

The Inclusiveness of Festival Culture in the Post-Disaster Rural Community Restructuring Process

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The Inclusiveness of Festival Culture in the Post-Disaster Rural Community Restructuring Process¹

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Keywords: Great East Japan Earthquake (*Higashi Nihon daishinsai* 東日本大震災), rural community restructuring (*shūraku saihen* 集落再編), festivals (*sairei* 祭礼), portable shrine parades (*mikoshi togyo* 神輿渡御), societal inclusion (*shakaiteki hōsetsu* 社会的包摂)

Author's Statement

In the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake of 11 March 2011, scholarship grew on religion and disasters. This article is part of that trend, which covered support provided by religious professionals, as well as the role of religious culture in recovery and religious institutions in prevention and mitigation. However, it is natural to question whether religion positively impacts everyone in the context of a society-wide natural disaster. This article attempts to answer this by looking at the expansion of a festival portable shrine parade route and the adjustments made that took into account the various parties involved.

1. Introduction

Soon, ten years will have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake, which brought massive damage to the Tohoku region's Pacific coast.

Areas damaged by the tsunami have formulated and implemented recovery plans. These plans support victims in rebuilding their lives. Also, they do not simply repair infrastructure and homes but also consider the sustainability of local communities and disaster prevention/reduction.

Amidst this, scholars have taken note of the festivals (*sairei* 祭礼) and folk performing

¹ This article is a translation of Kurosaki Hiroyuki 黒崎浩行, *Saigaigo no shūraku saihen katei ni mirareru sairei bunka no hōsetsusei* 災害後の集落再編過程に見られる祭礼文化の包摂性, *Kokugakuin Daigaku kiyō* 國學院大學紀要 59 (2021): 15–28. Translated by Dylan Luers Toda.

arts (*minzoku geinō* 民俗芸能) that the residents of affected areas have passed down. In addition to providing concrete support for these practices, scholars have discussed their meanings and roles.

Ueda Kyōko 植田今日子 has written about Ushi no tsuno tsuki 牛の角突き, a bullfighting festival revived in Niigata Prefecture's village of Yamakoshi (today, Nagaoka City's Yamakoshi area), as well as the Sōma noma oi 相馬野馬追, a horse festival in Fukushima Prefecture's Hamadōri area. Yamakoshi was struck by the 23 October 2004 Chūetsu Earthquake, requiring the entire village to evacuate, and Hamadōri was affected by the 11 March 2011 Great Eastern Japan Earthquake and subsequent nuclear accident. Ueda argues that although carrying out festivals and folk performing arts while the community's continued existence is up in the air does not directly contribute to the economic rebuilding of victims' lives, these practices "serve as support when humans are in very difficult situations."²

Also, drawing from a joint survey of intangible cultural properties in the prefecture of Miyagi, which the Great East Japan Earthquake struck, Takizawa Katsuhiko 滝澤克彦 has presented the view that "through festivals, social structures and relations in rural communities are reproduced,"³ and comparatively examined examples of this while arguing that the continuation of festivals leads to "the resilience of rural communities."⁴

Having similar interests to those found in discussions like these, I have engaged in fieldwork at multiple locations and, at the end of 2019, published a book that included my findings.⁵

While referring to an actual case, this paper attempts to discuss further the idea, presented in my book's conclusion, of "social inclusion."

Ever since Durkheim, research on the social integration function of rituals has been carried out. This has taken the form of descriptions of collective effervescence phenomena and analyses of ritual processes (Arnold van Gennep, Victor Turner). Scholars have also researched and discussed the role of post-disaster rituals in light of the Great Hanshin (Kobe) Earthquake and the Great East Japan Earthquake.⁶

While the phrase "social inclusion" does not contradict "social integration," it does make one more clearly aware of the contrasting term "social exclusion."

The political scientist Daniel Aldrich points out the dual-sided influence of social capital in disaster recovery. He says that while strong bonding social capital promotes mutual aid amongst local residents, it reinforces "existing systems of discrimination" and justifies "programs that provide benefits only locally, not regionwide or citywide, harming

² Ueda, *Sonzoku no kiro ni tatsu mura*, p. 158.

³ Takizawa, "Sairei no jizoku to sonraku no rejiriansu," p. 126.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Kurosaki, *Shintō bunka no gendaiteki yakuwari*.

⁶ Miki, *Fukkō to shūkyō*; Miki, *Shūkyō to shinsai*.

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those on the margins of society.”⁷

While it is important both that festival participation allows people to experience the renewal of life and that communities are re-integrated through this, this can turn into the exclusion of people who are not participating. Do the people organizing a festival thoughtfully work to ensure that this does not happen? If we adopt the perspective of social inclusion, this is precisely what we cannot overlook.

From the above perspective, in this paper, I will consider the case of the portable shrine parade (*mikoshi togyo* 神輿渡御) at Koizumi Hachiman Shrine’s 小泉八幡神社 *reisai* 例祭, a major festival. It is held in the Koizumi area of Motoyoshi-chō in Miyagi Prefecture’s city of Kesennuma.

I have already published the results of my survey, carried out from March 2011 to November 2016, regarding the Koizumi area and the religious culture connected to the area’s livelihoods.⁸

Subsequently, there was an important change at the Koizumi Hachiman Shrine *reisai* held on 8 October 2017: the route of the portable shrine parade was modified to cover a wider area. This was decided after discussions between the chief Shinto priest, *sōdai* 総代 (representatives of shrine parishioners), and residents. These discussions were prompted by the group relocation of Koizumi area residents for disaster prevention purposes and the restructuring of *shinkōkai* 振興会 (local residents’ organizations for self-governance and socializing). The land for group relocation had been delivered in May 2015.

Focusing on this change, below I will describe the 2017, 2018, and 2019 *reisai* based on my on-the-ground observations and interview survey of connected individuals, including the shrine priest, and particularly pay attention to the diversity of people involved in the festival. While doing so, I will consider the *reisai*’s significance from the perspective of inclusiveness.

2. Group Relocation and the Restructuring of Residents’ Organizations

The circumstances of the group relocation of the Koizumi area (Machi district) are discussed in detail in a book by the Koizumi Chiku no Ashita o Kangaeru Kai 小泉地区の明日を考える会 (lit., “Association for thinking about the Koizumi area’s tomorrow”; below, Kangaeru Kai), the group that carried out this relocation.⁹ I have created **Table 1** based on it while adding information I acquired on the ground.

Albeit small-scale, group relocations were also carried out for disaster prevention purposes in the Zai (Higashi) and Hama districts (eleven and six plots, respectively).

⁷ Aldrich, *Building Resilience*, p. 2.

⁸ Kurosaki, “Shizen saigai kara no fukkō ni okeru shūkyō bunka no isō.”

⁹ Koizumi Chiku no Ashita o Kangaeru Kai, *Daisuki na Koizumi o kodomo tachi he tsugu tame ni*.

**Table 1. Circumstances of the Group Relocation of the Koizumi Area (Machi District)
(Including Prehistory)**

Edo Period (1603–1868)	Koizumi Village
1889	The Town and Village System goes into effect: Koizumi Village - Machi district, Hama district, and Zai district
1955	Merges with the towns of Tsuya and Ōya and becomes part of the town of Motoyoshi
1979	The town of Motoyoshi promotes the creation of <i>shinkōkai</i> , all-household residents' associations. <i>Shinkōkai</i> are created in each of the seven administrative divisions
2009	The town of Motoyoshi is absorbed into the city of Kesennuma
11 March 2011	Earthquake occurs off the Pacific coast of Tohoku. Tsunami with maximum depth of twenty meters. Forty dead and 1,118 buildings completely destroyed
24 April 2011	The voluntary association “Koizumi Chiku no Ashita o Kangaeru Kai” is formed and a committee is created to prepare for the establishment of a Koizumi district group relocation council
30 April 2011	Explanatory meeting regarding the group relocation advancement project held by the city of Kesennuma for residents
June 2011	Relocation destination decided / Search held for “partners” (experts) and partners selected / Koizumi district group relocation council established / Written request submitted to the city of Kesennuma
July 2011	Town development workshops start (last until January 2013) / Plan examined
May 2012	Agreement of Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism regarding group relocation acquired
July 2013	Development of residential land begins
18 August 2015	Residential land development (sixty plots) completed and delivered / Municipal Koizumi residences (disaster public housing, 37 households) completed
2017	Koizumi Middle School emergency temporary residences taken down / <i>Shinkōkai</i> restructured from seven to four (Machi district, Higashi district, Nishi district, Hama district) / Along with Magome Middle School, Koizumi Middle School is absorbed into Tsuya Middle School

The existence of *shinkōkai*, which were created in 1979, is a notable way in which Koizumi residents are organized. Like other areas in Miyagi Prefecture, there had been “contract associations” in the area (generally called *keiyaku-kō* 契約講; in Koizumi, *keiyaku-kai* 契約会). These mutual aid organizations managed joint assets like mountain forests, engaged in agricultural development, and promoted amity between members. However, the likes of branch families and families that had moved in from outside the community were not members.¹⁰ In contrast, the *shinkōkai* were organized, at the urging

¹⁰ Tōyō Daigaku Minzoku Kenkyūkai, *Koizumi no minzoku*, pp. 57–90.

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of the government, as all-household resident self-governance associations. They formulate and carry out projects for local development in a broad sense.

While before the Great East Japan Earthquake there were seven *shinkōkai*, after the tsunami damage and subsequent community relocation, they were reorganized into four in 2017.

The Kangaeru Kai, the voluntary association involved in the disaster prevention group relocation of the Machi District, was led by people in their fifties, a younger age group than *shinkōkai* officers. They invited outside advisors and held workshops for residents to talk with each other.

Map 1 shows the locations of the Machi, Zai, and Hama districts, the Machi District's relocation destination, Koizumi Hachiman Shrine, and other related places.

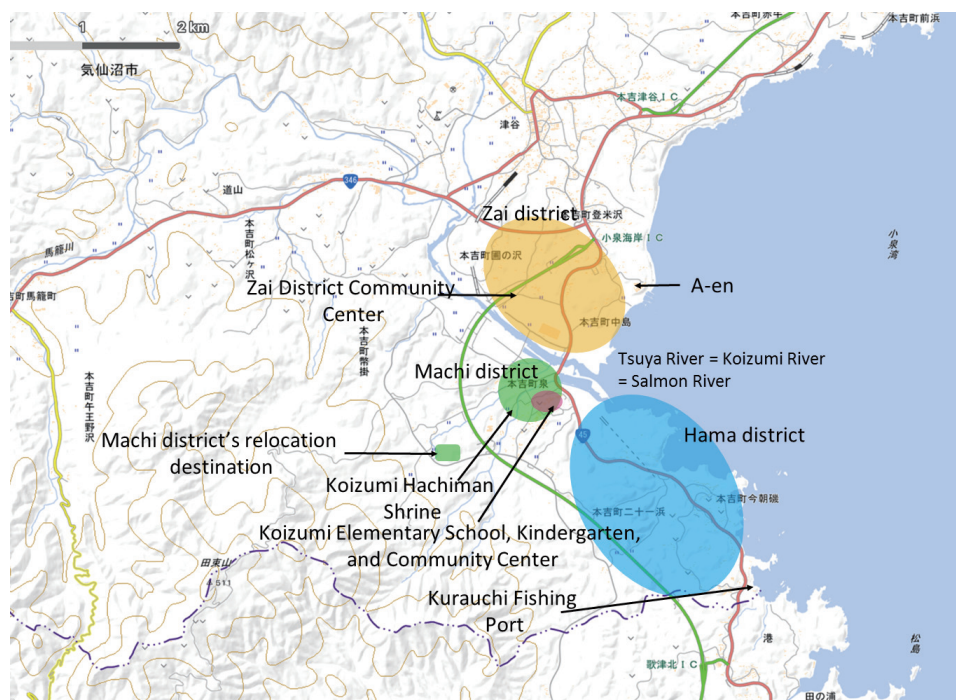


Fig 1. The Koizumi Area¹¹

¹¹ For Figure 1, I added shapes and text to GSI Tiles map data (<https://maps.gsi.go.jp/development/ichiran.html>).

3. Festival Changes

The Festival from 2011 to 2016

Hachiman Shrine, said to have been established in 1584 (Tenshō 12), is the protector of the Koizumi area (previously the town of Koizumi). While the shrine's buildings were spared in the Great East Japan Earthquake, the priest's residence was not. Documents, records, a *Ryūzu* Kannon (dragon-riding Kannon) iron statue that was the main object of veneration of the Kannon Confraternity (Kannon-kō 観音講), and other items were lost. For this reason, the priest came up with the idea of publishing a record that would share the religious beliefs and practices of the Koizumi area and Hachiman Shrine with future generations. In January 2019, with the editorial assistance of Ikeda Natsue 池田奈津江 (a Kanagawa Prefecture Shinto priest who had been offering support since 2011), Akino Jun'ichi 秋野淳一 (who helped with my on-the-ground interview survey in 2015), and myself, this record was completed.¹²

In this book, Ikeda describes changes to the shrine's *reisai* from 2011 to 2017.¹³ **Table 2** summarizes it and includes my observations from September 2015 and 2016.

Table 2. Festival Changes Between 2011 to 2016

2011	While the priest thought that the portable shrine parade could not be held, members of the local young men's association wanted to cheer up the community with it, and sixty to seventy younger people and volunteers in the community came together to carry one portable shrine in white robes (<i>bakuchō</i> 白丁).
2012	After the festival eve and <i>reisai</i> rituals, a parade of three portable shrines was held. The route was as follows: shrine → former residential area in the original Machi District → Koizumi River (Salmon River Abundant Catch Prayer Ceremony) → Koizumi Elementary School → Shrine. (Same until 2016.)
2013	With banner, lion costume, drum, and float donations, the festival becomes livelier. Third-year middle school students carry cardboard portable shrine wearing happi coats made from <i>tairyō-bata</i> 大漁旗 (fisher's flags).
2014	Under the guidance of former members of Inage 稲毛 Shrine parishioner young men's association (city of Kawasaki), school students carried a children's portable shrine that had been donated by the shrine Ōmiya-Hachimangū 大宮八幡宮 (Tokyo's city of Suginami). An offering stage is constructed in Koizumi Elementary School's schoolyard. Parade held to entrance of the Koizumi Middle School temporary housing area. Parade consisted of Koizumi Kindergarten children's shrine, Koizumi Elementary School's fife and drums corps, Koizumi Hama fisher percussion performance (a hometown performing art), and Koizumi Children's Association's earthquake/tsunami recovery portable shrine. Talent show held in the evening (organized by the "COOL na Oyaji no Kai" COOLな親父の会 / "Cool Dad's Association").
27 September 2015	Only local residents carried the shrine's portable shrine (wearing white robes). Otherwise, the same as the previous year.
18 September 2016	Same as the previous year.

¹² Koizumi Hachiman Jinja, *Motoyoshichō koizumi hachiman jinja no kiroku*.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 38–42.

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Before the Great East Japan Earthquake, five members of each of the seven *shinkōkai* carried the shrine's portable shrine. The parade started on the shrine's grounds and went to each house in the Machi district. At each house's Shinto shrine, the priest carried out a purification (*oharai* お祓い). It lasted from around 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.¹⁴ Also, offertorial events were held in front of the former site of the Koizumi Community Center (Koizumi Kōminkan 小泉公民館). It had been near the shrine before being washed away in the tsunami.

After the earthquake, the shrine's portable shrine was carried out by members of the Kangaeru Kai (until 2016) and volunteers (until 2014). As written in **Table 2**, a major reason the portable shrine parade occurred was the younger men participating in the Kangaeru Kai, which held discussions regarding group relocation, calling for and encouraging the priest to make it happen. The group's workshops discussed the Koizumi of the past and what should be valued and passed on. People worked to incorporate this into the plan for the relocation destination.¹⁵ We can see the influence of this extended to the continuation of the portable shrine parade.

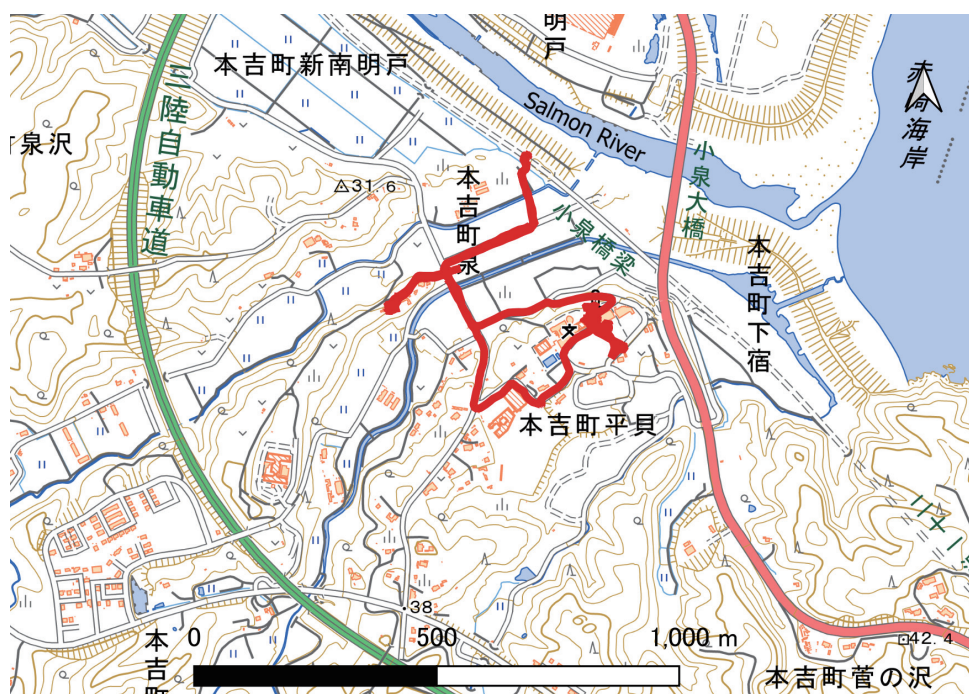


Fig 2. The 27 September 2015 portable shrine parade route.¹⁶

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 32.

¹⁵ Koizumi Chiku no Ashita o Kangaeru Kai, *Daisuki na Koizumi o kodomotachi e tsugu tame ni*.

¹⁶ For Figure 2, I created a GPS log during my survey with Simple Logger (<https://apps.apple.com/jp/app/id861791141>), and used QGIS 3.6.10 to overlay the GPS data on GSI Tiles map data. Same for figures 3 and 4.

Also, note that through the children's portable shrine, performing arts offerings, talent show, and so on, a broad swath of diverse residents has been involved in the festival as active participants. Koizumi's kindergarten, elementary school, and middle school are all located on the same rise of land. The Koizumi Community Center was also rebuilt there in 2015. Around noon on the day of the festival, the shrine's portable shrine arrived there, and the children's portable shrine, carried by kindergarteners, and the recovery portable shrine, carried by the children's association, assembled as well. A fife and drum corps performance by Koizumi Elementary School students and a Koizumi Hama fisher percussion offering took place as well. In 2014, a middle school students' shrine parade also began with the support of a Kanagawa Prefecture Shinto priest and parishioners.

On the grounds of the Koizumi Middle school is a temporary housing complex, and its residents had gathered as well. For this reason, the ages of the people surrounding the portable shrine parade and performing arts offerings were diverse as well.

Figure 2 shows the portable shrine parade route until 2016.

2017 Changes

The festival had been centered on the events in the original Machi district (portable shrine parade at the former residential area and Salmon River Abundant Catch Ceremony) and those on the rise of land where the schools, community center, and temporary housing complex were located (the portable shrine parade and offertorial events). In 2017, changes were made to the festival. The biggest one was the route of the portable shrine parade.

Due to advance discussions between the priest, *sōdai*, *shinkōkai* heads, and others, it was decided to have the parade route of the shrine's portable shrine connect the three districts of Machi, Zai, and Hama. The biggest reason for this was that the group relocation had been progressing and, at the same time, the temporary housing complex on the Koizumi Middle School's grounds had begun to be taken down.

According to the priest, while Machi district group relocation was completed and an assembly hall built, residents perceived Hachiman Jinja as the protector of the entire Koizumi area, and the opinion coalesced that it would be best to go around to all of Koizumi's districts, not just Machi.

This meant that the portable shrine would cover a broader area, and how to temporally and spatially accommodate the students' parading of portable shrines and offertorial events, which had taken place on the elevated land area where schools were located, emerged as an issue. A variety of proposals were considered.

Plans were made to have the Machi district's parade stop (*otabisho* 御旅所) be the Koizumi Machi District Shinkōkai Hall, the Zai District Community Center be that of the Zai district, and the Hama District General Purpose Assembly Hall (Tamokuteki

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Shūkaijo 多目的集会所) be that of the Hama District. However, due to a death in a family near the Hama district's assembly hall, the Hama district's stop was changed to the Kurauchi Fishing Port.

The resulting schedule and route for the festival on 8 October (Sunday) are shown in **Table 3** and **Figure 3**, respectively.

Table 3. 8 October 2017 *Reisai* Shrine Parade Schedule

08:30	Departure ceremony
09:00	Departure. Move the portable shrine on a truck. <i>Sōdai</i> and shrine carriers board a minibus.
09:30	Salmon River Abundant Catch Ceremony
10:15	Zai District Community Center: Shinto rituals, lion dance, mochi-making
11:00	Kurauchi Fishing Port: Shinto rituals, lion dance, mochi-making
12:00	Koizumi Community Center parking lot: Join up with middle school students' portable shrine
12:30	Koizumi Kindergarten children's portable shrine, Koizumi Elementary School drum and fife corps (Koizumi Elementary School schoolyard)
13:00	Koizumi Hama fisher percussion (Koizumi Community Center parking lot)
13:50	Parade of Koizumi Children's Association recovery portable shrine (up to the main entrance of Koizumi Middle School), middle school students' portable shrine, and shrine's portable shrine
14:30	Return
14:50	Return Ceremony
15:00	Feast (<i>naorai</i> 直会 ; Koizumi Machi District Shinkōkai Hall)
17:00	Talent Show (Koizumi Machi District Shinkōkai Hall)

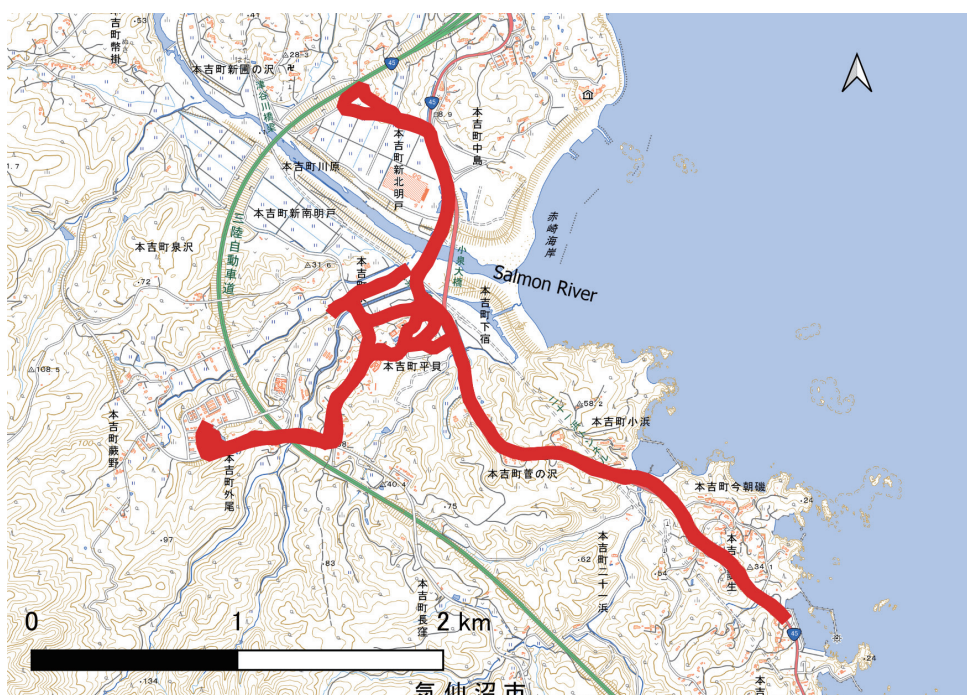


Fig 3. The 8 October 2017 portable shrine parade route.

Events with many children were, as before, held around noon on the schools' rise of land, and the shrine's portable shrine was put on a truck to go around the entire Koizumi area. Also, the talent show's venue was moved to the open area in front of the Koizumi Machi District Shinkōkai Hall.

A major reason that the events with many children stayed on the elevated land area was its many schools. While first gathering at this rise of land and then moving to the Machi district's group relocation site was considered, the amount of effort and time involved in moving could not be ignored.

As for the talent show, those involved in setting up and taking down the stage (primarily men in their twenties to forties) could only work on the weekends, and therefore it was decided that the Koizumi Machi District Shinkōkai Hall was actually preferable because the stage frame could be left standing for about a week before and after the festival.

In this way, while broadening the area covered by the shrine parade route, adjustments were made that took into account the people's circumstances.

There were also new circumstances surrounding the portable shrine carried by middle school students: in April 2017, Koizumi Middle School was absorbed into Tsuya Middle School. There were concerns that this would lead to a lack of participation by middle school students. However, in the end, ten middle school students residing in the Koizumi area participated in the shrine parade.

It was also hoped that residents of the Zai and Hama districts would participate in the festival due to the expansion of the area covered by the portable shrine parade. While approximately twenty residents came together at the Hama district's Kurauchi Fishing Port, only about ten appeared in the Zai district's community center. This probably led festival organizers to reflect on what could have been done differently.

2018 Changes

In 2018, the kagura offering and talent show were scheduled for 16 September (Sunday), and the *reisai*, portable shrine parade, children's portable shrine, drum and fife corps, and percussion group for 22 September (Saturday). Operational circumstances and the accommodation of school events led to this schedule.

According to the priest, the thirteenth day of the eighth month on the lunar calendar is when the *reisai* is normally held. In 2018, this was 22 September. However, setting up and taking down the talent show venue requires several days and many hands. Therefore, it would have been difficult to put on the show on Saturday evening. Also, school events were scheduled for 15 and 16 September of the previous week. This led to a schedule, said the priest, in which the *reisai*'s Shinto rituals would be held on 22 September and related events the previous week.

Also, with the 16 September kagura offering being Hachiman Shrine *reisai*'s first in

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thirty years, Shimo-ōkago 下大籠 Nanbu 南部 kagura (Fujisawa-chō, Ichinoseki City, Iwate Prefecture) was also invited. According to a Nanbu kagura survey report published by the Ichinoseki City Board of Education, the activities of Shimo-ōkago Nanbu kagura have primarily been offerings at the fall *reisai* of Shinmei-sha 神明社, a shrine in the Fujisawa-chō area of Iwate Prefecture's city of Ichinoseki, and performances at a children's hometown performing arts recital in Fujisawa-chō. Also, the report states, Shimo-ōkago Nanbu kagura is a sibling of Ōmuro 大室 Nanbu kagura (Kitakami-cho, Jūsanhama, Ishinomaki City), which was revived after the Great East Japan Earthquake. The former provided kagura dance scripts and other forms of support for the latter when it was being revived.¹⁷ This offering became a reality thanks to the proposal of the head of the Koizumi Machi District Shinkōkai, who is fond of kagura.

The portable shrine parade route continued to cover this wider area in 2018. The Zai district parade stop changed from the Zai District Community Center to the nursing home A-en (Tokubetsu Yōgo Rōjin Hōmu A-en 特別養護老人ホームA苑). When in September 2019, I asked the priest about the reason for this, he replied that it was because there was the opinion that with barely any people having come to the community center in 2017, it would be better to go to A-en, which has many elderly residents.

On 16 September, the kagura offering began on a specially-built stage in the Machi District Shinkōkai Hall. In addition to the priest, *sōdai*, and Shinkōkai officers, approximately ten Machi district residents, primarily older people, came. It was a sunny day, and strong sunlight shown on the seats lined up in front of the stage. Therefore, people watched from the eaves of the hall.

The talent show began in the evening (just after 5:00 p.m.). Ten groups of people of diverse ages (from kindergarten students to seniors) put on song, dance, and other performances. About thirty to fifty people came to watch.

Rain fell intensely six days later on the morning of the twenty-second. Therefore, the priest and others who would be participating in the ceremonies and/or involved in the portable shrine parade hurriedly gathered in the Koizumi Community Center to discuss the day's plans. This resulted in the start of the ceremonies and portable shrine parade being pushed back to noon.

The rain stopped in the late morning, and the children-centered offertorial events at the schools and community center's rise of land were held as planned. On the other hand, after the ceremonies and departure of the Hachiman Shrine's portable shrine at the shrine, the portable shrine was loaded onto a truck, and its carriers boarded a minibus. They went to the Salmon River Abundant Catch Ceremony, Zai district's nursing home A-en, Hama district's Kurauchi Fishing Port, and the Koizumi Machi District Shinkōkai Hall.

¹⁷ Ichinoseki-shi Kyōiku Iinkai, *Nanbu kagura chōsa hōkokusho*, pp. 56–57.

At the nursing home, which had been added after the previous year's lessons, approximately fifty residents went out to the front courtyard with the assistance of nursing home staff and greeted the portable shrine. A lion (costume) accompanied the portable shrine, and residents lined up to have their heads bitten.

The Shinto priest and shrine parishioners from Kanagawa continued this year to support middle school students' portable shrine parade. However, there were concerns about the influence of Koizumi Middle School being absorbed into Tsuya Middle School. In the end, partially due to the morning's poor weather, there were not enough middle school students for them alone to carry a portable shrine.

2019 Changes

In 2019, events were not split between two days. All were held on 8 September (Sunday). Participants were blessed with good weather, and everything proceeded basically the same as 2017, two years prior. However, as had been the case in 2018, the Zai district stop was the nursing home A-en (**Figure 4**).



Fig 4. The 8 September 2019 portable shrine parade route.

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A-en had told the priest that the previous year's portable shrine parade was received favorably by residents, as well as that there was a request that to have the shrine being carried around as bearers chant *wasshoi*, *wasshoi* or "heave-ho, heave-ho" (instead of just bringing the portable shrine in a truck). This is called *neri* 練り. The portable shrine was placed in the courtyard of A-en, and with almost thirty residents/staff-members greeting it, Shinto rituals, a lion dance, mochi-making, and *neri* was carried out.

Also, as was the case in the previous year, from 2:00 p.m. Shimo-ōkago Nanbu kagura was offered at the Koizumi Machi District Shinkōkai Hall.

In the previous year, there had not been enough middle school students to carry one float on their own, and the combining of middle schools had made reaching out to students less effective. Therefore, the idea of having a single portable shrine be carried by middle school students alone was given up on, and the Kanagawa Prefecture Shinto priest and parishioners did not provide support to students in building and carrying a portable shrine as they had been doing since 2013. People reached out to middle school students, and the few that came assisted in the shrine's portable shrine parade. At first, they held back (for example, holding the donation box instead of the shrine), but they gradually became more involved from the *neri* at A-en. The several middle school students also participated in the feast (*naorai*) that began at 4:00 p.m. and the party celebrating the talent show's successful completion at 8:00 p.m.

According to a man in his fifties that was involved in both the portable shrine parade and the talent show, currently, there are just enough people to get by, and it would be preferable if twice as many were involved.

4. Discussion

Above I traced the festival's changes, focusing primarily on the shrine parade route's scope. Of course, this was not only a spatial change.

The year of the earthquake, forty lives and approximately seventy percent of the area's houses were lost due to the tsunami. Amidst this, the portable shrine parade was relaunched, connecting the former residential area of the Machi district (now only foundations, with the shrine and houses having been washed away), the riverside (where a salmon hatchery business has continued), and the elevated land area that hosts educational facilities (such as a kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, and community center) and a temporary housing complex.

In terms of the people involved in the festival, it is important that up through 2016 the shrine's *sōdai* and *shinkōkai* (local residents' associations) entered into a cooperative relationship to form an entity that would operate the festival.

Participants included people carrying the shrine—volunteers (up to 2014) and middle school students—and, in the offertorial events, people of all ages, including

kindergarteners and middle school students.

The nearby portable shrine parade and offertorial events were easy to view for the residents, especially seniors, of the temporary housing on the same land rise as the schools and community center.

From 2017 onwards, as the environment changed with disaster prevention group relocation progressing and middle schools being combined, organizers pro-actively responded by changing the portable shrine parade route. It became an approximately two-kilometer undulating one from the elevated area to the Machi district's group relocation residential area. Machi district residents probably wanted to pass on the core of the festivities, moving it from their former places of residence—the district's original neighborhood (now used as a materials storage and worker resting area for reconstruction work) and the elevated land area—to their new home. However, the heads of the *shinkōkai* of other districts (Nishi, Higashi, Hama) are also involved in running the festival, and in light of the fact that Hachiman Shrine is the protector of the entire Koizumi area, it was decided to put the portable shrine on a truck and bring it to the Zai and Hama districts as well. The aim was to include residents of these districts as not only, of course, organizers and participants but also as people who come out to greet the portable shrine.

However, in the first year of this change, only a few residents gathered at the Zai and Hama districts' parade stops. For this reason, in the Hama district, in 2018 the parade stop was changed to A-en, which resulted in many facility residents coming out to greet it. The connections created in this way were not unidirectional; for example, in 2019 the *neri* was added at the request of these residents.

Here we find people both seeking to carry on a festival from pre-earthquake times as well as thoughtfully working to have this festival help include residents in the post-earthquake community rebuilding process. This can probably be found in other areas as well.

Inazawa Tsutomu 稲澤努 has investigated and discussed the festival restoration process of Yaegaki 八重垣 Shrine (Yamamoto Town, Miyagi Prefecture). This shrine is located in an area that was struck by the tsunami and designated as vulnerable to disaster.¹⁸ Inazawa has shown that with shrine parishioners leaving the parish, people worked to ensure the festival's continued existence by having an intangible cultural property preservation association assume responsibility for its operations, as well as that its portable shrine parade route went to the area's temporary housing complex.

I have also been following Yaegaki Shrine's festival. With residents leaving the temporary housing complex and dispersing to primarily three areas (Akasaka, the new town center called "Tsubame no mori," and Kasano), the portable shrine goes around to

¹⁸ Inazawa, "Matsuri no 'fukkō' katei."

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the three of them on a truck.

Seen in this way, we might say that an effective indicator of inclusiveness is the changing or broadening of a portable shrine parade route. However, what is important is whether inclusion is considered in the adjustments and coordination that take place up to that point.

In this sense, it is worth noting that a facility for seniors was added as a parade stop route. For the 2018 shrine parade, I rode the minibus used to transport people carrying the portable shrine. At that time, I remember hearing one person comment, “Maybe I’ll move there at some point.” With the aging and shrinking of the population still being unavoidable after group relocation, inevitably it becomes more likely that people will choose not only the help of family and the community but also human services. The portable shrine and those carrying it visiting such a facility and interacting with residents leads the former set of people to see the latter’s situation as something that pertains to themselves. The festival takes on another meaning: supporting the prayers offered at the facility.

When observing and recording in detail, as well as analyzing, the changes in festivals found in mid and long-term post-disaster recovery processes, it is beneficial to adopt the angle of inclusiveness. While continuing to do so, I plan to open up my field of vision to include comparative discussions.

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(Translated by Dylan Luers Toda)

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