Gotô. The Baramon's distinctive motif also distances it from folklore. Again, the Baramon has no warrior face, the helmet motif lacks iconographic details, and the tendrils and dragons found in the lower region are unrelated to folklore. Therefore the Baramon can only be abstractly connected to Tsuna, Raikô, or a general warrior type whereas the faces on the *ondako* and *oniyôchô* are closer to depictions.[241]

Significantly, unlike Iki and Hirado, Gotô City is not promoting an association of the Baramon with any one story. For instance, the explanations of the Baramon provided by Gotô's tourism website as well as the Gotô History Museum simply state that an *oni* is

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[238] Iki City Ikikoku Museum, (一支国博物館) "Iki ni nokoru oni densetsu," ("壱岐に残る鬼伝説,") accessed May 5, 2013, http://www.iki-haku.jp/biography/biography-01.html.

[239] Nagasaki City Ferry Terminal, Iki Kankô Kyôkai, (壱岐観光協会), "Iki Ondako," ("壱岐鬼凧,") December 28, 2012.

[240] For example see: Kyûshû Tabi Net, (九州旅ネット,) "Kyûshû no rekishi, bunka" ("九州の歴史, 文化,") accessed August 2 2013, http://www.welcomekyushu.jp/history/tradition/industrialarts.html. Interestingly, this website also states that the *ondako* was flown around the time of the Girl's Day festival. However it does not connect the *ondako* to *Hatsu zekku*.

[241] Hike suggests that the Baramon's weak ties to folklore indicate that the tradition started out strong in Hirado and then weakened as it spread to Gotô. However he does not discuss this point in detail. See: Hike, *Tako daihyakka, 23.*

biting a helmet without identifying the helmet's owner.[242] Similarly, the aforementioned display at the Nagasaki Ferry Terminal explains the Baramon's connections to *baraka* and *Hatsu zekku* but does not reference a warrior tale.[243]

Another related difference between the Baramon and the *ondako* and *oniyôchô* in terms of how the kites are presented today is that explanations of the latter two prioritize the warrior over the *oni*. As discussed above, typical versions of the tale of Yuriwaka or Tsuna and the Rajômon *oni* have consistent warrior figures while the *oni's* identity varies. Tsuna's tale can take place at different locations and feature different *oni* but the warrior is always Watanabe no Tsuna, just as explanations of the *ondako* seldom name the many *oni* that Yuriwaka battles. Consequently, in Gotô the Baramon is now more closely associated with the *oni* than the warrior.

Baramon-chan

The absence of a consistent story for the warrior-*oni* motif on the Baramon kite assisted the recent playful transformation of the Baramon as a regional mascot for Gotô. The kite's motif has generated a mascot called Baramon-chan (バラモンちゃん, roughly "Little Baramon"). Baramon-chan is a red *oni* with black hair, yellow horns, black eyes, a nose represented by two little dots, and small pointy teeth (fig. 47). The large proportion of his head and eyes relative to his other features makes his face child-like and endearing. He wears a cape with a green, blue, yellow, and black design resembling an abstracted version of the Baramon's warrior helmet. Baramon-chan has stout red legs with black feet that peek out beneath his cape. Sometimes he reveals his hands and arms, which are otherwise concealed under the cape.

[242] Gotô City Tourism Association, (五島市観光協会,) "Baramon tako," ("ばらもん凧,") accessed May 10, 2013, http://www.gotokanko.jp/tokusan/2.htm.

[243] "Gotô Baramon," ("五島ばらもん,") Nagasaki Ferry Terminal, December 28, 2012.

Figure 47

Baramon-chan by Nishimura Gundan
(http://www.nishimuragundan.com/oshigoto/o-baramon.html)

Baramon-chan is one of Gotô's three "image characters," along with Tsubaki Neko (つばきねこ, Camellia Cat) and Goto-rin (ごとりん) (figs. 48 & 49).[244] Tsubaki Neko is a cat with a camellia flower and Goto-rin is a female character wearing a camellia flower and a veil representing Gotô's many churches.[245] The cartoonist and character designer Nishimura Gundan (西村軍団) designed Baramon-chan for an image character competition. The people of Gotô City elected him and the other two mascots in

[244] The spelling of "Goto-rin" does not require a macron above the "o."

[245] Gotô City, "Gotô ime-ji kyarakuta-kettei," ("五島市イメージキャラクター決定," "The Results of the Gotô Image Character Competition,") accessed June 17th 2013, http://www3.city.goto.nagasaki.jp/topics/513/pdf/01.pdf.

2008.[246] The three characters appear together on tourist brochures and pamphlets advertising locations throughout Gotô so they function as mascots for the entire region.

Figure 48 (left)
Tsubaki Neko
Figure 49 (right)
Goto-rin
(Images from: http://www3.city.goto.nagasaki.jp/topics/513/pdf/01.pdf)

Of the three characters Baramon-chan- an eye-catching and active figure- is the most recognizable. The advertisements for Gotô's Baramon King Triathlon, for instance, feature Baramon-chan swimming, riding a bike and in other race-related scenarios. In these scenes he often exchanges his cape for a blue racing shirt. Baramon-chan also manifests himself as a plush real-life mascot who competes in national mascot competitions and promotes the triathlon (fig. 50).

The prominence Baramon-chan marks a departure from folkloric traditions. First, Baramon-chan effectively pairs the term "baramon" with the *oni*; he directs attention away from the warrior on to an *oni* named after the kite. In the Baramon King Triathlon advertisement, Baramon-chan even "took off" his helmet-cape in order to engage in sports. Second, Baramon-chan is not an *oni* in the traditional sense. By definition *oni* are malicious and frightening; they represent evil in folktales with both subtle and overt

[246] Nishimura Gundan, (西村軍団,) "Baramon Chan," ("バラモンちゃん,") accessed June 15, 2013, www.nishimuragundan.com.

religious themes (such as the tale of Shuten Dôji). Even the term *oni* is related to death.[247] In the folklore linked to the Baramon- Shuten Dôji and the various versions of the Rajômon tale- *oni* terrify and torment humans. By contrast, Baramon-chan does not represent a monster that kidnaps maidens to eat their flesh and drink their blood, or the sinister *oni* that lurks at Rajômon. Rather, he is endearing and jovial, and thus no longer an antagonist. In this way Baramon-chan exemplifies a trend whereby traditions associated with the kite generate new positive interpretations. Significantly, because Baramon-chan is a character in his own right with his own iconography, he does not jeopardize the Baramon's earlier connections to traditional folklore. Instead he modifies them, casting Gotô in a friendly light.

As a mascot for Gotô based on the Baramon motif, Baramon-chan fuses the identity of the Baramon kite with that of Gotô. He achieves this by using the kite to represent Gotô. Additionally, Baramon-chan's unique kite theme surpasses the iconography of other two mascots in terms of regional specificity. Goto-rin and Tsubaki Neko are amalgamations and their components are not unique to Gotô (veils, cats and camellia flowers exist in other locations). By contrast, Baramon-chan references only the Baramon kite, which is exclusive to Gotô. Moreover, the other two mascots have names describing their components (Tsubaki Neko and Goto-rin), which are also comprised of everyday objects whereas Baramon-chan's name refers specifically to the homegrown tradition that inspired his motif. This effectively makes the term "baramon" synonymous with Gotô. Therefore Baramon-chan represents a powerful form of new Baramon-based imagery achieved by weakening, but not destroying, the kite's ties to folklore enough to create iconography centered on Gotô.

In short, the *onidako* category usefully identifies a group of kites with similar shapes, motifs, and ties to *oni* and warrior related folklore. The Baramon's basic associations with Watanabe no Tsuna and Minamoto no Raikô, and its ties to the *ondako* and *oniyôchô* link the kite to a rich tapestry of literary traditions. Today these associations remain, but the Baramon's has loosed its bonds to outside traditions. Significantly, the Baramon's thematic ambiguity strengthens the kite's ties to Gotô

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[247] Reider, *Japanese Demon Lore*, 5.

Figure 50

Baramon-chan

Baramon King Gotô Nagasaki Blog

(http://ameblo.jp/gototri/entry-10891168563.html)

because it is not bound to any one story in or out of those islands. Rather the kite can function as a general symbol for vigor and good triumphing over evil. Again, its association with the term *baraka* and the concept of a warrior bravely facing an *oni* use the kite's flexible identity to put a local spin on folklore's heroic ideals. In a similar vein, the Baramon's very general connection to warriors also keeps the *oni*'s identity open to interpretation. The result is a kite-based character inspired by folklore and designed to represent Gotô that is removed from the traditional good versus evil folkloric paradigm. This character is called Baramon-chan and he conflates Gotô and the Baramon kite.

CHAPTER VI
CONCLUSION

This project began as an attempt to trace the Baramon's origins and development through time. At the onset, Hike's hypothesis linking the Baramon to the movements of the Matsura and *wakô*, as well as the relative abundance of Edo-period accounts of Nagasaki kite flying seemed to be promising leads. However, the Baramon was not preserved in the form of written documents or antique kites. Instead, when researching the Baramon in Gotô one encounters a standard narrative that seems to quiet variant theories as to the kite's origins. As discussed in the previous chapters the general consensus is this: The Baramon came to Gotô long ago and it was used for *Hatsu zekku*. The name "baramon" is linked to *baraka,* and the reverse-helmet motif expresses bravery.

This thesis took shape then from several observations made in Fukue Island. First, the people of Gotô possess and display a great number of contemporary kites and opt to display personalized Baramon in good condition rather than moldering ones from previous generations. Next, the Baramon's mysterious past actually enables it to represent an ideal version of itself and Gotô. Finally, the ways in which people interact with the Baramon reflect shifts in culture and the passage of time. In light of these observations it became necessary to investigate the contemporary Baramon in order to comprehend the tradition holistically.

The Baramon is traditional but very much alive, which necessitated (and allowed) this thesis to look at the historical *baramon*-related kite culture and examine the contemporary presentations of the Baramon. This approach confirmed that though the Baramon is connected to multiple aspects of broader regional heritage, it has become an expression of Gotô's history and culture. Some aspects of the Baramon's contemporary identity (such as its use in *Hatsu zekku*) are well established, while others (Baramon-chan for instance) are recent. These associations, nevertheless, relate to each other in the sense that they give symbolic meaning and personality to the Baramon by uniting it with Gotô's identity. Furthermore, from a commercial standpoint, the *Dentôteki Kôgeihin* designation recognizes the Baramon as a unique tradition that officially belongs to Gotô. As a result,

contemporary discussions of the kite can skirt aspects of its broader heritage, such as the *kabuto-baramon* and its ties to *onidako*.

The photograph from the *Fukue shishi* introduced in Chapter I (fig. 3) epitomizes the Baramon's position in Gotô: for all symbolic purposes, Baramon *is* Gotô. The photograph captures a gigantic Baramon on Onidake with a distant view of the ocean in the background. The kite stands approximately three times as tall as its handler, whose face is hidden behind its frame. The bottom tier of the kite bears the characters for Gotô. The photograph is attributed to the Gotô Tourism Organization, indicative of the Baramon's role as a mascot, and by extension, a marketing tool for Gotô. Implicit in the scene is the community effort necessary to produce, transport and fly a kite that is roughly thirty feet tall. What truly makes the Baramon unique however is that the people of Gotô have enthusiastically embraced it as an emblem that both represents and celebrates Gotô past and present.

APPENDIX
A BRIEF HISTORY OF JAPANESE KITES

The origins of kite making in Japan remains a topic of speculation. If Japanese kite making existed before the Heian period (794-1185) it was not well documented. Early references to "flying banners" appear in the two of Japan's oldest written histories: the *Nihonshoki* (日本書紀, *Chronicles of Japan*; Nara period, 720) and the *Hizen no kuni fudoki* (肥前国風土記 *Records of Wind and Earth in Hizen Country*: Nara period, eighth century).[248] Some scholars argue that volume twenty-six of the *Nihonshoki* contains Japan's first literary kite reference: An entry for the year 658 states that a successful general received drums and "octopus banners" (鮹旗, *tako-hata*) as a reward for his services.[249] The words *tako* and *hata* appear regularly in later kite nomenclature and the name seems to suggest a kite-like device. However the octopus banner cannot be definitively identified as a kite.

The *Hizen no kuni fudoki* also describes a flying banner. According to this text, an evil deity was terrorizing the township of Hemekoso (姫社). When a banner (幡, *hata*) dedicated to the deity was raised into the sky it flew away and its trajectory revealed the deity's dwelling.[250] The Kite historian Tawara Yusoku argues that because the banner flew quite far it should be regarded as a kite. He also points out that incidentally *hata*, (which means "flag" in contemporary Japanese) is a name for kites in Kyûshû.[251] However the term *hata* as applied to Kyûshû kites does not appear to be directly linked to the *Hizen no kuni fudoki*.

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[248] Hike, *Tako daihyakka*, 17.

[249]Sakamoto, *Nihon shoki*, 332.

[250] Until 1871 the region of western Kyûshû where modern day Saga and Nagasaki prefectures are located was known as Hizen Provence.

[251] Tawara, *Nihon no tako*, 9.
Hata are a type of fighting kite from Nagasaki City. The people of Kyûshû have also used *hata* as a general term for kites.

Over time, specific vocabulary for kites developed. A compilation of writings by a poet and court retainer named Shimada no Tadaomi (島田忠臣, 828-892) called the *Denshikashû* (田氏家集, *Poetical Works of the Denshi*: Ninna era, 885-888) includes a description of a paper bird (紙鳶, *kamitobi*) fluttering on a spring day in Sawayama.[252] The combination of the character for "paper" (紙) and the character for the raptor kite (鳶, the family Accipitridae) came to mean "kite." The encyclopedic *Wamyô ruiju shô* (和名類聚抄, *Annotated Dictionary of Classic/Chinese Character Terms*: Heian period, around 934) written by the poet and scholar Minamoto no Shitagô (源順, 911-983) gives further insight into early kite terminology. It contains an entry for kites called s*hirôshi* (紙老鴟, paper hawk/kite) and *kamitobi*.[253] The American kite scholar Tal Streeter (discussed in the first chapter) argues that these early kites were likely relatively small T-shaped constructions resembling birds.[254] By contrast, twentieth century reconstructions from the Period Festival in Kyoto imagined Heian kites as long diamond-shaped quadrilaterals with kanji characters for "hawk."[255] Both of these interpretations of early kites stem from the original word for kite.

By the Heian period the Japanese engaged in recreational kite flying, though leisurely kite flying was initially limited to the aristocracy who could afford precious paper. Kites may have also served spiritual purposes; Streeter theorizes that kites were brought to Japan Buddhist by missionaries and subsequently used in religious ceremonies.[256] By the Edo period kite makers had adopted religious iconography for their motifs; for example, many kites featuring Daruma (or Bodhidharma) were preserved in woodblock prints. Similar kites are still made today. Moreover, as in China, kites were

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[252] Hike, *Tako daihyakka*, 17.

[253]"Shirôshi", Shogakukan, accessed through Japan Knowledge May 5 2013.

[254] Streeter, "High Art: Keeping Ancient Asian Kitemaking Traditions Alive in Modern Japan," Kites: Paper Wings over Japan, 17.

[255] Hiroi, *Tako sora no zôkei*, 15.

[256] Streeter, *The Art of the Japanese Kite*, 156.

used in military contexts to signify a successful battle or as a means of conveying messages.[257]

During the Edo period, Japan experienced a kite boom.[258] At that time Edo (now Tôkyô) was one of the largest cities in the world. Generally, an expanding economy resulted in a redistribution of wealth, enriching the cultural activities of the urban middle class, and kite flying became a popular pastime. Though kites were common throughout Japan, abundant *ukiyo-e* prints preserve a disproportionately large number of Edo kite motifs. The prints document the shape and appearance of kites revealing diverse designs and aesthetics, as well as the city's vibrant kite culture. Ostensibly, woodblock prints also helped to intertwine kites with the arts of the lower (but not always poorer) classes. The kite, Kabuki play, and *ukiyo-e* or floating world aesthetics fused, resulting in new kite-related imagery. Woodblock print makers such as Katsushika Hokusai (葛飾北斎 1760-1849), Totoya Hokkei (魚屋北渓, 1780-1850), and (Utagawa Kunisada, 歌川国貞 1786-1865) incorporated kites into their elaborate compositions.[259] The author Kyokutei Bakin (曲亭馬琴, 1767-1848) even produced a "yellow book" (黄表紙, *kibyôshi*) comic featuring illustrations of kites in didactic contexts.[260]

Like woodblock prints and Kabuki plays, Edo kite culture was subject to government approval. Kites became so popular that they were included in laws regulating the materials and aesthetics of printed items. Perhaps due to inflated middleclass dissatisfaction with strict Edo codes, commoners began to subversively fly their kites above buildings belonging to the nobility.[261] Kite motifs also appeared in prints as veiled political satire.[262]

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[257] Examples of two such incidents can be found in Hiroi, *Tako sora no zôkei*, 16 and Stevenson, *Japanese Kite Prints*, 14 respectively.

[258] Stevenson, *Japanese Kite Prints*, 10.

[259] Ibid.

[260] Walley, "Kyokutei Bakin's By My Candy and I'll Give You a Kite Story," 33-60.

[261] Stevenson, *Japanese Kite Prints*, 12.

[262] Ibid., 11.

Edo culture also influenced the contemporary Japanese word for kite, which is pronounced "tako" (凧) and evolved from regional Edo slang in the Edo period.[263] Before the adoption of a standard term, words for kites differed to according to regional dialect. People from the Kansai region around Ôsaka and Kyôto favored another common word for kite: *ikanobori* (often written as 烏賊幟).[264] *Ikanobori* literally means "climbing squid" or "squid banner." Interestingly, *tako* is a homonym for octopus and depending on the region, the character 凧 was also read as *ika* (squid).[265] Moreover, Edo period kites were often shaped like octopus or squid. Hence, in addition to terms such as "paper hawk" several traditional words for "kite" referenced ascending cephalopods. These terms ultimately resulted in an appellation meaning "kite" but sounding like "octopus."

Besides creatures of sea and sky, common kite themes included local and national folklore, family crests, kanji characters, land animals, and supernatural beings. Even today, kites such as the *yakkodako* (奴凧, a T-shaped kite depicting a low-ranking samurai) follow a fairly standard and simplified aesthetic whereby the kite is shaped and decorated to resemble a man with outstretched arms. By contrast, rectangular *edodako* (江戸凧, Edo kites) feature highly detailed and individual compositions that demonstrate considerable variety. Other kites incorporate various iconographies into one motif. These Kites are comprised of several autonomous elements grafted onto a complex bone structure. The Baramon and the Shizuoka Prefecture *tomoedako* (巴凧, an amalgamation of crests and symbols), exemplify this type.

Warriors are another popular kite motif in part because kites are traditionally associated with masculinity. From at least the Edo period onward kites have been regarded as boy's toys. They were thought to procure good fortune and were flown to commemorate the birth of children, (especially sons) and bring the child health and contentment. To this end, older generations of male relatives made kites for their

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[263] Stevenson, *Japanese Kite Prints*, 13

[264] Shogakukan, "Ika-nobori", accessed May 5, 2013.

[265] Ibid.

progeny.[266] Moreover, records of kite flying on the Boy's Day festival date back to the sixteenth century.[267]

Kites are still flown today on Boy's Day and also on New Years Day though their production has decreased in recent decades. Many cities such as Nagasaki City in Nagasaki Prefecture and Sagamihara City in Kanagawa Prefecture hold annual kite festivals. The latter is a very famous event where local men and boys work on teams to launch humungous kites. Kites are also relatively abundant on Nagasaki prefecture's outlying islands including Gotô.

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[266] Hiroi, *Tako sora no zôkei*, 18.

[267] Ibid.

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