The goddess dances beyond time

An exploration of continuity through change in contemporary Japanese ritual, with specific reference to the miko mai shinji

by

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A dissertation submitted in satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Ph.D. by research

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For my father and mother,
for blessing me with a wonderful life
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Abstract

Ritual performance is a characteristic of contemporary Japanese life. Some of rituals originated more than a 1000 years ago, while the origins of others are not known. The theme of this thesis—continuity through change in contemporary Japanese ritual—is explored, particularly focusing on musical behaviour in rituals. The development of this theme is described in chapter one. Chapter two highlights some relevant characteristics of ritual (especially the creation of an appearance of continuity by repetition of formalised actions) and music (dynamic nature and adaptability) through a literature survey. For a more in-depth exploration, an ethnographic description of the miko mai shinji ritual, based on fieldwork conducted by me from 2005 to 2007, is provided in chapters three and four. The appearance of continuity in this ritual was created by conducting it in a fixed manner; however, at the same time, subtle changes occurred in the musical performances. Also, some conscious changes occurred through adaptation to their changing social situation. Such changes have sustained the ritual till the present day. In chapter five, consequences of continuity through change for the wider study of ritual and music is discussed.

When we consider rituals as human actions, we realise that continuity and change are not in fact opposites but rather facilitate each other. Rituals have been allowed to survive through change, and musical behaviour supports this process because of its dynamic nature. Moreover, the continuation of ritual practices allows for the honouring of tradition and enhances the value of the ritual. In addition, through adaptation to changing society, it embraces the contemporary world. Therefore, rituals continue to survive in contemporary Japan as a very significant part of Japanese life.
Declaration

I hereby declare that this is my own work and has not been submitted for the award of any Degree in any other University or Third Level Institution.

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Signed:_________________________  Date:______________

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Introduction

Rituals are human practices that are evident all over the world. There are various kinds of rituals: religious, secular, sacred, collective, and individual. It is impossible to settle on a universal definition of ritual, which can apply cross-culturally to all the rituals around the world. Various approaches have been employed in the study of rituals, including theological, religious, anthropological, sociological and philosophical. In addition, rituals that incorporate music or dance have been studied in the field of ethnomusicology and ethnochoreology. Rituals as human performances have also been studied in performance studies.

Japan, the country in which I was born and brought up, has a history of numerous rituals and festivals. Some of them originated more than 1,000 years ago. For example, the Gion festival in Kyoto, which is one of the major festivals in Japan, originated in the late ninth century. However, although the origins of some festivals are not well known, almost all such rituals and festivals are conducted regularly and honoured as Japanese traditions. For communities which continue holding their rituals or festivals, having them as part of their tradition is viewed as an honour irrespective of community size. Moreover, some rituals and festivals attract masses of people and thus give an impetus to tourism. In this thesis, I explore the
survival of rituals and festivals in contemporary Japan. At the heart of this exploration, is the ethnographic work which I conducted over a three year period on *miko mai shinji*, which is a ritual conducted by the Ôu community in eastern Japan. In particular, I focus on the process of handing down their rituals and their ritual music (and dance) traditions. In the ethnography, I reveal that their traditional ritual, which the community insists on following and continuing without any modification, has in reality undergone adaptation and change. Some of these changes took place in order to adapt to the changing social situation surrounding the community. Other changes have occurred because ritual and musical performance are human activities. However, despite such changes, there has also existed a kind of continuity in the ritual: the people conduct the ritual in the same manner. Thus, continuity and change coexist in rituals and festivals.

The continuity which characterises rituals gives an impression of stability in the conduction of these rituals, and human actions that include musical performances undergo changes. It also reinforces a sense of tradition and heritage, which is an important dimension of Japanese culture. It is this paradox between change and continuity that has contributed towards sustaining the various rituals and festivals. Especially through practice, these two characteristics facilitate each other; therefore, continuity is possible through change. This forms the central theme of this thesis.

In chapter one, I reflect on my life and show how festivals and rituals are connected with my life in order to clarify the argument raised in this thesis. Moreover, to immerse myself in the ritual soundscape of those people who
experienced some events in the Kantō area in Japan, where I am from, I introduce three festivals and two rituals that are observed in the Tokyo, Chiba, and Ibaraki prefectures. Moreover, I establish a central proposal for answering the question raised in my observation of a particular ritual called *miko mai shinji*.

In chapter two, in order to explore the central hypothesis established in chapter one, I outline a literature survey related to ritual and music, focusing on two key words: continuity and change. In this survey, the characteristics of the ritual which create an appearance of continuity, and the characteristics of music which easily occasion change, are highlighted. Practice theory shows that these two are not opposites but in fact facilitate each other.

In chapters three and four, I provide an ethnographic description of the *miko mai shinji* based on my fieldwork from 2005 to 2007. The ritual is reconstructed in chapter three. The community conducts not only the ritual itself but also some activities which are related to the ritual in a detailed and fixed manner. I also outline the literature survey on the ritual, in which some changes were detected. In chapter four, I focus on their music and dance and the manner in which they have been handed down. In the process of handing down the ritual, the music which the community claims has not changed, has in reality undergone subtle changes. Their ritual creates an appearance of continuity, at the same time it also indicates subtle changes in their performance. Also, some conscious changes have occurred in order to adapt to the changing social situation.
In chapter five, the outcome of these changes is discussed in terms of their implications for the wider study of ritual. In ritual studies, some scholars, such as of Émile Durkheim, follow an approach which emphasises the continuity or stability in rituals, while others, such as Victor Turner and Clifford Geertz, follow an approach emphasizing change or dynamism in rituals. Though these two approaches might seem contradictory, examining them through the lens of practice theory reveals that they are not. In order to examine this, I focus on Talal Asad’s performative approach to ritual. The final section in this chapter examines some of the characteristics of music which render it particularly amenable to facilitating continuity through change, with reference to DeNora’s work on the ability of music to support / challenge collective identity through individual creative expression.

As demonstrated in the miko mai shinji, continuity through change forms the central factor for the survival of the existing ritual activities in contemporary Japan. This is because the continuation of ritual practices allows for the honouring of tradition. However, this continuation is allowed by changes which are occasioned by the adaptation of society and also by human performances which consist of rituals. Therefore, ritual plays a significant role in Japanese life: it simultaneously honours tradition as well as Japan’s embrace of the contemporary world.
Chapter 1

Portrayal of ritual life in contemporary Japan

An autoethnographic introduction: how ritual introduced itself to me

Ian Reader’s phrase ‘Born Shinto, die Buddhist’ (1991, p. 7) would appear to be a succinct way of summarising the Japanese religious character. However, the reality, for many is not as simple as the phrase would lead one to believe. Nonetheless, as suggested by Reader’s phrase, the first ritual that I attended in my life was Hatsumiya mairi or Omiya mairi—a ‘Shinto’ ritual. This ritual is a traditional Japanese custom, wherein parents visit a shrine, located close to their home, and get their baby blessed for its protection by the shrine’s kami. Unfortunately, I have no recollection of this event! However, my parents took many photographs of me and preserved them in albums. In one of the albums, I came across some pictures of a woman holding a baby—my mother holding me—and she had a special cloth on her arms worn especially for the Omiya mairi – the ‘visiting of the

1 ‘Shinto’ is itself an ambiguous term having more of an academic connotation than a general one as it is not popularly used in modern-day Japan. For a detailed discussion on the historical and current status of the term ‘Shinto’, see Breen.L. and Teeuwen, M. (2000).

2 Kami is a Japanese word, which can be translated as gods, goddesses, or deities. However, this term is also used to refer to various supernatural entities, regardless of whether they are good or evil.
On the page next to the picture, my mother wrote the date and title of the picture, *Omiya mairi*. Another page contained some pictures of my *Okuizome* ritual – ‘the first meal’. *Okuizome* is held around 100 days after a baby’s birth, with the hope that the baby has sufficient food in her/his lifetime. The parents prepare a soup and three dishes for the ritual; stones are also included in this meal. These stones express the hope that the baby will have strong teeth, allowing it to eat foods which are as hard as stones. The pictures show me as a baby surrounded by such celebratory dishes and stones. In another photograph, my mother and I are in front of a *hina-dan*, which is a seven-tiered *hina* doll set for the Japanese doll festival called *Hina matsuri*. I remember my parents decorating this *hina-dan* from the end of February to the beginning of March every year to celebrate *Hina matsuri*.

There is a Shinto household altar in that picture, and the altar may have been put into the house when my grandfather, then head of the family, had the house built. A Shinto talisman called *o-fuda*, a *Daruma* doll\(^3\), and a pottery figurine of seven lucky gods\(^4\) were placed on the altar. I felt that this altar represented the various religious events in my daily life that were considered traditional.

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\(^3\) *Daruma* is a figurine model of the Buddhist monk *Bodhidharma* who is claimed to be the founder of Zen Buddhism.
\(^4\) The seven lucky gods are Ebisu, god of fishermen or merchants; Daikokuten, god of commerce; Bishamonten, god of warriors; Benzaiten goddess of music, art and beauty; Fukurokuju, god of happiness and longevity; Hotei, god of good health and abundance; and Jurōjin, god of wisdom
In another photograph, I am probably around three years old, standing with my cousins in front of a portable shrine called a *mikoshi*. Another photograph shows my father carrying me and standing in front of a ‘three lions’ doll’ float. From the three lions float and my cousin’s costume, I assume that these pictures were taken during our visit to a festival in Ishioka city, where my cousin used to live. As I grew older, I collected these photos and put them together in an album.

When I was in my twenties, I visited Kyoto for the *Gion* festival. I was able to find the pictures from that time, and in them I wore a Japanese summer *kimono* for the night time festival. Kyoto is located at quite a distance from Ibaraki prefecture where I lived. However, when one of my father’s friends who had relocated to Kyoto, asked me to come and see one of the most famous festivals in Japan, I accepted the offer without hesitation. I have always been drawn to festivals. Ever since I was a teenager, I have visited various summer festivals with my family and friends. In particular, I used to visit the local summer festival, which was held in my hometown almost annually, until I reached the end of my teenage years. The local festival is a new one and was started when I was thirteen—. Going out at night to experience the summer festivals wearing a summer *kimono* greatly appealed to me. That was a particularly special occasion for me, as a teenage girl, to be allowed by my parents to participate in late night outings. I would be very excited when I went with my friends to a festival, as it differed from my everyday life. However, I would be really disappointed on the days that it rained because I could not go to the festival.
I was twenty-two years old when my grandfather passed away. At that time, my family became Buddhist parishioners of Jōdo Shinshū — ‘Pure land Buddhism’, a Japanese Buddhist sect, to perform his funeral. My father built our new house before my grandfather died. We had a Shinto altar in the house, but not a Buddhist one. Therefore, my father bought a Buddhist altar and placed it in our new house. Since that time, Buddhism and Shinto have visually coexisted in my house. I learned new Buddhist customs such as offering incense sticks and decorating the altar. However, we continue to visit a Shinto shrine every New Year’s Day.

In February every year we perform a bean-scattering ceremony called Setsubun; this festival marks a change in the season from winter to spring and is celebrated in both shrines and temples. As a representative of my family, I had to throw beans while shouting ‘demons out, fortune in’. As a child I thoroughly enjoyed this ritual. However, as I grew up, I began to feel slightly embarrassed about doing such activities. My parents stopped decorating the hina-dan when we moved into our new house, as it entailed a lot of hard work.

In March, there is a week called Higan during which relatives visit our homes and pray and burn incense at the Buddhist family altar. At the onset of the Obon festival in August, we visit the family grave and bring our ancestors’ spirits home. Then, at the end of this festival, we take their spirits back to the grave. I remember that my parents and relatives forbade

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5 Obon used to be held in July before the solar calendar was introduced in 1873. Since then, the festival has been held in July or August. For example, in Tokyo, Obon takes place in August.
us from killing any creatures during this festival: I could not even kill a mosquito. During the summer holidays, our area would have an Obon Festival Dance in the elementary school field, and we would dance in our summer kimono. Today, this practice does not exist. Instead, children in my area carry a portable shrine during the children’s summer festivals in the school holidays.

These events and rituals were customary for me. Some of these events were related to a certain religion; however, I did not think I was doing any religious activity. I did not treat the events around me as religious events. Instead, I felt that such events were related to seasons and ancestor worship. Therefore, because I regarded these events as common Japanese customs, I could easily understand and relate to them. However, music, such as the Buddhist chanting of shômyô or music of festivals was not easy for me to access. I have been learning Western classical style music since I was five years old. For me, music consisted of melodic, harmonic and rhythmic traditions developed within the Western art music tradition. Therefore, the melodies and rhythms of festivals were an unfamiliar sound to me. I could not find a connection between my daily life and such festival or ritual music. For example, I once heard gagaku music, which was played during my visit to a shrine on New Year’s Day. However, I felt that such music was similar to the soundtrack of movies; it was music for dramatizing space. On the other hand, the sounds of a Buddhist bell that I ring while praying at the Buddhist family altar, and the sounds of the clapping of my hands, while praying at the Shinto altar or shrine, allowed me to experience solemnity. I

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6 *Gagaku* is the collective term used to refer to ancient Japanese music and dance, especially those performed by imperial court musicians.
often felt that I was in a holy or sacred setting.

After completing my undergraduate degree, I played music in church choirs in chapels in my prefecture. These chapels were built by hotels for the purpose of conducting Christian style wedding ceremonies. Such wedding ceremonies were conducted by Protestant ministers hired by the hotels; however, most couples who were married at the chapels were not Christians. At these weddings, the couple would have a double-ring ceremony, everyone would sing Christian hymns, and the priest would read 1 Corinthians 13:1 in Japanese. It may come across as a bizarre Christian ceremony, but the attitudes of the couples towards the wedding were full of sincerity. From my point of view, the wedding ceremonies symbolised something sacred where couples swore their love for each other. My choir uniform comprised of a bordeaux-coloured gown and a crucifix necklace. Some of the guests, invited to such wedding ceremonies, would ask me if I was a Christian. Since I was not a Christian, I would feel odd wearing such Christian-like accoutrements for sacred wedding ceremonies. As a result, certain questions would arise in my mind. Christian hymns were sung in the ceremonies even though the couples getting married were not Christian. Why do such contradictions exist? What is ritual and what is ritual music? This phase of my life sparked my interest in rituals and ritual music.

In 2004, I travelled to Ireland to pursue my masters in Chant and Ritual Song. The course focused on ritual music from two perspectives: academic and performance. In this course, I studied how the field of ritual study has developed. For example, we studied the historical background of ritual
studies, functionalism, structuralism, symbolism, performance theory, and practice theory, which I discuss in this thesis. At the same time, I experienced the dynamics of rituals through collaborative activities at the ritual lab. The word ‘lab’ has an objective ring to it; however, this concept was introduced into the field of ritual study by Ronald Grimes as a methodological tool providing students with a ‘feel’ of the rituals. Therefore, the emphasis of the term is on subjectivity. (For details, see Grimes 2007). In the laboratory, we would construct or reconstruct our rituals and perform them. All students, including me, came from diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. We shared knowledge and feelings by performing various rituals. Sometimes, unexpected results were generated in the lab; that is, the expected result or feeling was not always achieved by performing the ritual. For example, I created a ritual based on a Japanese Buddhist service which I considered sacred. However, my constructed ritual came across as comic to me. I did not obtain a sense of sanctity or holiness in the constructed ritual. On the other hand, a simple ritual action based on a Christian practice of anointing the hands with oil generated a sense of sacredness in me, even though I was not a Christian. In addition, the degree of closeness of the ritual depended on who conducted the ritual, whether it was one of our classmates, our lecturer, or some guest. This distance between the ritual and me mainly reflected the relationship between the person who conducted the ritual and me. For example, when our lecturer, conducted the ritual, I was one of the students, and I attended the ritual with ease because I could rely on the lecturer, who had considerable knowledge and experience of rituals. When one of my classmates conducted rituals, I was a co-worker and we experienced the fear of possible failure. Therefore, we worked together
harmoniously, and ties of solidarity were created. This solidarity seemed to increase with each ritual laboratory because our members remained the same for the year. This meant that for me, our class was a new small society created in Ireland.

The Academy invited various musicians from around the world and held workshops with them. On attending these workshops, I began to appreciate the definition of music posited by John Blacking (1995), which states that music is a sound pattern accepted by a society. This means that the value of music depends on a given society, and we do not have a universal standard of music. Each type of music holds a different value. In the context of this definition, I began pondering the meaning of rituals and ritual music. There are various definitions of a ritual, which left me rather confused. I looked back upon my past and attached definitions to the rituals that I had attended; however, I was unable to comprehend what a ritual actually is. One of the reasons for such ambiguity is that ritual was a foreign word for me. At that time, I was not sure about the Japanese equivalent of the English word ‘ritual’. Although I looked up this word in dictionaries, it was difficult to acquire a sense of the word. Another reason is that the study of rituals originated from the field of religion, and many rituals that I read in books were related to certain religions or beliefs. I did not consider the rituals and events that I attended in my daily life in Japan to be religious events.

This seeming disconnection between ritual and religion in a Japanese context interested me and so I decided to pursue the problem. I decided to select two rituals in Japan as the topic for my Master’s thesis. These two
rituals are held in Ibaraki prefecture, where I was born, and belong to *kagura*, a Shinto-related performance that includes music and dance for the deities. In my thesis, I explored whether or not people in contemporary Japan consider these rituals to be sacred. One of these rituals is categorised as *daidai kagura* dance and includes theatrical elements, while the other belongs to *miko mai kagura* and is a simple dance performed in front of the altar by a *miko* – a female shrine attendant. Since I was in Ireland at that time, I asked my father to film the rituals in DVD format and mail them to me. After I watched the filmed rituals, I contacted the members of each community. The community members responsible for the *miko mai* tradition, in particular, willingly participated in my telephone interviews. These responses helped me find the answer to the proposition of my thesis; that is whether or not a ritual is sacred depends on the people who conduct them. One cannot ‘see’ belief, even in ritual, as belief is invisible. But through the study of ritual and of ritual performers, one can begin to open up the question by listening to the comments of participants.

In 2005, I returned to Japan with a Master’s degree in hand and visited the leader of the community that I had dealt with in my thesis. He recommended that I come to see the ritual in November, and I accepted his kind offer. Since I knew that the community held musical rehearsals for the ritual, I asked him if I could observe the rehearsals, too. I was interested in seeing how they reproduce their ritual. They performed dance and music as a dedication at the Ôu shrine located in their area; I will describe their ritual and community in greater detail in chapter three. The dance is performed by a girl who lives in that area, and the accompanying music for the dance is
played by seven young men who also live in the area. Although some of the literature on Ôu shrine surmise that some aspects of a traditional ancient rite can be found in this ritual, they neither show any evidence of it nor do they indicate what the ancient rite was (e.g., *Itako shi* (History of Itako) 1995, *Ibaraki no mukei bunka zai* (Intangible folk cultural asset of Ibaraki) 1982 and *Asahi newspaper* 1964).

On the day of the ritual, there was an atmosphere of solemnity. The members decorated the shrine with sacred items such as white paper and straw ropes and mats, and some members even wore ceremonial clothes. Shinto priests from Kashima shrine, one of the biggest shrines in Japan, were the main conductors of the ritual. Some amateur cameramen who were photographing the ritual unfortunately obstructed my view; however, the ritual itself was solemn, and a sense of sacredness washed over me. The ritual was the same as that which I had watched on the DVD that my father had sent to Ireland. However, some questions arose in my mind when I spent time with the community members during rehearsals. I interviewed some of them about the origin of the ritual, but no one knew the details. Further, most did not know who was enshrined at their shrine. Confronted with this lack of knowledge, I became curious to know why they conducted the ritual on an annual basis and so questioned them. Some of the answers they gave implied a tradition of ancestor worship or the relationship between the ritual and the local region. Another answer implied that they wished to pass down their ritual to the next generation because the community has been conducting it in the past without any change. I found this discrepancy between attention to practice and tradition on the one hand,
and a lack of factual knowledge or belief, on the other, to be of great interest. In the ritual laboratories in Ireland, we constructed rituals with a specific purpose or meaning. For example, I constructed a ritual, which involved praying for happiness and good health for the year. This meant that I had created a specific purpose and meaning for the ritual. In Japan, on the other hand, although the community did not know the reason or origin of the ritual, they knew how to conduct and perform it.

This seeming lack of religious understanding behind the performance of the ritual led me to question the nature of religious/ritual belief in Japan in general. Referencing a publication released by the NHK Broadcasting Culture Research Institute entitled *Nihonjin no shûkyô ishiki* (The religious consciousness of the Japanese), I found some interesting results. For example, the report stated that 54% of Japanese said they usually celebrate the New Year by visiting a shrine; 27% responded that they visited it sometimes; and 19% stated that they did not visit a shrine on New Year’s Day. For the rituals of *higan* and *Obon*\(^7\), where families visit their ancestral graves, the report noted that 69% usually make this visit; 20% occasionally follow this custom; and 11% do not follow it at all. Looking at these results, I believe that religious events have been accepted as traditional events in daily life in Japan. However, the sacredness that such religious events possess is not entirely lost, even though people might consider such events as non-religious events.

This applies not only to activities but also to objects which symbolise

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\(^7\) *Higan* is a Buddhist holiday celebrated in both spring and fall in Japan. *Obon* is also a Buddhist holiday annually celebrated in August.
Fisch pointed out that some Japanese youth wear a cross as a fashion accessory (Fisch 2001). He mentions that youth in Japan are influenced by Western supermodels who wear such accessories and that they perceive it as nothing more than a fashion accessory. If I were to challenge this idea put forward by Fisch, I would propose that youth in Japan attach a slightly sacred meaning to this accessory. However, it is not a sacredness associated with Christianity. In other words, this sacredness does not pertain to a specific religion but is merely something that ‘feels’ sacred. As can be seen from such Japanese belief systems as Shinbutsu shûgô—the fusion of kami and Buddha, and Honji suijaku—the manifestation of the Buddha in kami form, Japanese tend to transform or customise foreign cultural belief systems according to their taste. Therefore, it could be said that the youth in Japan accept the sacredness of the cross by customising this sacredness to their personal taste even though they do not accept it as a religious symbol of Christianity. For them, the cross, as an accessory, represents something that is sacred. This acceptability allows for religious ambiguity.

Thus, in Japan, no-one disapproves of people who have a Buddhist altar in their house and, at the same time, visit a shrine on New Year’s Day. Similarly, the blessing of a non-Christian couple in a Christian-style wedding ceremony causes no concern. This religious ambiguity is also mirrored in the relationship between festivals or rituals, and its participants. Every year, various rituals and festivals are held throughout Japan.

However, like the community in Ôu, it appears that members are not aware of the origin and details of their ritual or festivals. Moreover, the social and
economic background, which originally generated and sustained rituals and festivals, have been subject to constant change rendering the original impetus for ritual obsolete. In particular, advances in medical technology and a decline in farming have impacted considerably on the original impetus for ritual practice. For example, most members of the Ōu community were originally farmers. However, younger members of the community have turned away from farming and secured jobs in other towns. Therefore, praying for abundant crops is not an appropriate reason for conducting a ritual. But, despite such changes, many rituals and festivals seem to preserve their original form and practice. Because of this seeming paradox, two questions arise in my mind. Firstly, why do rituals survive in contemporary Japan? And, secondly, because music is often an integral component in ritual practice and because I am myself a trained musician, I am interested to know what role does music play in this survival? In order to answer these questions, I will focus primarily on the ritual miko mai shinji of the Ōu community. However before embarking on a study of this ritual, in particular, in order to obtain an understanding of the nature of rituals and festivals in 21st century Japan and to put the miko mai shinji in a broader context, a brief description and discussion of rituals and festivals in adjacent areas is appropriate. Given the large number of rituals and festivals that could be studied, I have selected those which I have been personally familiar with.

The ritual landscape and soundscape of the Kantô area

How do rituals survive in contemporary Japan? What role does music play? Keeping such questions in mind, from 2005 to 2007, I observed some rituals
and festivals\(^8\) in Japan, mostly in the Kantô area\(^9\), where I was born and raised. It was not my intention to observe a ‘representative sample’ of events, or to argue for a ‘regional’ style, but rather, to immerse myself in the ritual soundscape of those people who, like me, lived in this area and experienced these events; either as peripheral happenings of which they were passively aware, or as active participants. In this chapter, I introduce three festivals and two rituals that are observed in the Tokyo, Chiba and Ibaraki prefectures which, along with four other prefectures, make up the Kantô area.

Tokyo is the capital of Japan and is the political and economic centre of the country. Therefore, new ideas and trends often originate in Tokyo and then spread across the rest of Japan. In the seventeenth century, the Tokugawa Shogunate\(^10\) established the government of Edo and closed the country to foreign commerce. Consequently, a virtually hermetic cultural environment fostered the development of peculiarly Japanese cultural traits.

Chiba is a prefecture that is adjacent to Tokyo. Therefore, many people living in Chiba work in Tokyo. According to the Statistics Bureau\(^11\), 26.9% of Chiba residents over fifteen years of age work or attend school in Tokyo. I was born and raised in Ibaraki prefecture, which is located north of Chiba.

Ibaraki is an agricultural region that produces the largest amount of upland

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\(^8\) Rituals are often an integral part of festivals. However, I separated the two in my thesis because some of the rituals I observed were not part of festivals.

\(^9\) The Kantô area consists of Ibaraki, Tochigi, Gunma, Saitama, Chiba, Tokyo and Kanagawa prefectures.

\(^10\) Tokugawa is the name of the family which ruled Japan throughout the Edo period (1603-1868).

\(^11\) [http://www.stat.go.jp/data/kokusei/2005/jutsu1/00/01.htm](http://www.stat.go.jp/data/kokusei/2005/jutsu1/00/01.htm)
rice, lotus roots and melons in Japan. On the other hand, as Ibaraki is situated close to the Pacific Ocean, it also boasts a thriving fishing industry.

The festivals and rituals I describe in the remaining section of this chapter are presented as an ethnographic evocation of ritual and festival life in this area of Japan, and form the backdrop for the proposals on ritual and music developed in this work.

I shall deal with Tokyo first.

**Tokyo**

**Edo tenka matsuri**

![The festival parades between office buildings](image)

Figuere 1. The festival parades between office buildings

*At the roads where the parade was being held were token traffic controls, and no cars were allowed to drive on these roads. In*
addition, if visitors or tourists entered the roads, guards alerted them to step back on to the pavement. . . Each float paraded in an orderly and proper fashion and reminded me of a Disneyland’ parade. Although, the parade was beautiful, I was unable to appreciate it fully. The roads were surrounded by concrete buildings and I saw some residents of the building watching the parade. Hence, though the parade was a veritable riot of colour with striking sounds of music, I felt that I was actually in a business district. At night, in the darkness, the portable shrines of this area were paraded; they were carried by people whose shouting voices resounded in the darkness. The shouting was hoarse and the people moved their portable shrines violently. Now, I was excited and forgot that I was in a business district. (extract from my field notes, 29/9/2007)

In 2007, a revived urban festival called Edo tenka matsuri\(^\text{12}\) was held for two days in the Japanese capital of Tokyo. The theme of the festival was to display the spirit of Japan through the taste and stylishness of Edo\(^\text{13}\). The festival took place in the Chiyoda area and was hosted by the executive committee of the tenka matsuri. One of the special supporters of this festival was the national daily newspaper, the Yomiuri Shinbun and this company published an extra PR supplement for the festival which was distributed freely to all present. The headline of this newspaper was: ‘An old and new festival of the Heisei era\(^\text{14}\), re-creating the exotic feel and flavor of Edo’\(^\text{15}\). The theme and the headline thus emphasised Edo culture—old Tokyo culture. However, at that same time, the inclusion of two opposite terms ‘old’ and ‘new’ in the headline, were obviously contradictory.

\(^{12}\) Matsuri means festival.

\(^{13}\) This theme is in Japanese and therefore, I translated it into English. Edo was the old name for Tokyo prior to 1868.

\(^{14}\) Heisei is the title given to the reign of the present Emperor of Japan, Akihito. As he came to the throne in 1989, the era begins from this year and continues to the present.

\(^{15}\) This headline was also translated from Japanese to English.
In the extra supplement, there is a section that discusses the ‘old’ history of *tenka matsuri*. It states that *tenka matsuri* was a common name for festivals that were recognised by the Shogun and the government of Edo Japan (1603-1867). Participants of such festivals were permitted to parade inside Edo castle. Only two festivals were given long recognition by the Edo bakufu – the government of Edo Japan. One was the Tennô matsuri at Hie shrine, and the other was the Kanda matsuri at the Kanda Myôjin shrine. Each festival was performed every alternate year and the Shogun watched either of the festival parades every year. It is said that many floats were paraded through the Edo castle town and these were all vibrant festivals. However, after the Meiji era (1868-1912), these parades encountered various obstacles due to the construction of the electrical tramway in Tokyo. The high floats could not be paraded because of electrical wires. In 1889, one hundred floats gathered in front of the Imperial Place to commemorate the promulgation of the new constitution. This was the last enactment of the *tenka matsuri* – ‘the festival below the Imperial Palace’\(^\text{16}\), before it was revived in its current form in 2003.

From this explanation, the vibrancy of festivals and the relationship with the authorities in the past can be gleaned. In other sections of the newspaper, there was an explanation of Edo *tenka matsuri*. The year of its revival in 2003 marked the 400\(^{\text{th}}\) anniversary of the beginning of the Edo period (1603-1867). The festival takes place every alternate year as an old and new festival of the Heisei era (1989-present). The parade of the floats and

16 The ‘Ten’ in *tenka* refers to the Emperor or Tennô and ‘ka’ means below.
portable shrines is supposed to recreate the vibrancy of past times and, to add to the historical re-creation, a group of people dressed as Korean envoys was introduced in 2007. A small article in the paper contained a background explanation of the re-enactment of the visit of the Korean envoys, namely that the Edo government resumed diplomatic relations with Korea, and Korean kings would send envoys to congratulation ceremonies on the appointment of a new shogun\textsuperscript{17}. Several hundred people, wearing the traditional dress of Korean envoys, paraded and the roadside was crowded with spectators. The group of Korean envoys created an exotic atmosphere when the festival was celebrated in 2007.

As I mentioned before, the supplement, provided by the Yomiuri Shinbun newspaper, was distributed on the day of the festival. The supplement provided details on the festival schedule and, with a map of the Chiyoda area, explained the course and time of the parade of floats and portable shrines. In addition, a description of each float and portable shrine was included in the map. During the festival, some of the celebrations were held in Hibiya park, the main park in Chiyoda, where there was a display of traditional artworks of the Edo period, sales of both Japanese and foreign cuisines and beverages, and performance of traditional music on the stage. In 2007, the Edo \textit{tenka matsuri} was held on the 29\textsuperscript{th} and 30\textsuperscript{th} September. However, the parade was only held on the 29\textsuperscript{th}. Moreover, the starting point of the parade was Hibiya park and not specifically any Shinto shrine or temple.

\textsuperscript{17} The Edo Shogunate restored relations with Korea in 1607. Ties between the two countries had been broken when Toyotomi Hideyoshi invaded Korea. Until 1811, there were twelve envoys.
Fourteen floats were used in the festival in 2007. Although this festival was held in the Chiyoda area of Tokyo, the floats were gathered from various prefectures—Saitama, Gunma, Ibaraki, Tochigi, Chiba and Shizuoka. On the other hand, all portable shrines and their respective parties belonged to a particular town in the Chiyoda area in Tokyo. Almost all of these parties comprised men, and only one party consisted of women; none of the parties included both men as well as women. In addition, some of the floats, dolls and portable shrines were exhibited in the office building during festival days and people could view them freely.

From Hibiya Park, the floats and portable shrines paraded through the business districts of Marunouchi road and Kôsai road to the final destination in a square in front of the Imperial Palace. Along the route, visitors and spectators watched the parade from the pavement. If people ventured on to the road, they received strong warnings from security guards. I felt that the restrictions imposed by the organisers of the festival were very strong, and that as a result there was a lack of spontaneity: every event in the festival had an audience and the performers were being continuously instructed by the organisers.

As I mention in the description of the Ishioka festival, festivals are usually held for some purpose such as praying for a good harvest. People initially visit these festivals out of curiosity, but then gradually, the festival begins to attract crowds and elements are introduced in these festivals to engage these crowds. However, the same cannot be said of the Edo tenka matsuri festival.
In the absence of any initial ritual intent, the festival was revived or planned from the outset with the intention of attracting people. This festival can be considered a cultural event that promotes Japanese culture. However, it has borrowed some traditional aspects from older festivals. For example, many of the floats and portable shrines, which are typical features of festivals, are paraded through the 21st century business district of Tokyo to the accompaniment of *masturi bayashi* music. The festival seems, therefore, to derive its traditional values from the borrowing of old historical forms and by emphasising the association with the festivals celebrated during the Edo period. However, given that the festival is a reconstruction rather than a continuation of traditional practice, one could assume that the cultural values expressed are those of modern Japan and not necessarily an extension of past values.

Along with the contradictions and ambiguities of some of the terms used to describe the theme of the festival, outlined above, there is also confusion between the concepts of ‘culture’ and ‘tradition’. There is a general conception that in Japan, traditions always possess cultural values which, to some extent, cannot be questioned. Iwamoto (2007) pointed out that these two words, ‘tradition’ and ‘culture’, are often used interchangeably. He mentions that the literal meaning of the term ‘culture’ changes with the context, and that ‘culture’ and ‘tradition’ were originally opposite concepts. According to him, since the word 文化 (culture) in Japanese consists of two Chinese characters, 文 (sentence) and 化 (change in original form or transformation), the word includes the aspect of progress or development. On the other hand, he also states that the word ‘tradition’ refers to an aspect
that does not, and essentially should not, undergo change. Therefore, he insists that the phrase ‘traditional culture’ is paradoxical. However, despite Iwamoto’s interpretation of ‘culture’ and ‘tradition’ as understood when rendered in Chinese characters, conventional understanding sees the two as related concepts, which in Japan as well, is clearly evident in the practical use of the terms.

Thus, as I have mentioned above, there is a general conception in Japan that traditions always possess cultural values which, to some extent, cannot be questioned. As seen in the *tenka matsuri*, even pseudo-traditions are used in cultural events. Such practices are employed to create a traditional flavour which is then used in advertisements, or the media, for presenting the festival as an event that has a special time-honoured value. The seemingly traditional formats emphasise such traditional values and attract people to the festivals by characterising them as both cultural and traditional events. Therefore, by borrowing from traditional forms or structures, new cultural events can be described as cultural as well as traditional events, without them actually continuing from antiquity.
Chiba

Sawara no taisai

Figure 2. The floats parade in the rain

As it seemed like it was about to rain, there were not so many tourists. Unfortunately, because of the weather, each float was covered with semi-transparent plastic sheets; hence, the tourists and I were unable to appreciate the beautiful figures on the floats. However, they still looked amazing. Each piece of music that was being played on each of the floats somehow appeared to be playing at a slow pace. Since each float had its own route for the parade, I didn’t know when I would spot one. Therefore, when I heard the music, I became really excited because this meant that a float was slowly approaching. I felt the sound was something special that was coming towards me. (extract from my field notes, 14/7/2007)

Sawara no taisai (Sawara festival) is the generic name for a Gion festival, which is celebrated at the Yasaka shrine every July, and is also an autumn festival.

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18 The one-month long Gion festival is held annually at the Yasaka shrine in Kyoto. The festival is believed to have originated in the 9th century and is held to exorcise demons.
festival celebrated at the Suwa shrine every October; both take place in
Sawara city, Chiba. In 2004, the Sawara festival was recognised as a
nationally important intangible folk cultural asset. According to data
provided by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, the Sawara festival is related to
a ritual performed at the Yasaka shrine, a tutelary shrine in the Honjuku area
of Sawara city, and another ritual performed at the Suwa shrine, a tutelary
shrine in the Shinjuku area of Sawara city. During the Sawara festival,
beautiful floats decorated with large dolls and adornments are paraded in the
city. Influenced by the festival culture of neighbouring Edo (Tokyo), the
floats in Sawara are paraded in processions and are accompanied by
instrumental music – hayashi called Sawara bayashi. This tradition started
at the beginning of the eighteen century and has continued ever since.
Moreover, the celebration of the festival involves a competition between the
Honjuku and Shinjuku areas. Every float has four wheels and two floors: the
top floor has a balcony and the ground floor is for the musicians who play
the Sawara bayashi. The floats are also decorated with large dolls.

Jûyô mukei minzoku bunka zai (nationally important intangible folk cultural
assets) is a designation given by the government to intangible cultural assets
demed to be significant. These cultural assets include annual events,
customs, traditions and folk arts. The criteria decided by the Education
Ministry for assigning this designation are that the origin or aspects of the
cultural assets should be characteristic of traditional Japanese lifestyle or it
should highlight the origin, establishment or aspects involved in traditional
arts. Oshima (2007) explains that this designation for intangible assets
facilitates government support. But, Oshima also identifies the risk that such
a designation holds. People tend to preserve their heritage only because it has received this designation. Therefore, he notes that it is the consciousness of the tradition bearers with regard to their responsibility of preserving their heritage, irrespective of such designations, that needs to be raised.

In the Kōhō sawara – a Sawara city newsletter, published in 2004, various features of the Sawara festival support Oshima’s view regarding the significance of this designation. When a cultural property is designated, although it is governed by minimal specific regulations, it is required that the tradition be passed down through generations without any changes to its form. The newsletter thus encourages residents of the city to recognise the importance of their tradition and its preservation by highlighting the fact that their tradition has been designated an important cultural heritage. A spokesperson for the Association for Commerce, Industry and Tourism of Sawara city commented on the significance of this designation. He stated that, owing to the designation, the residents of Sawara city diligently celebrate their traditional festival and promote their tradition, which has survived for 300 years, so that it can be handed down to the next generation (personal communication). By providing grants for repairing the festival floats or for other requirements, the city participates in the preservation of the Sawara bayashi tradition not only materially, but also in the organisation of preservation societies. Elementary and middle schools in the city have local performing clubs, and societies for the preservation of Sawara bayashi and they promote the music as a traditional art by teaching it to the next generation. Thus, the city aims to promote the traditional music among the young and hopes successfully to preserve the various aspects of that
In 2007, the autumn festival was held on the 13th, 14th and 15th of July. I observed it on the 14th. According to the brochure provided by the Sawara no Taisai promotion association, the order of events on the 14th of July was as follows: the procession starts from 10 am with each float, paraded in the festival area, representing a particular town. A musical performance on a boat was scheduled next, but this was cancelled because of rain. After processing through the town, the floats began to be turned around at 6 p.m.

On the 14th, it was raining heavily during the day and each float was covered with transparent plastic sheets. Most of the adults and children who pulled the floats wore rain capes. Some of the floats were decorated with straw ropes, called \textit{shimenawa}, tubs of \textit{sake} and posters which gave the names of individuals who had made financial contributions and the amount donated. Some members of groups, which were associated with different towns, danced around the floats to the sound of the music. They stopped their floats for a while and danced and sung in front of them. Only a few members of the groups held Japanese fans in their hands while dancing. Others held nothing. These dancing groups consisted of both male and female dancers.

Amidst the music being performed by the musicians on the float and cheering by other members of the town’s group, members called \textit{wakashū} carried the floats to the town’s intersections from where they then had to turn the floats. Each float was huge and heavy and therefore cannot be turned easily. The music continued to be played while the floats were turned.
The floats went through this performance one after the other, and an announcement introducing the floats was made as each one passed. The atmosphere was filled with excitement and noise during the turning of each heavy float by the *wakashū*—an activity that requires considerable effort. While they were doing this, the *wakashū* motivated themselves by calling out to each other. At the same time, the people watching the parade also cheered them. For example, women wearing festival clothes danced and called out to the *wakashū* in order to encourage them and those watching the event. The female dancers held Japanese fans in their hands and made wide movements with their arms, swaying them upwards and downwards.

As previously mentioned, cars are not allowed to enter the area while the event is being held; however, the traffic is not regulated on some of the other roads through which the floats parade. The number of both stalls and visitors appeared to be less than those in the Ishioka city festival (Hitachi no kuni Sôsha taisai).

As the floats of each town are large in scale and adorned with beautiful decorations, it would be very difficult to maintain the floats without the financial assistance that the city provides every year. Furthermore, not only men but also many women attend the festival. They accompany the men, who carry the big floats, with their dancing and singing. These participants also require funding, and finance received helps to supplement the costs incurred in preserving their tradition and the fact that their festival is designated as a national heritage encourages the people to participate and promote the festival.
Ibaraki

Hitachi no kuni Sōsha taisai

Figure 3. Each float displays their musical performance

It was already mid-September, but it was still hot. There was no space to stand in the shadows of the buildings since all the shaded places were occupied by tourists who were watching the festival parade . . . Each town animatedly performed their music and danced on large and beautiful floats. It seemed that they had forgotten the summer heat. On this festival day, the city was filled with various striking sounds. The heat of the summer, strong sunshine, deep shadows, sound of the music, shouting of people, colourful festival items decorating the floats, the clothes of the dancers and musicians, fox masks, the fervour—all these elements that contributed to the festive atmosphere attracted me. (extract from my field notes, 15/09/2007)

Although some form of ritual belief may be the original impetus for the enactment of a festival or ritual, in modern Japan, tourism now plays a major role in sustaining ritual and festival practice. One such example is the
festival of Hitachi no kuni Sōsha taisai held in Ishioka city, Ibaraki.

Hitachi no kuni Sōsha taisai, the festival related to the Sōshagū shrine, is held for three consecutive days every September. It is said to be one of the three major festivals in the Kantō area. Fifteen towns participate in this festival. In the past, it took place on the 14th, 15th and 16th but, in order to take advantage of a national holiday on the third Monday of the month, the festival is now held from the preceding Saturday to the Monday. According to the Shōkō kankōka (Association for Commerce, Industry and Tourism) of Ishioka city, this festival attracted approximately 430,000 tourists in 2006 and 440,000 tourists in 2007 (personal communication). Many tourists attend this festival every year, and it is an important tourist attraction for Ishioka city. In view of this, the city promotes the festival, for example, by providing financial support, temporary lavatories and deploying patrol officials during the festivals, in addition to publicising this festival across the country.

According to the brochure published by Shōkō kankōka in 2007, this festival is believed to have originated around the eighth century in the hope of bringing good luck in battles. A parade, featuring colourfully decorated floats and wooden cars with various lion masks that represent all the towns of Ishioka city, moves through the city. The parade is accompanied by rhythmical festival music. During the festivals, cars are not allowed on some of the roads and there are many stalls on both sides of the sidewalk. These stalls sell food and toys and have games. Some of the vendors are foreigners and they sell foreign cuisines.
I remember that in 1992, when I was in high school in Ishioka city, Ibaraki, some of my classmates would leave school early in order to attend this festival. This festival also includes the rituals of Reisai, Jinkōsai, Taisai and Kankōsai\(^{19}\). Reisai is the most important ritual of the festival and is performed with solemnity by representatives of each town and those concerned with the festival. The date of this ritual has not been compromised by the Monday national holiday and its enactment on the 15\(^{th}\) of September is retained. The webpage for Ishioka city specifies that this festival is not meant to be attended by tourists.

I conducted fieldwork at Sōgashū shrine on 15\(^{th}\) of September 2007. This was the opening day of the festival and Reisai and Shinkōsai were carried out on this day. In contrast to these solemn rites, the city was abuzz with the sounds of the festival, colourful decorations, parading floats, red lion masks and a portable shrine. While only a few tourists attended the solemn rites that day, the parade was attended by many tourists.

The floats used in the Ishioka festival have two decks or a trilaminar structure, and the first floor is used as a stage with a balustrade. On the stage, musicians and dancers wearing masks and costumes perform music and dance. A big doll is placed on the upper floor of each float. The dolls are around two meters tall and two men protect the dolls from trees, electric cables and other obstacles. The floats move on wheels and people, including

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\(^{19}\) The terms ‘Jinkō’ or ‘Shinkō’ are used to refer to the fact that the kami is transported from one place to another on portable shrines. The term ‘Kankō’ implies that the kami has been returned. The term ‘Taisai’ is used to refer to the rituals conducted in the shrines.
men, women, children, tow the floats using ropes. The name of each town is
written on paper lanterns adorning the floats, which are lit up at night. Other
decorations include sakaki branches, sacred plant in Japanese mythology,
and shimenawa, which are sacred rice-straw ropes. In addition, the floats
also have lights that illuminate the stage. Therefore, performances can be
given at night and be easily viewed by visitors and tourists. Two floats
sometimes pass each other on the street. When this happens, each float is
turned and faces each other while the music and dance continues. The
musicians and dancers from each town seem to compete with each other in
their performances. Men, women and children all participate though men
predominate. The floats of each town have their own distinct music, and this
creates a sonic mix during the festivals.

As already alluded to, tourism has become an important dimension of the
festival and this dimension is common to many other festivals throughout
Japan. For example, Nagahara describes the dynamism of festivals and
tourism by citing the case of the Hanawa bayashi festival held in Akita
prefecture (Nagahara 2005, pp.433-456). According to Nagahara, the
Hanawa bayashi festival is visited by people who wish to appreciate the
country’s traditions, including its performing arts. The festival has earned
the reputation of being a tourist attraction, and by virtue of being a cultural
event, it demands that the performing arts and other aspects be presented in
a traditional form without any changes being introduced. Nagahara also
points out that tourists often attend only a part of the festival rather than the
entire festival. This might apply to the Ishioka festival as well, in that
tourists often spend only a few hours at the festival rather than witnessing
the entire proceedings. They enjoy certain parts of the festival that feature various attractions, which are not a part of their daily lives, such as sacred ropes, the unique masks of dancing lions and foxes, and the sounds of the festival. Such invisible and visible attractions create a temporal atmosphere that attracts tourists.

Ibaraki

Angû sai

Figure 4. Four miko dance on the ground of the Kashima shrine

The music for the dance was slow and really sophisticated. At the same time, it was also solemn. . . The Shinto priests, female dancers and musicians all moved slowly and elegantly during the ritual. It seemed that they were performing specific mannerisms and there was no room for improvisation. . . The ritual was held under the sun, and I felt a link between nature and man. The dancers performed on the ground with seasonal flowers in their hands. The sounds of nature—for example, birdsong and the sound of the
The Angû sai is a ritual performed between two other rituals, the Jinkô sai and the Kankô sai which take place in the streets of Kashima city, Ibaraki. According to a record maintained at the Kashima shrine, Jinkô sai was discontinued for a couple of hundred years but was resurrected in 1870. However, a priest at the Kashima shrine believes that the Jinkô sai mentioned in this record actually refers to Ofuna sai\(^{20}\) which is another festival held once every twelve years. The modern-day Jinkô sai began in 1882, and simultaneously, the Angû sai was created as a new ritual. The latter in particular is, therefore, a reflection of the ideology of Meiji Japan and this is evident in the kind of music and dance which has been subsequently introduced to accompany the ritual.\(^{21}\) In the Jinkô sai, the kami of Kashima shrine is transferred to a portable shrine, which is then paraded through the streets of Kashima city. Kankô sai is the return of the portable shrine to a building called Hongû in the shrine. During these rituals, dances and music are performed in front of the portable shrine. The ritual, including the performance and entertainment for the divine spirit, is called the Angû sai. The music played during the Angû sai is *gagaku* which is court music. These rituals and events are performed in public.

The music and dance during the Angû sai, which are dedicated to the kami, are performed by Shinto priests and official shrine workers. The musicians

\(^{20}\) In this festival, each *kami* of the Kashima shrine, located in Ibaraki prefecture, and Katori shrine, located in Chiba prefecture, meet on the Kitaura lake.

\(^{21}\) The priest commented that after the Meiji Restoration, there were possibly some changes that came about in the Kashima shrine system. However, there are no detailed descriptions about this in the shrine.
are both men and women. The men who play the *kakko* (hourshaped drum), *taiko* (drum), *shôko* (bell), *shô* (mouth organ) and *hichiriki* (end-blown double reed flute) wear green costumes and special ritualised black hats called *eboshi*. On the other hand, women who play the *sô* (zither) wear white clothes and red ceremonial skirts. The singers wear green ceremonial skirts.

I observed the *Angû sai* ritual in 2007. The ritual was performed next to a gate called Rômon on the morning of the 2nd of September. Here, a portable shrine was placed in a small tent-like building called the *Angû*, and in front of this sat a line of musicians. First, the musicians played *gagaku* music during which Shinto priests, wearing white ceremonial robes, *eboshi*, special black shoes, and holding long wooden boards in their hands, came through the gate. Female attendants called *miko* followed them. They wore white clothes and red ceremonial skirts; their hair was tied at the back with hair accessories and adorned with a small bunch of yellow chrysanthemum flowers. The parade was slow and solemn.

The Shinto priests and female attendants sit on chairs under a white tent. Men wearing crested *haori* jackets and formal dress are seated behind them. An announcement is made about where the *Angû sai* will take place and what will be done during the performance. First, a rite called *shubatsu*\(^\text{22}\) is performed. One of the Shinto priests goes to the Angû—the portable shrine, stands in front of it and slowly bows several times. An announcement that requests other people to stand up is then made. The priest reads a Shinto

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\(^{22}\) The Chinese characters are 修祓. This means a purification rite.
purification prayer and an announcement is made asking people to bow their heads. After the prayer is read, everyone is asked to stand erect again. The Shinto priest bows deeply and slowly several times; he then slowly claps his hands twice, bows twice in the same manner as before and returns to his seat. Through an announcement, other people are also asked to be seated. Then, two Shinto priests come from behind the Angû bringing a branch of the sakaki tree and salt, which are placed on a small table. They approach the seats of visitors, female attendants and Shinto priests.

At the beginning of the purification rite, an announcement is made requesting everyone to stand up. Two Shinto priests face the visitors, female attendants and other Shinto priests; one of them swings a branch of the sakaki tree widely from right to left and another sprinkles the salt from right to left. The priests then go to the portable shrine, and return the branch and salt, after which they return to their seats. Next, a shrine priest goes to the portable shrine, and everyone stands up and turns towards the portable shrine. An announcement that requests everyone to bow along with the Shinto priest is made. Offerings are then carried to the Angû while music is being played. Four Shinto priests come forward and form a line from behind the portable shrine to its front. They stand at a distance from each other and pass the offerings. A priest who stands in front of the portable shrine offers them to a small altar that is placed in front of the shrine. These offerings consist of such items as rice, sake, seafood and vegetables. Next, a Shinto priest reads aloud a prayer called norito in front of the shrine. While this prayer is being read, people stand and bow their heads, as instructed by the public announcements.
After the priest returns to his seat, an announcement declares that a dance called ‘Yukyû no mai’ (everlasting dance) will be performed and the explanation of the dance given is as follows: ‘This dance originated in 1940 and Tadatomo Ōno who was the head of the gagaku division, Imperial Household Ministry, composed the dance and music. This court dance and music was originally performed by four men; however, four women performed the court dance and music during the Tokyo Olympics in 1964. The lyrics state that our country has been excellent through the ages’. In spring, the dancers bear a branch of cherry blossom in their right hands, while they carry a bunch of chrysanthemum flowers in autumn. During this recital, young Shinto priests spread a big straw sheet in front of the portable shrine for the dance performance.

After the preparation, four dancers align themselves transversely. Music is played and the dancers start dancing in tune to the music. Both the music and dance have a slow tempo and four dancers use the same movements however, these movements are not repeated often. The melody of the song on the ryûteki (transverse flute) and shô is the same. The duration of this music is around 10 minutes. The straw sheets are soon put away. Next, everyone, including the Shinto priests, related people, dancers and visitors, turns towards the Angû and sings the national anthem twice. There has been considerable controversy regarding Kimigayo, the Japanese national anthem, especially in educational institutions such as schools. The Japanese government made a clear distinction between the actual song and the militarist Shinto image that was associated with it during wartime. In 1999,
the government passed a law adopting the song as the country’s national anthem. During the war, the anthem was actively and effectively used as a tool for stirring nationalist sentiments. The after-effects of its use still linger in Japanese society and therefore the anthem’s usage is controversial. The introduction of the national anthem into the ritual as recently as 2005 seems, however, to have been a personal choice. One of the Kashima shrine priests had heard a gagaku version of the national anthem at another shrine, was impressed and decided to include it in the Angu sai. Those participating in the festival are expected to join in singing the anthem after the initial opening bar has been introduced on the ryûteki.

After the national anthem has been sung, two Shinto priests spread a small straw sheet and place a small table in front of the Angû. The Shinto priests who are seated approach the Angû in a line and, slightly bowing, offer a branch of the sakaki tree called tamagushi by placing it on the small table. Then, the straw sheet and table are put away and a Shinto priest replaces the caps of sake bottles that are offered and places them on the altar. This rite is called tessen. Next, a priest comes to the Angû and bows once. Before this, an announcement is made that tells everyone to stand, turn towards the Angû and bow along with the priest. After this, the Kashima dance is performed in front of the Angû. However, this dance is not performed in the order of the ritual provided on the official web page. Moreover, the music for this dance is not performed live by musicians but is probably played on a cassette or CD player. Before the music begins, an explanation of this dance is provided by a male voice. According to this explanation, the dance is intended to drive away evil spirits. Women, wearing white clothes and
bearing a fan or hei\textsuperscript{23} in their right hands, dance while playing a small gong that hangs around their neck. After this dance, the completion of the Angû sai is announced. Many visitors, including amateur photographers, came to observe this ritual in 2007. In addition, on these days, many stalls are set up outside the shrine and other events are held both inside and outside the shrine.

The ritual and religious dimension of the festival is self evident. Shinto priests and official shrine workers carried out the ceremonies, and the dance, which was dedicated to the kami, and was performed in front of the portable shrine to which the kami of the shrine was moved. Many visitors and amateur photographers came to see the ritual. However, despite the religious nature of the celebration, it seems unlikely that their visit was motivated by the religious significance of the ritual. For example, not all the visitors/photographers come to pray to the kami on the day of the ritual. Furthermore, not only photographers but also shrine office workers filmed and took photographs of the dance during the ritual. According to a priest of Kashima shrine, ‘Urayasu no mai’ (dance of Urayasu) was performed every year during the ritual, as a dedication to the kami, but, in 2007, the ‘Yûkyû no mai’ dance was performed because the performers had mastered it\textsuperscript{24}. Both dances are contemporary kagura dances composed in the twentieth century by Tadatomo Ôno. An announcement about the dance was made during the ritual, explaining who composed the dance and when it was

\textsuperscript{23}Hei or gohei (a stick with white paper streamers) is one of the items used during the Shinto ritual.

\textsuperscript{24}Since shrine maidens had learned and mastered Yûkyû no mai for improving their dancing skills, in 2007, one priest replaced the Urayasu dance with Yûkyû no mai, which is to be performed at the ritual.
performed. Information on the significance of the dance is also provided. For example, the announcement relates that because the dance was performed during the Tokyo Olympics ‘Yûkyû no mai’ was considered to be a representative dance form of Japanese traditional dance ‘culture’. However, no mention is made of the fact that the dance was actually created, as already noted, in 1940 to celebrate the 2600th anniversary of the first Emperor of Japan Jimmu. Absence of this information, and emphasis on the Olympic performance, perhaps suggests an attempt to obscure or even whitewash the more problematic origins of the dance.

The ceremonial attire of the dancers and musicians, and the sounds produced by the musical instruments that are typically used in gagaku or court music, seemingly serve to reinforce the historical significance of traditional Japanese ‘values’ as an expression of nationalist identity. Hence, although the dance is performed as a dedication to the kami, it also has value as a form of traditional Japanese art.

**Lion dance and miko dance**

On the 23rd of every November, a girl’s dance called miko mai and a lion dance called shishi mai, are dedicated to the kami of the Kunigami shrine located in the Uwado area in Itako city, Ibaraki. According to a document, the ‘Ibaraki no mukei minzoku bunka zai’ (1982), ‘The intangible folk

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25 According to Japanese mythology, Emperor Jimmu is a descendent of kami. It is unclear whether he actually existed.

26 These musical instruments were introduced into Japan from China. The composition of gagaku or court music, as we know it today, was almost completed by the 10th century AD.
cultural assets of Ibaraki’, Kunigami shrine was established in 1326 by introducing the celebration of two deities, originally worshipped at Oaraiisomae and Sakatsuraisozaki shrines. In 1395, three lion dance masks or heads were dedicated along with prayers for the improvement of grain yields. This is claimed to be the origin of this ritual. In 1690, the domain lord, Tokugawa Mitsukuni, built a shrine pavilion in the village and took this occasion to initiate performances of this ritual every November on a specific date according to the Chinese lunar calendar. After the Meiji era, this date was fixed as the 23rd of November. Both miko mai and shishi mai are dedicated on the same day. However, there are no details regarding miko mai in either published books, or on the Internet webpage of Ibaraki prefecture or Itako city. The only available description of this dance is that it is performed in the morning with considerable grace. Therefore, the origin of this dance is unknown. This lion dance is designated as one of Ibaraki prefecture’s intangible folk cultural assets. However, the miko dance has not been given any designation.

I conducted fieldwork on this ritual on the 23rd of November in 2006 and 2007. I also interviewed some of the devotees of the shrine who attend the rituals. The purification ritual is held at the main shrine from 10 a.m. onwards, and miko mai is performed and dedicated to the kami from 11 a.m. onwards. According to one of the devotees of the shrine, in 2006 the miko, a female dancer, was a fourth grader, and this was the fourth year that she

27 It is possible for more than one Shinto shrine to have the same divine spirit.
28 Both these shrines are located in Ibaraki prefecture.
29 In the Japanese educational system, elementary school begins from the age of 6 and then continues until 12. Therefore, the girl was 9 or 10 years old in 2006.
was selected as a miko and danced as part of this ritual. Only the elder sister in a family is allowed to become a miko and these girls play this role until they reach the sixth grade. If the girl has her first menstrual period, she has to give up the role. The length of rehearsals varies each year. The rehearsals for both miko mai and the lion dance began in November 2006. However, in a year when a new miko is chosen, rehearsals begin in October.

On the day of the ritual, one of the musicians carries the miko on his shoulders and brings her to the main shrine. She wears a pink kimono and red Japanese skirt. Furthermore, her hair is adorned with fake flowers and she also wears paper accessories. According to one of the devotees of the shrine, the miko is not allowed to touch the ground with her feet; therefore, one of the musicians hoists her on to his shoulders. There is a hall of worship behind the main shrine, and these two buildings are connected by a hallway. A sacred rope hangs near to the ceiling. Food and drinks are offered in the hall of worship. A small low table is placed under the rope, and a bell and a branch of the sakaki tree are placed on it. The miko is brought to the main shrine and the Shinto priest leads her to the table. The miko then sits on the floor, in front of the table, and bows reverently once. She then dances while holding a bell in her right hand and the sakaki branch in her left. The instruments used in the rituals, both in the miko and lion dances, are three bamboo flutes, one shimedaiko (drum) and one large drum. Visitors, amateur cameramen and reporters from the local newspaper come to observe the ritual.

The lion dance is also performed and dedicated at the shrine in the same
afternoon. The performers then leave the community hall in the same manner as they did for the miko mai. The masks of two of the three lion dancers are covered with a black cloth. In addition to the lions, other characters also appear during the performance. One of them is called Tengu and he wears the red mask of a long-nosed goblin, red and gold coloured Japanese clothes and high Japanese wooden clogs. Hyottoko, a character wearing a funny male mask, and Okame, who wears a well-rounded female mask, also appear.

With Tengu in the lead, the performers leave the hall. Tengu then goes to the front of the main shrine and turns towards the ground. Three lions stand on the ground in a transverse line. At the same time, the musicians assemble on one side of the ground and Hyottoko and Okame stand among the visitors or viewers. A straw sheet is spread in front of Tengu and two men, who are positioned on the left and right side of the sheet, hold each end of the rope. Several pieces of music are played during this lion dance. The number of dances performed also varies. The dancers perform the same movement, dance solo and jump; these movements range from slow to vigorous and vice-versa. Near the end of the dance the two lion dancers, whose masks were uncovered, cover them once again with the black cloths. After performing the lion dance, Hyottoko and Okame perform a short comedy sketch. During the performance, Okame parodies the dance movements of the miko, and Hyottoko fools around with her. For example, he flips her kimono skirt up. This induces laughter in the audience. During this comedy sketch, music is also performed by the musicians and a song is sung by some of them. After the sketch, with Tengu in the lead, the performers return
to the community hall and play *sangiri* music in front of the hall. The ritual is then completed.

In my field journals written in 2006, I have noted down my experience on speaking to a community member.

*I visited their shrine office located next to the main shrine to speak to a community member. They had lunch in the office. They offered me rice balls and some of them spoke to me about the lion dance.*

(extract from field note dated 23/11/2006)

Descriptions of this ritual also mainly describe the lion dance, and there are only a few comments on the *miko mai* in some of the literature published by Ibaraki prefecture, or on the Web pages of Itako city. In fact, the audience and number of amateur photographers at the lion dance performed in the afternoon, is generally bigger than that for the morning performance of the *miko mai*. Both performances, the lion dance and *miko mai*, are performed by the same community in the same place. Of course, each of the performances has different characteristics: the lion dance includes elements of humour and energetic performances that people enjoy, while the *miko mai* is more simple and subtle. I assume that one of the reasons for this is that the lion dance is designated as an intangible folk cultural asset. For the community, both performances are of importance. However, outsiders, such as tourists or amateur photographers, are aware of the ritual through books or Web sites that actually describe the lion dance as an intangible folk cultural asset. This creates an interest in many photographers who come to
see the performance. Moreover, the performers of the lion dance help in promoting this dance as a cultural asset of Japan, not only amongst the community members, but also amongst outsiders.

The honouring of tradition

As part of my observations on the ritual life of the Kantô area, I conducted a brief survey on rituals and festivals in the area. These festivals and rituals are fragments of older Japanese rituals and festivals. Even in 21st century Japan, a large variety of rituals and festivals have survived through the years.

My observations during this period suggested one very strong idea—that honouring tradition is a core value in Japanese culture. Evidence for this is that the nation, prefecture and city designate not only support tangible properties such as buildings and artefacts, but also intangible properties such as human activities. 30 These designations emphasise the importance of preserving tradition and reduce the financial burdens of communities who pass down their traditional events to the next generation; therefore, they offer both financial and ideological support for the preservation of tradition.

These designations place great emphasis on the unchanging nature of the tradition. The words ‘never change’ or ‘unchanged’, with regard to traditions, acquire value. This implies that when traditions are carried out properly, the communities are passing down something unchanging and of great value to the next generation. Therefore, when there are changes in how

30 For example, the significance of honouring tradition at the State level is evident in the Cultural Properties Law of 1950, with its subsequent designation of important intangible forms of folklore cultural assets.
a tradition is performed, it implies that the community has failed to pass down the tradition properly, or that it has more or less broken or damaged the tradition. People recognise that unchanged traditions have value, whereas traditions that have been changed are not as desirable.

This may suggest that the oldest form of a tradition, in other words, a tradition preserved in its ‘original’ or ‘purest’ form has the greatest value. Oishi points out a trend to seek value in antiquity, non-change and constancy in forms of folk art; even though some researchers believe that changes in the forms of folk art, as they are passed down from generation to generation, are inevitable (Oishi 2007, p.3). In fact, such appearances, or formats, that appear traditional or old attract people by characterising something as having a time-honoured value. For example, the *Edo tenka matsuri* is a festival that has been borrowed from an old festival and is performed as a cultural event.

Namely by creating a semblance of the ‘traditional’ through artefacts and items, as well as music and dance performances, temporal spaces, distinct from our daily lives, are generated and these find popular appeal. This popularity is evident in the numbers of people who flock to the Ishioka festival or, even in the case of the Angû sai of Kashima shrine, which despite retaining its ritual dimension, attracts a gathering of amateur photographers whose sole aim is to get a good picture.

As Nagahara states, visitors or tourists who come to see such festivals and rituals, want the festivals to be performed in their original form, without any
changes (Nagahara 2005). Therefore, in Japan, traditional values mean honouring elements that continue to exist in their original form, without any appearance of change.

**Miko mai shinji as a key ritual**

Having highlighted some of the themes inherent in the realisation of Japanese festivals today, I want to continue the discussion by focusing on one of these, the *miko mai shinji*, in greater detail. In this thesis, I have changed the names of all the community members to respect their privacy.

As I described above, my first encounter with the *miko mai shinji* ritual at the Ōu shrine was in Ireland, where I had studied rituals and ritual music as a Master’s student. At that time, for my Master’s thesis, I had searched for rituals held in Ibaraki prefecture through the Internet, since I was interested in studying some rituals and ritual music of Ibaraki prefecture, which is my birthplace. One day, I read about the *miko mai shinji* ritual on the Internet. The webpage stated that the dance in the ritual is simple but valued as a part of the ritual and has been retained in its ‘ancient form’. I was attracted by this comment and decided to study this ritual.

The ritual I saw in my first DVD observation appeared to be sacred and mysterious: a girl danced wearing white and red ceremonial costume, and some musicians wearing kimonos played background music in a dimly-lit room. After watching the DVD, I contacted Mr Hinoki, who was a leader of the community at that time. Mr Hinoki was highly cooperative, and he was
kind enough to let me ask some questions related to the ritual for my research. Therefore, I contacted him several times via telephone and he also arranged for telephone interviews with some other community members. In fact, I interviewed the musician who played the music and the girl who danced in the film in 2004. I finally met the community members on the 1st of November 2005, after I returned to Japan. Mr Hinoki gave me a guided tour of the Ôu shrine during the day, and introduced me to the community members at night, who were involved in a ritual to choose the girl who would serve as the miko of the year. The ritual for the selection of a miko called miko sentei no gi was held in the shrine office located in the grounds of the shrine. Thereafter, I attended their rituals and rehearsals from 2005 to 2007 as an observer, and spent a considerable amount of time with them.

My time with this ritual community, which formed the central focus of my fieldwork, revealed two important characteristics, namely change and continuity, in regards to the ritual activity particular to this ritual community. I considered these characteristics worthy of consideration in the wider question of the survival of ritual practice in contemporary Japan. I have already spoken about the high value placed on tradition and continuity, and this was especially mentioned in descriptions of this ritual performance. In the practice and perception of this ritual, considerable importance is given to the preservation of the tradition and the continuation of practices that were valued by the community’s ancestors. For example, members commented that they had passed down their ritual unchanged from their ancestors and that they were proud of that. In addition, some of the literature has descriptions of the rituals being passed down unchanged in their ancient
forms. Such descriptions probably encouraged bearers of the tradition to maintain their rituals unchanged.

However, my observations also revealed subtle, but nonetheless important aspects of change and adaptation in the performance of the ritual, which would seem to contradict the core value of honouring tradition. For example, with respect to the festival music, the manner in which *kagura-daiko* is played has been changing slightly, and during my fieldwork, I also found a new method used to teach the dancing. However, such new methods have received both acceptance and criticism from community members. For example, people hesitated in using such new methods when senior members of the community were present at the rehearsals. The changes are not only in performance practice but also in the dates and timings of the rituals. Such aspects of the ritual have been changed in response to the social environment. For example, the ritual was moved to the weekend because it was difficult to arrange such performances on a specific day.

These apparent contradictions between tradition and change may serve as a clue to the central question of my thesis: why rituals survive in contemporary, twenty-first century Japan. From these two seemingly paradoxical dimensions, i.e. continuity/tradition and change/adaptation, I would like to begin to explore the following postulation:

Rituals help in preserving the appearance of continuity. At the same time, rituals and music allow for subtle but important levels of adaptation and change. For example, one of the outstanding characteristics of a ritual is its
repetitive nature. A community continues its rituals, music and dance in a specific manner since this might help in creating some sense of stability among its members. However, music is dynamic by nature and created through interaction between human beings. Therefore, changes in ritual music are more or less inevitable, and ‘tradition’ and ‘change’ are proposed, not as opposites, but as complementary: indeed, one could argue that tradition is maintained through change and adaptation, and not in spite of it. The continuation of these ritual practices allows for the honouring of tradition, which is a core value in Japanese culture, through its ability to adapt and change. The preservation of rituals and ritual music involves recreating the tradition by performing those rituals in a constantly changing social environment. Community members can continue performing their rituals and music in their style, despite changes in the social environment, because they can be adapted and changed and therefore become truly, both traditional and contemporary.

Before I proceed with a more in-depth examination of the miko mai shinji ritual, in chapter 3, I will next explore a number of theoretical perspectives which may help to support this central idea of continuity through change in ritual and music.
Chapter 2
Music and ritual:
A literature survey on change and continuity

Chapter One concluded with the postulation, which emerged from my extensive engagement with the miko mai shinji and its community of musical practitioners, that ‘tradition’ or ‘continuity’ does not form a binary opposite to change. On the contrary, tradition is often facilitated and reinforced by subtle changes which are both acknowledged and unacknowledged by the ritual practitioners. In this chapter, I will pursue this proposition further, with reference to both ethnomusicological and ritual studies sources. However, before I proceed, I would like to briefly summarise the postulates, concerning rituals and music, which I had presented in the first chapter.

Blacking’s definition of music, as mentioned in the first chapter, states that music is a pattern of sound that is recognised socially (Blacking 1995). Sound is an invisible entity that is transmitted through vibrations in the air and is generated either artificially or naturally; once sound is generated, it disappears and is no longer heard. This implies that music is transient and
dynamic in nature. Even with a fixed score, the realisation of the sound culminates in the same phenomenon of transience, and the human element in its production, wittingly or unwittingly, confirms the dynamic nature of music evidenced in the inevitability of change.

Rituals, on the other hand, while also performed and therefore equally ephemeral, are often characterised by repetition (Bell 1992, 1997). Rituals possess their own specific manners or formalities, and these are continuously repeated as the ritual is practiced. In fact, it may be said that this repetition may be one of the most unique characteristics of rituals. Such repetition generates stability and gives a sense of continuity to both the participants and the observers of the ritual. More specifically, repetition includes specific manners and movements that give an appearance of continuity.

Both music and rituals are human activities performed in society and are shared by individuals in society. Therefore, both music and rituals are contextualised by their socio-cultural location. Society is fluid and dynamic, and since we belong to society, our actions and their consequences are to varying degrees affected by the social environment that always surrounds us. Societies are characterised by structures which are not static. The French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1977) saw society as possessing a dynamic structure that is constantly recreated through the interrelationships among its inhabitants, a phenomenon he termed ‘habitus’. This means that the products and acts that are generated in society assume a social disposition shared by the social members. Such a disposition, referred to as habitus by
Bourdieu, lends the society a form of structure. However, this structure is created or recreated by human relationships through social actions, and hence, this structure is not static but dynamic. Music too may be interpolated in Bourdieu’s ‘habitus’, as its dynamic character lends itself to the expression of the dynamic and fluid aspects of human society. This is not to suggest that music cannot and is not also used to express continuity, or that repetition does not form an important dimension of musical expression. But, in this chapter, I want to focus on the ephemeral / temporal / dynamic character of music to explore further its ability to express social / cultural / ritual change.

The role of ritual in negotiating change is well documented. Beginning with Victor Turner (1969), several scholars have focused on characteristics of ritual which facilitate socio-cultural change (e.g. Geertz 1973). My focus here is a subtle variation or extension on this theme: how does the character of ritual support change through repetition / continuity and the appearance of being unchangeable?

Tradition refers to the process of handing something, both visible and invisible, down through generations. Change in traditions of rituals and music cannot be avoided because of their inherent humanity. Therefore, changes that are accepted by societies are recognised as adaptable changes and such adaptations allow these changes to be preserved. Hence, this acceptance of change helps members of a given society to carry on and continue with human activities still perceived as traditional. Tradition is therefore preserved through adaptation.
In the first chapter, I referred to sections in Japanese society which esteem the value of what are or perceived to be ‘old’ traditions. The continuation of ritual practices allows traditions to be ‘honoured’ through the intrinsic nature of tradition to adapt and change, while conveyors of that tradition honour the value of continuity. Thus, continuity allows for the honouring of tradition through change and adaptation.

Two key aspects of my proposition concern the relationship between change and continuity. In the following review of pertinent texts from ethnomusicological and ritual studies sources, I will discuss aspects of the dynamic character of music which lends itself to supporting change, and aspects of the repetitious character of many ritual practices, which lends itself to supporting claims for continuity. I will draw this chapter to its conclusion through a broader discussion on the phenomenon of continuity through change.

**Exploring change through music**

What is musical change? What does it mean: a change of the musical system or structure, performance style, the use or function of music in society, or something altogether different?

Alan Merriam (1964) insisted that music is inseparable from the cultural and social context in which music resides. Thus, he interpreted music as a reflection of human behaviour. His influential concept, music in culture, was
developed by Timothy Rice (1987). Rice embedded Merriam’s tripartite model that consisted of music recognised by society, behaviour related to music, and musical sound, into a new model comprised of ‘historical construction, social maintenance and individual creation and experience’ (1987, p. 476). In Rice’s model, each element is more interrelated. Similarly, John Blacking (1973) emphasised the importance of the human dimension of music in musical study. ‘Music is a synthesis of cognitive processes, which are present in culture and in the human body: the forms it takes, and the effects it has on people, are generated by the social experiences of human bodies in different cultural environments. Because music is a humanly organised sound, it expresses aspects of the experience of individuals in society.’ (1973, p.83) Thus, music is not simply a recognised pattern of sounds but a manifestation of human behaviour.

With this in mind, what is change in music? Merriam notes in his work that change exists perpetually throughout human experience, and he classified change into two categories: innovation, an internal change; and acculturation, an external change. Bruno Nettl (1983) pointed out that Merriam did not develop his theory on external change in spite of the changes in music that Nettl believed were almost exclusively of this nature. Following on from Merriam, however, Blacking and Nettl developed broader and more in depth theories on change in music.

For Blacking (1995), the importance of studying change in music does not lie solely in the reasoning that music reflects the deep source and meaning of social and cultural continuity and change. He insisted that human change
could manifest itself via the medium of music. He also criticised the approach of ethnomusicology, which adopts a central approach in the production of music and pays less attention to change, even if there is a motivation to record music that is on the verge of extinction. Blacking in particular emphasised the significance of what he termed ‘radical change’ in music, and consequently did not consider changes in musical style or repertories in music as a change in music. At the same time he insisted on the need for a universal theory on musical change.

Blacking developed numerous views on musical change. According to him, ‘purists’ or ‘traditionalists’ viewed radical change in oral tradition as moral decay (1995, p.151). On the other hand, ‘syncretists’ viewed the active production of new sounds as the adaptation of a community to new changes in the environment; therefore, ‘syncretists’ valued change. Purists and ‘syncretists’ have different or opposing views to musical change, although the phenomena itself remains the same. In addition, Blacking criticised the sociological approach to musical change as lacking an analysis of musical structure. Conversely, musicology did not pay enough attention to social interrelationships. Thus, according to him, studies on musical change needed to consider music within the context of society and the interaction between the two.

It is clear that Blacking emphasises the relationship between music and society in the study of musical change since he defines music as a socially recognised pattern. Therefore, he insists that the first key to understanding musical change is in determining the sounds a society recognises as music.
Thus, it is important to know and consider what music is for and how musical change is recognised within a society. For Blacking, ‘radical change’ is musical change; however, he states that the early stages of change is latent; therefore, researchers need to extend the historical dimension of their research. He insisted that musical change must be approached from both a synchronic and diachronic viewpoint. In addition, radical change, according to Blacking, includes intention, that is to say a determination by the performer.

By contrast, Nettl classified musical change into four categories. The first category is ‘the most complete kind of change’. This category is theoretical because it is difficult to find real examples. It refers to a complete break with the original musical system. The second category is ‘radical change’. This refers to the coexistence of continuity and differentiation in both the new music and old music that has changed. Thus, parts of the old music will exist in the new music. The third category is ‘normal change’, which refers to the assumption of change as an essential character of the music system. Nettl mentions that the musical system has a certain degree of continual change that protects music from becoming ‘an artificially preserved museum’ (1983, p.279). The last category is an ‘allowable variation’ or a ‘permission error’. Nettl insisted that individual change, namely changes in music which occurs during an individual performance, exists to an allowable degree and such change is difficult to recognise as such. This fourth change is unavoidable because it is the product of individual human behaviour.
Nettl viewed musical change as one of the natural characteristics of music, and he emphasised paying attention to societies or social conditions in which musical change is absent in the same manner as those in which musical change is present. According to him, change is slow or absent in societies that are less developed technologically, and musical change is also slow in societies where the music has already changed and is adapting to a new social system. But examples of slow musical change may not always be correlated with technological stasis. ‘Social’ institutions, in which there is an inherent concern in sustaining continuity with the past, infers musical stasis. Nettl pointed to religious music as an example of a musical form resistant to change. Conversely, as an example of musical change induced by technological enhancement, Nettl points to the rapid musical change of the twentieth century where the invention and introduction of new technologies, introducing or accepting new sounds such as animals or industrial sounds into music, and the changing environment of music by the record industry, are factors of music change.

Rapid musical change is not, however, solely the product of technological advancement. Bruno Nettl spent much time working with the indigenous tribes of America where he also observed rapid musical change. The introduction of advanced technology was a factor. But other factors which prompted change were increased communication between tribes and the unification of an indigenous cultural system. Thus, in addition to technological change, the social environment which envelops a given musical system is also a significant factor in inducing musical change.
Technological and social change are factors in musical change; but Nettl also points to the relationship between a given human entity that creates music, and the society that possesses the music, as again being a factor for change. Owing to the variety of factors that induce musical change, unlike Blacking, Nettl was not in favour of a universal theory of musical change.

If and when musical change does occur, Nettl maintains that each community, possessing its own music, has different reactions toward musical change. Again, using his own research with indigenous North American tribes, in particular the Blackfoot tribe of Montana, Nettl claims that attitudes to musical change were positive. By contrast he refers to a South Indian musicologist who finds musical change undesirable, and then to a Persian music teacher who views musical change as a necessary strategy for its survival.

Blacking and Nettl’s ideas on musical change share points in common. When studying musical change, both emphasise the relationship between music and societies that possess their own musical style. Martin Stokes (1994) too points out that ethnomusicologists have been interested in the concept of music as ‘seldom stable’ in the context of social change (1994, p.17). Stokes focuses on embracing different musical styles, and again confirms the essential premise in ethnomusicological analysis that the relationship between musical change and society is inseparable. As stated, Blacking and Nettl share similar viewpoints on musical change but a significant difference between them is that Blacking only acknowledges radical change, whereas Nettl has a broader view of musical change. For
Blacking, music, as in human adaptation, is adapted to new environments and this allows for its survival. Therefore, for him, changes caused by acculturation are a form of adaptation and, as these are not examples of ‘radical change’, he does not see these as valid forms of change. However, Nettl insists that cases of ‘radical change’ expounded by Blacking are rare.

**Examples of various changes**

In fact, there are examples of various types of changes. Therefore, not only one change necessarily occurs in a society. It is possible that several musical changes occur in parallel or in series in a society. For example, a change in musical style through the oral transmission of music from generation to generation might cause a change in musical structure. On the other hand, a change in the musical structure or system might generate new performance styles for musicians. In religious music, people’s religious beliefs have been altered based on the changing social environment, which might allow the use of different types of music in rituals to encourage their attendance. Such changes probably modify the role and function of music within a ritual. Each musical performer experiences various musical changes, and factors thereof, throughout his or her career. The said changes might be relatively modest, thereby making their recognition difficult. Here, I will provide various examples of musical changes in order to demonstrate their complexity in reality. Although I support Nettl’s broad perspective of musical change, it is, I believe, in fact difficult to clearly classify musical change. This is because musical change is not a simple phenomenon but a complicated process with respect to the relationship between music, and the
societies in which music is played and possessed.

Various musical changes can occur within the same society or within the same social context. One such example is the music played in the Lingsar festival, a festival which takes place at Lingsar temple, Lombok, Indonesia. David Harnish (2005) describes changes in music and performance given here by two ethnic groups: a migrant Hindu Balinese group and a local Muslim Sasak group. Each group performs their music at the festival.

Lombok was colonised by the Balinese in 1740 and a temple, Pura Lingsar, was established in the nineteenth century. This temple controlled the use of water and was an influence on the spirituality of farmers. Furthermore, the festival reinforced the spiritual power of the Bali court which ensured the water for the rice. As such, the festival was politically associated, reinforcing and justifying the regime. After colonisation by the Dutch, the Indonesian government declared independence in 1945 and insisted upon the preservation and control of the festival by the nation, in order to maintain their connection with the festival. This social change was accompanied by various changes in the music and performances at the festival. For example, in 1980, the government forbade the Muslim Sasak from attending the festival as a religious practice; however, they were allowed to attend the festival as a cultural practice, thus maintaining their culture and customs. Moreover, in 1997, a new female temple dance, composed by a famous choreographer in Bali, was introduced into the festival. For the Balinese, the artistic performances at the festival have a religious function, which they are spiritually dependent upon. Therefore, even though the festival has a ‘rich history of performing arts’, the new
dance was accepted in the festival because ‘it is a sacred dance from Bali’ (2005, p. 11). On the other hand, the government promoted the gamelan gendang belew of the Sasak young men as traditional Sasak music. The government even demonstrated their support financially. Therefore, these new gamelan groups advanced quickly and became powerful representations of the Sasak, as well as vehicles for creating an identity for the Sasak youth and encouraging their ethnicity.

If various musical changes occur in the same context, it is possible that certain forms of music undergo a change, while other forms of music remain relatively unchanged in the same social context. For example, Irvine and Sapir (1976) described musical changes in the old and new genres of the Kujamaat Diola society of southern Senegal. According to them, the society underwent a radical social change in the late nineteenth century. The Kujammat region was invaded by the Manding who converted it to Islam, resulting in the vast majority of the area’s population becoming Muslims. And then the subsequent imposition of French colonialism brought changes into Diola: the ‘cessation of inter-village warfare’, the introduction of a new crop (peanuts) and ‘the subjection of the Diola’, which allowed its population to sustain contact ‘with neighbours of different ethnic backgrounds’ (1976, p.68). In this society, musical change reflects social change. In the past, the society did not allow visits to other villages. Therefore, interaction or contact among villages was rare. However, in recent times, musicians often visit other villages and such social exchanges have been the cause of musical change. There are, in fact, two genres of music in Diola society, old and new. The new genre of music is permitted to
be performed in many villages. On the other hand, the old genre of music is restricted to performances in specific villages. The old genre of music is thereby performed by the same members. In contrast, the new genre of music is performed by various members and its orchestration by travelling musicians, since the musicians move from village to village. Therefore, this old genre of music remains relatively unchanged since it is performed by the same members and is easy to harmonise. With the new genre of music, musicians are less familiar with each independent musical performance and it is, therefore, difficult to harmonise the music. Nonetheless, these two types of music exist within a society, and musical changes vary accordingly.

Another example of change and continuity in music is described by Rappoport. She describes change and continuity in the same forms of music. In her description of the Sa’dan Toraja, who are rice farmers residing in the mountains of South Sulawesi, Rappoport (2004) indicates that the preservation of their music is achievable through its modification and use in new contexts. This change in music was due to the change in the social context in which the music is played. In the twentieth century, most of the Toraja became Christian through the incursion of Christianity. In addition, the establishment of the nation of Indonesia and its tourism industry modified their musical tradition. Prior to this period, Toraja music was solely performed in ritual ceremonies. Following the advancement of the tourist industry, musical performers played music and sang songs, with the exception of funeral songs, at the request of tourists. Christianity forbade the performance of their most traditional rituals, except funerals and house festivals. Some classic songs were forbidden, although others were absorbed
into Christian rituals. Funeral songs, with their lyrics on death, were rewritten by Christian churches because they banished the worship of death. Accordingly, such social changes transformed the music of the Toraja.

On the other hand, the continuity of the music has, through various means, persisted. Rappoport points out that the melody of the rising sun ritual, which was forbidden by Christianity, helped to preserve the music of the Toraja through its use by the nation and its incorporation into the music of Christian churches. For example, although there are modifications in the melody, lyrics, and length of performance, some part of the original melody is still practiced. Thus, not only change but also continuity is observed in the music of their society.

Nettl considered individual changes as within a permissible degree of error; however, some individual changes are not errors but are done intentionally by performers. Waterman (1991) insists upon the importance of examining the individuals who play the music and the manner in which they play. He delves into Jùjú: the music performed by the ethnic group of Yoruba in southwestern Nigeria. He indicates that the musical style of Jùjú is reproduced and accepted through the actual musical—negotiation of performances by musicians. For example, the variants of the talking drum, introduced in 1984, became a symbol of the pan-Yoruba identity. Waterman suggests that the success of the talking drum lay (1) in the performances of traditional musicians who played this musical instrument, for example, early Jùjú bandleader, Akanbi Ege, and (2) its performance in widespread areas, including cultural contests and on both sacred and secular occasions.
Intentional musical change may also be the result of adapting to the changing social environment surrounding the music and this allows for its survival. For example, the Japanese musicologist KISHIBE Shigeo (1971) states that the Japanese traditional musical instrument, the *koto*, which is a stringed zither, is often played in concert halls and the sound of the instrument is now fuller because of the use of microphones. If *koto* performers were to keep to their traditional formats, the music would be inaudible to audiences in concert hall settings. In other words, if the performance practice of music resists new social environments, a rupture can occur between the music and society. Such a rupture might jeopardise the survival of the music within that society. Music that is not accepted by a society could not survive therein. Likewise, musicians face a similar difficulty in being accepted as musicians in a society. If music adapts to a new social environment by changing, it will be recognised as music in a given society. Musicians too can be accepted in their given societies by doing the same.

In Japanese traditional music, new genres have been generated as contemporary forms of Japanese traditional music. This has allowed traditional musicians to introduce new performance styles into their performances. For example, some newly composed Japanese music uses western style staff notation and a wider combination of musical instruments. And, certain exponents of traditional Japanese music such as TÔGI Hideki, who plays the court music of *gagaku*, has, in addition to the use of traditional instruments, introduced new contemporary musical sonorities in his new *gagaku* style compositions. The introduction of new musical
elements does not mean that traditional forms are discarded completely. Rather, musicians like TÔGI Hideki, make musical adaptations so that traditional music survives. Therefore, he, and others like him, perform both new and old genres of the music.

Thus, some traditional musicians actively incorporate such technological developments or new performance styles into their music. Like TÔGI, some of them are readily accepted by society and they earn many fans. In other words, their music is allowed to survive in society. Conversely, societal rejection of traditional music threatens its survival. In turn, traditional music worldwide may decline or perish.

For the survival of music, some of its forms may have to be changed. Asai (1999) describes that Nōmai, which is a folk art in Northern Japan, is becoming more theatrical and secular with the aim of attracting a larger audience, and young men who have the potential to be performers. She points out that such changes in folk art are imperative for preserving tradition and suggests that a balance be maintained between these changes and the ‘style, performance, and sacred intent of the art’ (1999, p. 185).

Music can also reflect the social conditions in which it is created. Sherinian (2007) focuses on the relationship between caste identity and musical style and change. He points out that musical changes are a means of articulating social division or caste, even though caste identity is becoming increasingly ambiguous on the surface as witnessed by the Tamil Protestants of Tamil Nadu, a state located in South India. Missionaries were unsupportive of the
caste system; however, the caste system has remained because these missionaries accepted it for the purposes of converting the upper classes. According to Sherinian, by the twentieth century, the musical choices of the Tamil Protestants were affected by their caste: different caste groups preferred different musical styles. Moreover, their identity became somewhat blurred because of the increasing mobility of the population from villages to cities, and the transmission of inexpensive music cassettes. However, according to Sherinian, their own musical styles are associated with their identity and changes in the music articulate this. Each community or caste effects changes in tunes and rhythms differently. For example, the ‘upwardly mobile lower-caste’ (2007, p. 275) aligns itself with the modern Western cultural models, which are accompanied by western harmony and organs (harmoniums), to gain status among the upper class elites.

The degree of change depends on the society, musicians, and the circumstances surrounding the music, but more or less, change in music is inevitable. This characteristic of music allows its survival in a changing society. Since music is a reflection of human behaviour, it is difficult to preserve. In fact, technological developments allow the recording of music visually and aurally through video cameras, recorders, musical scores and the like. However, do these methods truly preserve music? I say no. Recordings do not mean the survival of music. Music survives through performances in a society. However, human performance is momentary. Even when the same musicians perform the same music, this music will differ slightly, it is never identical. Therefore, allowing musical change supports the survival of music through performance. That is to say, musical
change can avert the disappearance of a given music.

Moreover, music allows for the continuity of events. Seeger (1991) declares that the Suyá Indians of Brazil incorporate the powers of other societies into their own community by performing their songs. The songs are shared throughout the Suya community by performing them in ‘ritual-related activities’ (1991, p.26). They regularly introduce new songs; however, the manner in which these songs are used within the society is more or less similar to that in ceremonies. Seeger states that ‘the structure of the long ceremonies facilitates the inclusion of new kinds of musical events while preserving a traditional, or established, structure’ (1991, p.27). Thus, a kind of community continuity is created when music is incorporated in the same manner, despite its diverse origins.

Therefore, can it be said that no music can avoid change in order to survive? Does any music that has changed relatively little exist? Nettl states that religious music remains relatively unchanged; however, a change from Latin to the vernacular in Catholic hymns made songs comprehensible to societies in which the Latin language was not commonly used. This brought significant change in the use of Catholic hymns.

**Musical change in the miko mai shinji**

In my observations of the *miko mai shinji*, there are observable changes in and adaptations to their music. I will discuss this in detail in chapter four. However, this does not mean that the community members recognise such
changes. In fact, in their personal comments or interviews during my fieldwork, they insisted that their music has remained unchanged. For example, when I attended midday rehearsals for the feast known as *naka iwai*, some representative members of the community insisted, as in the conversation below, that their music was unchanged.

Interviewer: Do you think there is a difference between the music performed by active musicians today and the music performed by you in the past? Or, are they the same?

A: (the music performed by musicians today is) exactly the same (as the music we performed in the past)\(^3\)\(^1\).

B: This (musical performance) has endured for a long time.

C: It has persisted.

(Group interview, 14/11/2005)

Such comments, insisting on the absence of musical change in the music, were observed during my first fieldwork in 2005. This brought me to the central concept of this thesis: even though musical change is inevitable, the appearance of musical continuity is extremely important, especially in some ritual forms. I will attempt to discuss the importance of continuity in ritual forms in the following section.

\(^{31}\) For better comprehension, clarifying comments have been placed in brackets.
Exploring continuity through ritual studies

While the previous section focused on the ability of music to adapt to change, this section will review some of the literature which notes the importance of repetition and continuity to the character of ritual performance. First, it is necessary to refer to one of the most influential theories on the ritual process which, in fact, does not assess continuity but rather places the emphasis on ritual dynamism and change.

Arnold van Gennep stated in his famous book ‘The Rites of Passage’ (1960) that a ritual, especially a rite of passage, involves a specific process which is comprised of three categories: separation, margin, and incorporation. In the separation stage, people separate their own status from the society to which they belong in adapting to a new society. The margin state is one of transition. In this state, people lose their social status and become blank, as a means to enable them to adapt to a new social situation. They are then invited into a new society, and this constitutes the last state called incorporation. Gennep focused on the relationship between rituals and society, but maintained that this approach of relative structuralism considers society to be static.

Turner (1969), who also addressed structuralism in this context, was influenced by Gennep. However, he noticed limitations to this approach to structuralism and expanded an examination of the margin stage. Turner insisted that liminality, which he called the margin state, generates a state of anti-structure. He termed this state of anti-structure, ‘communitas’. In his book ‘The ritual process’ (1969), he examines the rites of passage of the
Ndembu tribe of Zambia (1969, p.97) and shows that participants negotiate their social powers and change their social status through rituals, namely, through the margin state. This idea that rituals assist in the negotiation of change in society as a social or cultural device, has been a central theme in ritual studies since Turner’s seminal work. Thus, rituals were accorded an important place in society owing to this role.

However, in my analysis of Japan, I find that rituals facilitate continuity and, at the same time, change takes place through rituals. This does not mean that my observation contradicts Turner. In contrast, one of the functions of music in rituals is to support change and adaptation. Rituals negotiate change through the preservation of continuity and the appearance of being unchangeable.

Maurice Bloch (1989) discriminated between the special actions or behaviour observed during rituals, especially in terms of language, and the behaviour observed in everyday life. By using a linguistic approach, he described how actions in rituals are restricted and, therefore, new actions within rituals, are either minimal or absent. According to Bloch, redundancies in ritual, that is, the repetition of performances, are identically fixed actions. Therefore, such performances lack flexibility and the capacity for adaptation. He insists that this repetition of performances fixes or stabilises the form of the ritual, which in turn imposes restrictions on ritual performances, enabling them to ‘become a part of a greater fixed and ordered unchanging whole’ (1989, p.184). This means that, to Bloch, the form of rituals and ritualistic performances work to restrict each other.
Therefore, rituals give the appearance of having ‘always existed, and will always exist’ (1989, p.184).

Likewise, Simpson (2004) describes repetitions in rituals as ‘invariably formalised actions’; however, he also suggests that there is ‘assumed repetition between rituals’, that a ritual ‘performed today is believed to be essentially the same as the one performed last week and the week before’ (2004, p. 303). For him, repetition in rituals is a means for ritual specialists to use their skills and knowledge to perform the same ritual at different times.

Catherine Bell (1997) further emphasises the unchangeable and everlasting nature of ritual, or at least the vested interest in the perception of several ritual communities. In other words, even though the exact date of origin of a given ritual may be unknown, there is always the semblance of antiquity and this in turn highlights the constant nature of rituals. One of the reasons, as Maurice Bloch emphasised above, is the repetitive and formal nature of most rituals. Thus, the act of repeating rituals that have specific forms under specific conditions, including time and space, without being aware of when the rituals originated, gives rise to the impression that rituals are old and constant. Bell also points out that academic research on rituals has also played a role in creating this impression. She states that many theories about rituals originate from previous synchronic oriented research on oral societies that have provided scant evidence of variations in rituals. Even if rites have changed constantly but subtly, the changes are not usually recognised as changes but as exceptions to the norm. This characteristic of rituals is
considered as resistant to change. Bell describes such resistance as follows:

Despite such evidence for change, it is nonetheless quite true that ritual activities generally tend to resist change and often do so more effectively than other forms of social custom. (Bell 1997, p.211)

Bell suggests that this characteristic of rituals originates from the impression that rituals are unchangeable, and points out that this resistance protects rituals from change. Roy Rappaport (1999) also insists that the formality of rituals protects them from change. He defines rituals as ‘the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers’, and states that the formality of rituals, that is, ‘adherence to form’, (1999, p.33) creates invariance. On the other hand, he continues to elaborate, stating that although performers focus on performing rituals carefully and exactly like they are supposed to be performed, the performances do vary and are never completely precise. Therefore, rituals are not characterised as completely unchangeable but as ‘more or less’ unchangeable. As Rappaport insists, rituals are more or less unchangeable owing to their formality; however, at the same time they are subject to change, as they are a product of human action. As with Bell, Rappaport points to the tension within ritual performance, between the importance of continuity and the inevitability of change.

Talal Asad (1993) questioned the trend of considering rituals as symbolic behaviour and insisted that rituals were expounded on in manual books in
the past, and that the purpose of rituals was to perform regulated actions by following the descriptions of rituals in the books. He focused on Christian monastic life in the Middle Ages and described the possibility of constructing virtue by mastering formal performances and acts, that is, gradually learning how to physically carry out various ritual acts based on instructions provided by authorities. Monks living in monasteries adopt the virtues of Christianity in their inner bodies through ritual practice; this constitutes a physical performance. In this case, Asad insists upon the importance of accuracy or precision in the repetition of performances. Such precise repetition, according to him, is most successful in the act of disciplining the body. In this manner, Asad argues that ritual bodies are disciplined by ritual practice, which is a repetition of more or less unchanged actions.

Through her fieldwork in studying contemporary Muslim women, Mahmood (2001) focuses on the process of producing the ‘experienced body’ (2001, p.884). In this process, there is a relationship between conventional acts, which include rituals, and pragmatic acts, which are daily actions. She proposes that participating in ritual prayer constitutes a disciplinary practice for them, and this ritual prayer combines formal behaviour and pragmatic action. Therefore, the self-formation of Muslim women is facilitated through precise repetitions of actions oriented towards their pious norms. In this way, both Asad and Mohamood insist that precisely repeated actions can create or orient a specific sense into the practitioner.
David Cannadine (1983) described the changes in the rituals performed by the British Royal family in that the rituals, which were once performed artlessly, now constituted spectacular and colourful performances. He insists that in a stable period or age, rituals, owing to their invariance, reflect stability and the integration of a nation. On the other hand, in an unstable or volatile period, the form of rituals is intentionally maintained as they represent continuity and solidarity. This implies that changes in rituals are a result of not only errors or inaccuracy in performances, but also various intentions to exploit the ‘benefits’ of rituals. Cannadine also described the relationship between rituals and context, stating that although rituals can maintain their form through repetitiveness, their meaning is changeable depending on the context. According to him, context cannot only change the meaning of rituals but also the rituals themselves. This implies that changes in rituals are a result of both internal and external factors.

Catherine Bell insists that the ‘sociocultural context’ (1997, p.212) is not merely a background for ritual performance. According to her, people simultaneously create ‘a ground and foreground’ (1997, p.212) by their ritual actions. She considered changes in early Christianity as an example, stating that despite the stability of tradition and structural durability of rituals created through history, the ethos and theoretical meaning of Christianity have changed across the ages. In ‘The Invention of Tradition’ (1983), Hobsbawm states that one of the characteristics of rituals, which is inherent in newly invented rituals, is constancy, and the history of the ritual, which is either true or fictitious, as told by tradition, imposes formalised practice through repetition. These repetitive and formalised practices are
significant characteristics of almost all rituals.

**Practice theory in ritual studies**

Bell states that ritual studies, when viewed from the perspective of practice, implies a basic shift from conceptualizing rituals as behaviour that is an expression of a cultural pattern, to behaviour that involves the creation of a pattern. Rituals, when viewed through the lens of practice theory, appear to be processes that are reproduced time and again, and that are therefore dynamic rather than static repetitive actions that have a fixed structure. This implies that ‘repetitiveness’, which is one of the significant characteristics of rituals and creates the impression of rituals being relatively invariant or constant, implies not only the repetition of the same actions but also humans’ reproduction or recreating of a performance. Bell also states that the practice theory constructs power relations amongst members of the community that performs rituals. This implies that power relationships are formed and shared amongst performers or practitioners through rituals that involve the reproduction of behaviours.

As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, Bourdieu (1977) defined disposition gained and possessed socially as ‘habitus’. He also termed the actions and behaviour unconsciously and mechanically carried out during customary practices in everyday life as ‘practice’. Habitus, according to Bourdieu, defines the direction of ‘practice’, and consistent practice regenerates habitus.
Sherry Ortner expressed Bourdieu’s habitus as ‘a deeply buried structure’ (2006, p.5), and as both structural and practical. Through habitus, structure is restructurised and actions are reproduced as practice. Bourdieu defines habitus as a structuralised structure; however, Ortner insists that habitus is an intentional agency that connects structure and practice. Habitus is not a legal rule or law in society. It only refers to the disposition that is socially created amongst members of the society. Therefore, the effect is limited, and the members of society are not obligated to perform the ritual and the actions associated with it. In other words, disposition does not imply ‘must do’; rather, it implies that ‘doing so is what is commonly expected’ or that performing the rituals would have ‘favourable consequences’ for society. In fact, if a specific disposition is possessed and shared in society for a long time, the disposition sometimes acquires considerable social power through a silent agreement or tacit consent among members of the society.

Thus, when a community possesses and shares habitus for a long time, this can create a kind of continuity in their disposition, or sometimes, a kind of social obligation. Such continuity may seem more or less negative when the disposition is viewed as a social obligation. However, it also gives people the space to create various values for themselves through practice.

Values of continuity

Identity

One of the values that ritual continuity generates concerns the provision of space and time to practitioners, wherein some kind of identity is created.
According to Anthony Giddens (1991), identity includes the process of identification and implies that we are similar in terms of certain aspects. This implies that our identity cannot be formed without others. Lang (1961) also described how other people are necessary for creating one’s identity and that with the help of the relationships formed with others, we can manifest our identity. In other words, identity is created through interrelationships between oneself and others, and this depends on who the ‘other’ is. For example, when an individual interacts with their mother, he/she has an identity that is different from the identity this person has when interacting with a friend. According to Giddens, identity is never complete and undergoes a constant process of formation. Thus, identity has many facets and is dynamic and sometimes paradoxical; in other words, identity can also cause insecurity among members of the society.

However, this insecurity could result in a certain degree of stability by assigning particular roles to an individual in society. For example, if a member who is new to a ritual is assigned the role of a musician in the community, this person’s identity would become stable if he/she repeatedly played the role of a musician over a long period of time. When such roles are repeatedly performed by members of the society over a long period of time, the members agree upon the meanings of such roles and expect certain actions when the role is performed. In this manner, the specific disposition of the roles is directed amongst members of the society by their actions. Therefore, a person who has a specific role can behave appropriately because of understanding what society expects from him/her in terms of their role. However, at the same time, such a disposition can also cause
stress for the person. For example, a person playing the role of a musician is expected to attend rehearsals, or may have to engage in behaviour that is personally unacceptable to them.

Peter Berger and Thomas Luckman (1966) state that roles are recognised through interrelation with others in the society. Helen Lynd (1958) also mentioned that roles include appeals from society to behave in a certain manner. This implies that people are expected to behave in a specific manner when they have a specific role that is recognised by the society. Berger and Luckman stated that such behaviours or actions based on the role are, in fact, done under social force. Thus, having a specific role is accompanied with a social response, which an individual realises by exhibiting the behaviour that is associated with that role and is expected by the society. In this manner, the society demands that people with specific roles engage in specific behaviour or action, and by doing this and conforming to the societal roles, they acquire social status or value in the society. As I mentioned earlier, such demands sometimes become burdensome. In fact, these demands during rituals might even burden practitioners to the extent that they stop performing the ritual resulting in its disappearance. Therefore, in order to counter this, demands regarding the performance of rituals are often flexible and can be modified by members so that the ritual may survive. This implies that the demands regarding the performance of rituals are not created in a rigid or one-sided manner, and the expected behaviour or actions are negotiated by members.
Sense of belonging

Another value which arises as a result of continuity in rituals is the creation and promotion of members’ sense of belonging to the community through the sharing of space and time by attending rituals; this sense of belongingness also results from the members’ participation in the rituals and their successful enactment of the roles. This implies that the value of rituals lies not only in their origin but also in the fact that they result in the creation of new meanings for the community owing to their continuous performance. For instance, in a particular case study, Reiko Itoh and Leonard Plotnicov (1999) explained that Jews attending informal Jewish services in a Reform Jewish congregation in Pittsburgh do so, not so much for religious reasons, but because it provides them with a space in which they can create and manifest their identity as Jews and hence strengthen their belongingness to the community. In other words, they attend the service to create personal and collective identities. Similarly, the continuous performance of rituals by communities provides members with the opportunity to share various things such as the time, place, performance, and the history of rituals. Such sharing relates a member’s personal identity to their collective identity as a community member.

Peter Parkes (1994) stated that singing performances in Kalasha society, located in the Chitral valley of north-west Pakistan, are related to the members’ personal group and collective identities, which serve as an agency of expression, and are used by members to express their allegiance to society. In this manner, the continual sharing of actions or performances, and the knowledge and skills shared and recognised by members of a
community create a sense of unity among members. This sense of unity is one of the factors that generates members’ sense of belongingness and helps in the creation of their identity as community members. This collective identity that is created amongst members is also the result of external factors. This implies that their identity is achieved through recognition by outsiders. This collective identity is restricted to members of the community, and is not shared by other communities or external societies.

A collective identity and sense of belongingness promote and motivate the members of a society to continue performing the rituals because the rituals are valued by its members. The degree of belongingness depends on the members, but some may not consciously feel they belong at all. However, by assuming specific roles, members do usually become aware of being part of the community. In addition, by attending the rituals regularly, they renew their relationships with the rituals. This serves to reinforce the sense of belongingness. Most rituals have specific conditions attached to them; for example, they have to be performed at a specific date, time, and the performers have to fulfil certain conditions. Thus, members tend to perform the rituals in a similar manner. However, since the society they live in is constantly changing, certain communities sometimes encounter difficulties in performing rituals in the traditional manner. In such cases, the sense of identity and belongingness supports the continuation of rituals because of the sense of value attached to them.
Tradition

As Richard Handler and Jocelyn Linnekin (1984) state, tradition in the common sense is an ‘inherited body of customs and beliefs’, or the ‘continuity of the past with the present’ (1984, pp.273-275). Humans have passed down their own traditions specifically by performing them, that is, through practice. Similarly, continuity in rituals is the face of tradition and is recognised both by practitioners who perform the rituals and by observers who are not a part of the community.

In the first chapter, I stated that tradition is often identified as being unchangeable. In other words, some communities value rituals because they represent the invariance of tradition. As repeatedly noted above, rituals often project an unchangeable or static image. Significant characteristics of rituals are their formalised structure and repetitive nature. Thus, the continued performance of rituals easily deems rituals as unchangeable traditions, in the absence of any evidence that they have been passed down without any change. Most rituals have a structure, and these structuralised actions are repeated during the rituals. Such actions are expressed through the bodily movements of performers while they perform the ritual, and knowledge of the rituals is also renewed through their continued performance, either consciously or unconsciously. Therefore, both physically and mentally, it is relatively easy to memorise the rituals and the information contained in them through their repeated performance.

Another reason behind honouring tradition by continuously performing rituals is that they foster a sense of connection to the past. For example, in
the Ōu community, which is the focus of my research, some members considered their rituals to be family traditions. For example, grandfathers and fathers attended the rituals as musicians and now their children/grandchildren play the same musical instruments. Such family histories, with different generations actively participating in rituals, sometimes makes members believe that their rituals are ancient, despite the lack of any evidence for this. Even though some members were not aware of the origin of the rituals, they approve of their continued performance since their forbearers were also connected to them.

Some scholars distinguish rituals from the activities that people engage in during their daily lives; however, this distinction is somewhat dubious, as rituals are ever present in daily life. Satsuki Kawano (2005) stated that rituals are associated with daily life, and evoke gratitude, respect and other positive moral values. Human beings perform various rituals in their lives. Some of them, such as annual rituals, are periodic. Kawano stated that such rituals create a sense of morality, and some repeated rituals can arouse various feelings and emotions in performers. For example, higan is observed in Japan for a period of one week in both spring and autumn; during higan, people visit family graves in spring in order to offer incense, flowers and prayers to the dead. How this tradition is observed differs according to the Japanese Buddhist sect; however, each family performs the ritual in more or less its own characteristic way and continues to perform it in that way. This implies that each family follows its own unique way of performing the ritual or family tradition. This formal approach when practising rituals, and giving consideration to old family traditions or
ancestors, creates a sense of respect or reverence for ancestors or one’s own family. This attitude might be carried over to other rituals or other occasions in society, since people belong to several societies that cannot be completely separated.

**Continuity through change**

Music has been examined in this chapter in terms of its dynamic character and its ability to facilitate change. On the other hand, the characterisation of rituals as continuous and repetitive, has also been explored. The proposition here is not that these should be viewed as opposites, but rather that one facilitates the other.

Let us first consider music. Change is an important factor in the preservation of music. Music can survive, or is preserved, by adapting to a new social environment. Since a complete change of music may indicate that the music is disappearing from a given society, continuity in music is more or less required for its preservation. Therefore, continuity resides in music itself even if the degree of change depends on the music. Both rituals and music are temporal and dynamic in nature since they are human acts. Therefore, changes in both are more or less inevitable. However, rituals are also considered to be unchanged or stable. Therefore, it is difficult to recognise change in rituals. Thus, change and continuity coexist in both music and rituals. These are not opposed to one another; rather, through change, music and rituals are preserved and on the other hand, such continuity allows change to exist in both rituals and music. Change and continuity thus
facilitate one another.

Focusing on only changes in music and continuity in rituals might give the impression that they are opposed to one another. Since rituals are characterised by repetition and formality, it is easy to consider it as being unchanged for a long period of time. However, continuity does not refer to an unchanged absence or an absence of any change. When we see continuity in the context of human behaviour, it refers to continuing something without interruption. What about change? If continuity means simply continuing something, the opposite of continuity would be something that describes the state of stopping. Therefore, change and continuity are not opposed to one another. If musical behaviour is discontinued for a long period of time, music might disappear from society, even though there is a possibility of its revival.

Music and rituals share the common characteristics of being the human actions performed in and accepted by society, and their survival is based on their performances in society. This means that performing is necessary for them to survive. One of the characteristics of human actions is that we cannot exactly carry out the same performances again. Therefore, changes in human behaviour or performance are more or less inevitable. However, this character of change facilitates the survival and preservation of music and rituals. That means, by accepting change, ritual and music are allowed to continue, and thus they can survive in society. Change in music that is found in society does not necessarily constitute any major social change. However, changes in music brought about by its performance create flexibility in
music and therefore, make it easy for music to adapt to the social environment. Rituals sometimes resist change because of the formality involved that has continued over a long period of time. However, performances in rituals are also considered to be human actions as the music is performed in these rituals, thus permitting change to take place. Especially when the perspective of society towards the rituals and music has changed and the ritual community faces difficulty in carrying them out under new social conditions; such changes preserve the rituals and music, thus maintaining the continuity of them in the community.

Thus, continuity and change facilitate one another. This relationship between continuity and change is particularly well facilitated by practice. In the section under the continuity of rituals, I specifically described that ‘disposition’, which Bourdieu called habitus, is created by practice in society. Especially in the ritual community, such a disposition is created by its members through repetitive actions. This disposition sometimes restricts or controls the creation of new actions in the community or changes their customary actions. Therefore, most of the music employed in the rituals is relatively stable because of such restrictions. Some characteristics of the rituals, for example, formality and stability, also hide or obscure the changes in music. In fact, most music in rituals is performed in the same manner and is repeated periodically; therefore, there rarely ever is any radical change. However, this does not imply an absence of musical change in rituals. In addition, changes in ritual music can be observed in the transmission of the music from one generation to the next, rather than in the performances of the rituals. Since community members hand down the music by performing
Changes occur in performances due to various reasons. For example, errors that take place during performances are not corrected and are transmitted to the next generation with the same errors. Musicians whose abilities are questionable, or performers who do not conform to the prevailing customs of the performances, may possibly bring about changes in performance. As I mentioned, the community does not permit all the changes to be implemented in the rituals. Even if various changes are required to be implemented in the rituals and music, the members selectively decide which change is suitable. For example, some changes are rejected and dismissed as mistakes or errors. These judgments are made by the members, since the ownership of the rituals and music lies not with any individual but with the community. Thus, changes are negotiated amongst the community members and only those changes that are accepted by the members continue to prevail. By practising music and rituals, such changes can be negotiated through continuity, and in turn it can be said that change also facilitates continuity.

In music and rituals, changes are adopted and preserved by accepting the performers and the society that rituals and music belong to. Tradition refers to the process of handing down something, or the results of such a process, to the next generation. Therefore, tradition more or less possesses continuity. In his book *Invention of Tradition* (1983), Eric Hobsbawm states that certain ‘old’ existing traditions are relatively recent inventions. However, such
invented traditions also create continuity that connect the traditions of the present to the past without manifesting any evidence of continuity, and are thus recognised as traditional events by society. In addition, this continuity that is a part of both tradition and invented tradition, makes connections not only with the past but also with the future. For example, annual traditional events definitely take place not only in the present year but also in the following year, because these events have taken place annually over a long period of time.

In fact, like rituals, tradition is considered to be relatively stable. Because specific behaviours or manners distinguish a society, and the tradition of these behaviours is carried over to the next generation, such customs are repeated, thus making them stable and ensuring their durability. However, as Catherine Bell mentioned, changes are observed in rituals even though tradition possesses stability and structural durability. On the basis of this understanding, tradition is always passed onto the next generation accompanied by change.

In tradition, as is the case with rituals, its values and customs are created, negotiated and shared by the community members through their practice and the process of handing them down to the next generation. In the process, their collective identity or belongingness is created and shared amongst the community members. This identity and sense of belonging are not accompaniments of tradition, but are formed through practice. Therefore, tradition itself does not create value. The values and meaning of tradition are created and reproduced by the community members through practising
the tradition. It is only by human action that tradition is preserved. In other words, tradition should be preserved through changes. Some of the characteristics of tradition that overlap with rituals can create continuity from the past. In traditional rituals, the consistency, seeming appearance of remaining unchanged and association with the past are all combined.

There are various accepted views regarding changes in tradition by societies. As I described in chapter one, a good example where change is valued by a given society can be found in Japan. In Japan, the passing down of tradition appropriately or correctly means that tradition is being handed down without any change. Therefore, change in tradition more or less has a negative image, and community members avoid making any possible changes. Here, change and continuity are treated as opposites. However, as I have proposed earlier, they are not necessarily opposites. Continuity occurs through changes in practice.

Preserving tradition means that those traditional practices are still performed in modern times. This means that the tradition has survived. Again, tradition, ritual and music can be preserved through performances of them and therefore survive in society. Through such performances, society recognised them as survivalist activities related to daily life. Therefore, for rituals and tradition, the assimilation of the modern is necessary for their continuity. In the twenty first century, there are various rituals and festivals which have survived in Japan. Some of these rituals seem to have continued without any changes. However, in fact, both change and continuity have occurred in these rituals and festivals through the continuation of activities associated
Summary

Drawing on key texts from the disciplines of ethnomusicology and ritual studies, this chapter attempts to ground the proposal of continuity through change, which emerged from my ethnographic work on the *miko mai shinji*, within a wider framework encompassing the relationship between music and ritual. Music and rituals, just like human behaviour, cannot avoid being changed. However, formality and structured performance are made repetitive by practice, and thus obscure the changes in ritual and ritual music. This apparent contradiction between change and continuity is not to be perceived as oppositional; rather, change and continuity facilitate each other by contributing to subtle but important levels of adaptation and change. Therefore, through adaptation, rituals and ritual music allow for the preservation of tradition. This relationship between change and continuity is particularly well facilitated by practice. Thus, change does not prevent preservation, but is rather one of the factors necessary for preservation. Ritual practice allows for the honouring of tradition through continuity, and at the same time, continuity through change allows for the assimilation of modern Japan, where tradition is a core value.

This proposition emerged from my ethnographic experiences with the musicians of one particular ritual community. As I have briefly mentioned at the end of the first chapter, the ritual, *miko mai shinji*, is held annually by the Ôu community, which consists of residents of the Ôu area located in

with them.
eastern Japan. I conducted my fieldwork from 2005 to 2007 and this period also included a ten-day rehearsal. Such a rehearsal is also formalised as a ritual in itself. The tradition is orally transmitted and the music played has no musical score; it is merely used as an accompaniment during the traditional dance, which is normally performed by a girl and is dedicated to the kami (divine).

In the subsequent chapter, I try to provide a ‘thick description’ of the ritual as advocated by Geertz, and therefore, the description not only includes that of the ritual itself but also the process of the ritual, such as rehearsals. I have also described the methods that I used in my fieldwork at the beginning of the next chapter. In my research, I discovered that changes in ritual music were very subtle and veiled by the appearance of the continuity of the ritual. However, through three years of observation, some changes were certainly detectable. Here, we move to the next chapter, where I shall further discuss the relationship between change and continuity in ritual and ritual music through a focused exploration of one particular ritual community.
Chapter 3

The miko mai shinji: an ethnographic description

In this chapter, I provide an in-depth description of miko mai shinji to explain my central hypothesis of continuity through change in ritual and music. Although miko mai shinji is the primary ritual under discussion, it
should not be treated separately from other rituals and events, which are also conducted by the community along with the main ritual. These form part of the wider ritual context. In particular, the music and dance rehearsals, which are conducted around eight days before the ritual, are essential to the discussion of miko mai shinji in my research, although the rehearsals are not official rituals. However, they are ritualised by their regulated manners. Therefore, I consider miko mai shinji as not only the main ritual but also as a complete ritualistic event that includes all the events related to the ritual. I conducted fieldwork from 2005 to 2007, covering all events from 1st November, which is the first day of the ritual called mikotsuke sai, to the last day called takaharai sai; takaharai sai is scheduled a few days after the main ritual.

**Methods used in the fieldwork**

Since my primary approach of this research is ethnographic, I began conducting my fieldwork by observing the community and the rituals associated with it. Participant observation is a widely used method, particularly in the ethnographic approach, and involves participating in the life of the people being observed while maintaining a professional distance so as to ensure that adequate data is recorded (Robson, 2002). Because participation and observation are not polar opposites but rather exist on a continuum, it is a flexible model. In view of this, the participation rate in participant observation was different at each time during my fieldwork,

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32 Usually, takaharai sai is scheduled on the first Sunday or public holiday after the main ritual.
depending on (1) my relationship with the observed people in the community and (2) the condition of the fieldwork. For example, in 2005 (the year in which I began fieldwork in this community), I rarely participated in the activities related to their rituals. This was because I had not established a strong-enough relationship with the members at that time. As Goward (1984) mentions, most of the information obtained by researchers is dependent on whether people invite or accept them into their lives, and this involves winning their trust and friendship. In other words, participant observation directly reflects the relationship between the observed people and researchers. Therefore, I abstained from active interaction until I felt secure about my relationship with the participants, and I spent my first year establishing a rapport with them, in addition to observing their rituals and related activities.

My first step into the community was supported by Mr. Hinoki, who was a member of a senior group in the community called sôdai. He was born and brought up in this region and, like most members of the community, has attended this ritual since childhood. Although he is not an academic researcher or a scholar, he belonged to a folk study club in Itako city called Suigô minzoku kenkyû kai (The Suigô33 folkloric research group) and is self-taught in this ritual. Therefore, he has more specialised knowledge and information regarding this ritual than the other members. In addition, as a representative of the community, he communicates with outsiders, including local news reporters, cameramen and people who, like me, are interested in the ritual. The community members approach Mr. Hinoki if they face any

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33 Suigô (水郷, water and village) is the name of water-side districts.
problem regarding the ritual because he is the one authority adequately equipped to settle the situation. Thus, it is evident he possesses considerable knowledge and influence in the community. He also acted as my first informant when I began fieldwork. The information he shared with me was almost the same as that in the published literature and the local newspapers. An example of this is as follows:

In order to decide the miko of the year, (a) girl is selected from among girls who reside in the Ōu area and whose ages range from seven to thirteen years.

(Jōyō news paper 2005)

As my fieldwork progressed, a question arose as to the credibility of the accounts of other people. Cohen (1984) mentions that every member is a potential source of various types of information. In addition, Spradley (1979) states that people become excellent sources of information by answering the same questions repeatedly in interviews conducted by researchers. Given this, I considered all the community members as informants in the fieldwork. Therefore, I interviewed and spoke to the members, in the same way as I did with Mr. Hinoki. Fontana and Frey (2000) state that conducting interviews is the most common and effective way in which individuals endeavour to understand their colleagues and other people. By talking and listening, we are able to acquire information from people and share it; consequently, we are able to better understand one another. I believed that I could also build a rapport with them through such interrelated communication.
Interviews were held during the scheduled breaks between musical rehearsals as well as after the rehearsals. Most of the interviews were conducted in the rehearsal room, where the members would invariably be in groups. Consequently, many members would be present at the time of an interview; because of this, when I interviewed one member, some of the other members would also participate or listen, thus making it a group interview.

As Fontana and Frey point out, an advantage of the group interview is that members are provided with a stimulus that enables them to recall specific events or experiences, which they then share within their group. In fact, some members’ comments sometimes acted as a trigger for other members, and certain information was identified as being correct or incorrect by members participating in group interviews.

In 2006, I also administered questionnaires to the members in the rehearsal
room and requested them to complete the forms during the break. The questionnaire administered to the musicians differed from that administered to the other members in terms of the questions asked. I added more questions related to music in the sheets. All the respondents were required to write their names on the sheets. People whose questionnaires were left blank, or who had used obscure expressions, were interviewed later. The sheets proved useful not only in knowing their thoughts or opinions but also in putting a face to each name, allowing me to easily identify who they were talking about in the interviews\textsuperscript{34}.

I paid careful attention to the length of the interviews; I tried to talk to everyone for a similar amount of time. I made sure to switch on my recorder in front of everyone so that they were aware that their conversations were being recorded, although I had already previously procured verbal permission. Some members asked me to stop the recording or delete the data because of certain words used. For example, in 2007, one member complained about other members during an interview and later requested me to delete the record. I entertained such requests because the members themselves played a crucial role in contributing to the data. In such cases, I made a written record of the event in a journal that I maintained during the fieldwork. The same holds for the filming of rehearsals during fieldwork. In 2006, some of the members asked me to refrain from showing the films to people outside the community since the rehearsals these days differ from the regular ones conducted previously.\textsuperscript{35}

\textsuperscript{34} I have included the questionnaire template in the appendices.
\textsuperscript{35} In 2007, they again used an irregular manner in their rehearsal; however, they did not mention anything about the use of films.
As a woman, I faced additional challenges in collecting recorded data in the field. Except for the *miko*, the ritual is conducted by males only, and women face many restrictions. They were not allowed to enter the rehearsal room when the men were rehearsing, except to serve tea during breaks. I therefore had to film their rehearsals from outside the room. This imposed filming constraints, and it was impossible to film the entire view of the room from outside. I had to occasionally change my position and film the rehearsals from different angles. In addition, on the day the ritual was conducted, the ritual itself was too long to film on the camera I was using, and I had to turn off the camera to change tapes. Thus, it was also impossible to capture everything related to the ritual on film. However, the purpose of filming was not only to record all the performances in the ritual or rehearsals precisely but also to analyse them. Morphy (1994) points out that viewing or reviewing filmed data enables us to notice various aspects that we fail to notice when we observe the ritual live. By repeatedly viewing filmed data, I described the dance and music in order to analyse the changes in their music. Since I am trained in Western classical music, I used the Western scale to describe the melody of the *shinobue* flute. With regard to dance, I used the data to depict the step and arm movements of the dancers.

The information collected and acquired in the field can be divided into two categories. One category comprises recorded materials such as interviews, films and music recordings that researchers study for a specific purpose or which help illuminate others. Another category includes the material obtained from personal journals or from researchers’ memories, including emotions and feelings, pertaining to their experiences during the fieldwork.
How should I treat personal items in my research? During my fieldwork, I maintained a personal journal and made entries when I was at home. One of the advantages of a journal is that we can directly express our emotions in it. We cannot directly express our emotions or feelings through films or photographs, but we can capture information with a specific intention. In my journal, I randomly made personal notes while recording the events and accidents that occurred during my fieldwork, and writing about my feelings and emotions associated with them. Ellis and Bochner (2000) elucidate the recounting of such personal experiences and feelings for the purpose of research by ‘autoethnography’. However, as Ellen (1984) mentions, personal journals pertaining to fieldwork not only provide a form of emotional catharsis by enabling researchers to separate professional and personal observations but also include ideas, information and comments that may later aid interpretation. (Scholars who have delved into the significance of the autoethnographical aspect include Duncan (2004), and some contributors to the book *Shadows in the fields* (2008), including Kisliuk and Beaudry). The contents of my journal account reflect the way in which I understand or know the people in the community, their society and my own self, and provide the backdrop to my fieldwork. From this perspective, I occasionally used my journal as a mirror that reflected my inner self—my emotions, preconceived notions and feelings—and how I understood them.
Introduction to *kagura* and *miko mai*

Before we proceed to survey *miko mai shinji*, it is essential to explain *kagura*, a genre of ritual music, dance and drama associated with Shinto shrines. *Miko mai shinji* is one example of *kagura*. There are two major types of *kagura*. One is *mikagura*, *kagura* of the Imperial court, performed by musicians of the *Kunaichō shikibu* (Department of Ceremonies of the Imperial household), and performed in other major shrines. The other type is *sato kagura*, which is played or performed by people in local shrines.

The word *kagura* is written as a combination of two Chinese characters, ‘神’ (meaning ‘God’) and ‘楽’ (meaning ‘joy’, ‘pleasure’ or, more pertinently in this instance, ‘music’)\(^{36}\) and, according to some scholars, is a reduced form of the words ‘*kamu kura*’ (meaning ‘seat of the kami’). Honda (1990), one of the scholars who supported the concept of *kamu kura*, considered that a prayer rite, which was conducted facing the seat of *kami*, was referred to as *kagura* in ancient times. According to him, the prayer rite was meant to incorporate the power of the *kami* into the human body.

*Mikagura* is the oldest surviving *kagura* having taken place, on a regular basis, in the court in mid December since the year 1087. The performance is given on a seven stringed zither called a *wagon*, a transverse flute called a *kagura bue*, a vertical double reed flute called a *hichiriki*, and two wooden clappers called *shakubyōshi*. The music accompanies the occasional dances of the *ninjō*, the leader of the group.

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\(^{36}\) In his book, Tsugita (1977) describes that this Chinese character means performing dance and music in front of the Divine.
The *Kojiki* (712), an ancient three-volume chronicle of Japanese myth and early history, dedicated to the Empress Genmei, contains a mythical story that is purported to relate the origins of the *kagura* dance.

Tsugita (1977) translated the *Kojiki* and, here, I summarise the story based on his modern translation as follows:

The sun deity, Amaterasu Ômikami, hid herself in a rock cave because she was angered by the deeds of her brother, Susanoo no Mikoto. The world was then plunged into darkness, causing the other gods and goddesses to become worried. They then tried to lure Amaterasu Ômikami out of the cave and summoned the goddess Ame no uzume no Mikoto to dance in front of the cave. Attracted by the commotion the sun goddess was gradually lured out and light was restored to the world. The dance of Ame no Uzume no Mikoto is considered to be the origins of the *kagura* dance.

According to Kishibe (1984), the basic instruments used in *sato kagura* performances are transverse flutes, medium-sized drums, and often a large barrel drum. Honda (1993) classifies *sato kagura* into four types: (1) *miko kagura*, which involves dance performances by maidens at shrines; (2) *Ise ryû kagura* (*Ise type kagura*) which involves boiling water and the sprinkling of the water as part of a purification ritual; (3) *Izumo ryû kagura*
(Izumo type kagura), which is primarily a theatrical kagura, involving the theatricalisation of Japanese myths as the essential element; and (4) shishi kagura, lion dance kagura.

Miko mai shinji belongs to the first category of Honda’s classification, miko mai, and is one of many folk performing arts in the Kantô area in and around Tokyo. Honda notes that Izumo ryu kagura is prevalent in the region, and refers to miko kagura as the oldest form, similarly alluding to the mythical origins in the dance of Ame no Uzume no Mikoto.

The first record of miko kagura in the Kantô area is found in the Azuma kagami, a chronicle of events dating from 1180 to 1266. This work contains a description of kagura performances in 1181. Honda mentions that the term ‘kagura’ is found in other instances in the book, Azuma kagami, in reference to miko kagura. Honda (1993) used the terms ‘miko mai’ and ‘miko kagura’ interchangeably in his own publication. Miko kagura performances are widely prevalent in Japan and include the notable examples of Yaotome mai (the dance of eight girls) at the grand shrines of Kasuga and Ise and the miko mai of Kibitsuhiko shrine.

Descriptions of miko mai are also to be found in the foreign literature. A Japanese translation of Georg Schurhammer’s ‘Shin-tô: der Weg der Götter in Japan: der Shintoismus nach den gedruckten und ungedruckten Berichten der japanischen Jesuitenmissionaire des 16. und 17. Jahrhunders’ (Shintô: the way of the gods in Japan: The Shintoism, according to the printed and

37 The specific year that it was published is unclear.
unprinted reports of the Japanese Jesuits Missionaries in the 16th and 17th Century) (Schurhammer 2007) presents a few descriptions, by Jesuit missionaries to Japan, of kagura dances in the 16th and 17th centuries. For example, there is a description of kagura, where women reside in pagodas (shrines), and dance in a graceful, arching manner in front of the pagoda since they believe that the ideal dedication by visitors to the shrine is through dancing. Another description provided is that of an old woman with a bell in her right hand, who dances and sings for half an hour, accompanied by the sounds of drums and the systrum. The bell probably refers to the suzu, a short staff to which ten or twelve bells are attached at one end. I presume that these bells are identical or similar to the types of bells used widely in miko mai performances in present-day Japan.  

In order to obtain a wider view of miko mai in the Ibaraki area, I consulted with the Ibaraki Minzoku Gakkai (The society for Ibaraki folk arts) on miko mai in Ibaraki prefecture. The age of miko varies across Japan though in the Ibaraki area, girls of predominantly primary school age seem to dominate. For example, my fieldwork revealed that the age group of miko in Ōu shrine ranged from 7–13 years. Another miko who dances in a ritual held in the Kunigami shrine, which is located very close to the Ōu region and consequently has a very similar dance, is under 13 years. The four girls who dance miko mai at Yahata shrine in Ishioka city, Kakioka, are aged between 9 and 12 years. And the age of two miko mai dancers at Negoya nanadaiten shrine corresponds to fifth graders in elementary school, namely

38 A common style of suzu used in miko mai and is included in the miko mai shinji in Japan, in which around 15 small bells are attached.  
39 According to the book, ‘Yasatomachi shi.’
around 10 or 11 years of age. *Miko mai* dances are unmasked, which contrasts with the theatrical, masked performances in *Daidai kagura* by men at Ogurinaigedai shrine, though *miko* dances are included here too. The Higashikanaasa shrine in Ibaraki holds *miko mai* performance once every 73 years. This *miko mai* is performed by a male wearing a female face mask. The *miko mai* of the Sakatsura isosaki shrine is performed by five girls in the month of May every year, and the *miko mai* of the Ōarai isomae shrine is performed by four girls annually in April. The Kasama *Inari* shrine, in Kasama city, Ibaraki, has an event called ‘*Maigaku sai*’ in which a dance with *gagaku* music is performed every year in November. In this festival, a contemporary *kagura* dance called ‘*Urayasu no mai*’ is performed. *Miko mai* is also performed in other shrines such as the *Kashima* shrine of Obitama city, and the *Tōshōgu* shrine of Mito city where a ‘contemporary’ 20th century *kagura* dance is performed to the accompaniment of *gagaku* music. From these examples, it is apparent that *miko mai* performances are widely prevalent in Ibaraki.

These *miko mai* performances can be classified into two categories: (1) anonymous or local *miko mai*, where choreographers are unknown. These are performed in local shrines by *ujiko*, people who live around shrines, or by local Shinto priests; and (2) contemporary *miko mai* that have been choreographed by specific individuals or by members of the *Kunaichō shikibu* (Department of Ceremonies of the Imperial Household). Contemporary *miko mai* is performed at large shrines, for example, at the *Kashima* shrine of *Kashima* city or the *Hitachi no kuni sōshagu* shrine in the

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40 Kanasa Dai-dengaku festival.
Ishioka city of Ibaraki.

The following section will examine the miko mai shinji at the heart of this study, and the community which performs this ritual.

**Miko mai shinji conducted by the Ôu community**

The Ôu area of Itako City in Ibaraki Prefecture, located in eastern Japan, has many fields and forests and is richly endowed with natural resources.

In the past, the inhabitants of the region mostly consisted of farming families. Today, younger people seek employment in other cities due in part to better transport accessibility and development. The community consists of families who live around Ôu shrine. There are around 50 families in the area; people who enshrine the same kami and live around the shrine are
known as *ujiko*, a term related to Shinto. I hesitate to define their religion as Shinto because most of them do not know the name of the *kami* even though they regard it as sacred.

For example, one of the musicians said the following during an interview:

‘We don’t know (the name of the deity enshrined at Ôu shrine), do we? The *kami* is just the *kami*, isn’t it? Absolutely, it is true, isn’t it?’ (Kawahara, 18/11/05)

This does not imply that they disrespect the shrine in which they have enshrined their *kami*. As proof of this, in the questionnaire distributed in 2006, some of the musicians commented that the shrine is the place where *kami* exists. Since it is sacred, they are able to purify their minds while there.

However, the inhabitants of this region are unaware of the origin of their ritual, although they have been annually organising it for a long time.

During the interview, one of the group members stated that the ritual can be regarded as tradition.

‘Well, for me, this ritual is...We need to preserve our regional tradition. This is the reason for my participation’. (Ishimoji, 12/11/05)

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41 The text enclosed in parentheses has been added by me.
Other members pointed out the relationship between the ritual and the region.

‘Well, it’s because we live in this region, isn’t it? We live in this region and such a thing (the ritual) exists in here, therefore we perform it’. (Hagiwara, 18/11/05)

‘Yes, because the ritual exists, we perform it in due time’. (Kozuna, 18/11/05)

‘I don’t have any special feelings about this ritual because it has existed since I was a child, and therefore, for me, it is natural that the ritual exists in this region’. (Kirise, 14/11/05)

A member who had grown up in this region and had attended the ritual many times said the following:

‘I feel like the calendar year ends when this ritual is over. This ritual and its schedule are incorporated into my year-round schedule.’ (Ishida, 13/11/05)

Another view refers to the means of communication between the people who reside in the area.

‘At the end, for me, the ritual is like a social gathering in this area. Well, it is also important as a traditional event at the shrine, but I
think that the ritual can also be understood as a gathering of people
and an occasion for sharing enjoyable moments.’ (Yanagita,
18/11/07)

Another member linked his participation in the ritual to faith.

‘(The reason for participating in this ritual is)…because this ritual
is related to the kami, we are not opposed to it. I cherish the kami
and the shrine, so I am not opposed to it’. (Matsumi, 14/11/05)

A young musician who has participated in this ritual for less than 10 years
answered thus:

‘I didn’t know this ritual was held in the region (before I joined)’.
(Kuwata, 18/11/05)

It is evident that there are varied opinions in the community regarding this
ritual. However, it is a fact that they are engaged in the preparation of the
ritual for approximately ten days every November, although their busy
schedules occasionally cause them to miss the music and dance rehearsals
for the ritual.

The community comprises the following members: (1) the headman of a
region called kuchô; (2) an assistant to the headman is fuku kuchô ; (3) five
representatives of the community known as sôdai; (4) two leaders of the
community called *saiji*; (5) two assistants of the *saiji* known as *fuku saiiji*; (6) musicians called *sôgakuin*; (7) a shrine maiden known as *miko*; (8) her father, known as *zashu*; (9) a dance teacher called *shishô*; (10) other male members of the community called *sewanin*; and (11) female members called *keishin fujinkai*.

**Literature on *miko mai shinji***

A brief survey of published literature on the ritual points to a history of ritual continuity and evolution.

On 20th April 1963, a small article on *miko mai shinji*, with a black and white photograph, was carried in the local news page of the Asahi newspaper. The picture showed a small girl dancing on straw mats in the premises of the Ôu shrine and a few musicians playing musical instruments.

Figure 8. Photograph extracted from Asahi newspaper
Based on a field survey, it was found that the annual ritual of the Ōu shrine retains the ancient style and is as valuable as Ibaraki folklore. Therefore, the *ken bunkazai iinkai* (the Prefectural Cultural Assets Committee) was urged to classify this ritual as designated folklore data. The main part of the article pertains to the ritual for selecting the shrine maiden, *miko*. The article states that this ritual is old and has retained its original form to the present day. According to the article, the representative of the group of shrine parishioners, known as *ujiko sódai*, selects a girl as *miko* from among girls who live in the Ōu area and are aged between 7 and 12 years. For this, they draw lots in front of the altar. Then, they decorate two bamboo branches with a sacred rice-straw rope called *shimenawa*, and secretly tie it to the entrance of the *miko* house to signify the *miko* and her family. Thereafter, the girl who is selected as *miko* is taught the dance form for ten days by the *ujiko*. In the article, only a few names of the musical instruments used in the ritual have been described, and no detailed description of the dance is given. The article states that as the *gagaku* music, involving the transverse flute and small hand drum plays, the girl dances with a *hei*\(^{42}\) in her right hand and a bell in her left hand. There is no description about clothing, however, in the picture, the *miko* has a bell in her right hand and a *hei* – a staff of strips of white paper - in her left hand. She wears a ceremonial skirt that goes down to her ankles and a white robe. The musicians wear white robes and a nobleman’s court headgear. It is difficult to determine what they are wearing because they are sitting on the ground; however, I believe that they are wearing deep-coloured men’s formal divided skirts.

\(^{42}\) A white paper was attached to a stick.
In the official application for registering the ritual as an intangible asset in Ibaraki, the *Ibarakiken mukei bunkazai shitei shinseisho* (application for the designation of an intangible asset for Ibaraki prefecture), some descriptions differ from the present-day ritual. For example, the *miko* is selected between 12 midnight and 1 a.m. on 1st November. Nowadays, they select the *miko* around 8 pm on 1st November. With regard to music, the form mentioned that there were four verses of lyrics; however, almost all are lost. Only the following line of lyrics was recorded in the form.

降神鎮の大神楽

These lyrics are not sung today, and I have never heard of their existence during my fieldwork in the community. 降 means, in this context, ‘to come down’; 神 means God; and 鎮 means to appease. Unfortunately, I have no definite idea how the word ‘降神鎮’ is pronounced and which melody is sung to the lyric. I think that the Chinese characters may be read as *Origami shizume no Ô-kagura*. However, considering the Chinese characters, I think that the meaning of the lyric is to invite and propitiate the *kami*. I did not encounter this song during my fieldwork in the community.

The *Ibaraki no Bunkazai Dai 8 shû* (Cultural assets of Ibaraki prefecture, number 8), published in 1969, records rituals in the Ibaraki prefecture, and notes that the *miko mai shinji* was designated as a cultural asset on 23rd August 1963. According to the description of the *miko mai shinji*, a *miko* is selected from among girls who live in the Ôu region and is aged between 7 and 13 years. The *ujiko sôdai*, the representative the parish, and other
members select her by drawing lots in front of an altar on the night of the 1st November every year. Then, in the dark after midnight, they secretly decorate the entrance to the miko’s house by tying shimenawa rope onto it. Thereafter, senior members teach the girl the dance for around ten days. The description also states that seven musicians play the following musical instruments: a kagura-daiko (kagura drum), two transverse flutes, an ōtsuzumi (large hour-shaped drum), a kotsuzumi (small hour-shaped drum), an ōdaiko (large barrel-shaped drum) and a shimedaiko (laced drum). According to the article, the miko wears a white robe called jōe, a red ceremonial skirt and has long flowing hair tied in a hairstyle called taregami. She has a hei wand in her right hand and a suzu bell in her left hand. These descriptions are more detailed than those provided in the above-mentioned newspaper article published in 1964. The description of the dance provided in the book is as follows: The miko first approaches the altar and faces it; then, moves the hei wand and the suzu bell up and down for a while. After that, she repeatedly moves backwards three times and moves forward two times. The exact nature of the dance is unclear since the explanation provided is vague. This article also carries a picture, which depicts the miko dancing in a hall of worship called haiden while a few musicians play musical instruments. In the written description, she has a suzu bell in her right hand and a hei wand in her left; however, in the picture inserted above the text, her right hand holds the a hei and her left hand holds a suzu.
Next, I will examine the literary document ‘Hitachi Ōu kofungun’ (ancient tombs of Hitachi Ōu\textsuperscript{43}) based on the study conducted by ÔBA Kunio. He conducted a study on ancient tombs, mainly from 1952 to 1960. According to Ôba, he studied the origin of the Ōu shrine and described the ritual in particular detail because of a strong request by the ujiko of the Ōu shrine, who wanted to preserve their ritual and make it known widely. He describes the origin of the Ōu shrine with details obtained from historical materials. However, apart from a brief outline, he did not provide details about the ritual and the dance because there was nothing about them in the historical records. In his outline he explains that, on 1\textsuperscript{st} November every year, lots are drawn to select a girl as miko from among girls aged between 8 and 13 who live in this region. At night, the miko’s house is decorated with shimenawa without the knowledge of the miko and her family. The senior members of

\textsuperscript{43}Hitachi is old name of the northwestern region in Ibaraki prefecture.
the shrine teach the *miko* the dance form, which involves holding a *hei* wand in the right hand and a *suzu* bell in the left hand. The ritual begins early in the evening. Following the purification ritual called *shubatsu*, a Shinto prayer, a dance is performed. The book states that the music includes a transverse flute, a drum and a small drum. The description of the dance is the same as the description in the *‘Ibaraki no Bunkazai Dai 8 shu’*, published in 1986. However, Ôba adds that the dance is repeated five or six times and lasts for 40 minutes. He asked a man named Nemoto, who is an expert on cultural assets, to survey this ritual and report on it since this ritual had been designated as a cultural asset. Therefore, his report is included in Ôba’s book. His report is similar to Ôba’s report though he added the order of the ritual. His description of the dance is the same as that provided by Ôba.

There are five pictures of *miko mai shinji* in *‘Ibaraki no matsuri’* (Festivals of Ibaraki) published in 1976. Another minor comment is that the rehearsals in the past continued till late at night; however, late rehearsals do not happen today.

*‘Ibaraki no mukei minzoku bunkazai’* (Intangible folk cultural assets of Ibaraki), which was published in 1982, explains the order and origin of the ritual in detail. The explanation of the dance movement states that one turn comprises a backward and forward movement, and the *miko* performs this term five or seven times. There is no mention of dancing in a circular motion in front of the altar. According to the book, the ritual is valued because the dance is considered to follow the ancient style that employs
simple movements. Of particular interest is the starting time of the performance on the eve of the ritual. The miko leaves for the shrine at 10 pm and the ritual starts at 11 pm. Nowadays, the ritual is not performed so late at night. Moreover, the description of the procedure for selecting the miko is different. According to this book, the ritual for selecting the miko is held at midnight on 31st October and the miko is selected on 1st November and they then start teaching the dance to the miko. The book describes that in the past, the musicians played music during the ritual held at midnight. Although the description of the miko’s attire is the same as that in the books published earlier, the attires of the miko and the musicians is quite different from a picture in the book. In the picture, the miko has a hei wand in her right hand and a suzu bell in her left hand, and the colour of her robe is not white. The attire of the musicians is also of a different colour.

In ‘Ibaraki no matsuri to minzoku geinô’ (Festivals and folklores of Japan), published in 1983, there is a picture depicting one of the rehearsal scenes. At that time, the rehearsals that were a part of the music and dance training were held in the miko’s house. In a traditional Japanese room, there is an alcove known as tokonoma, in which a scroll is hung with the name of the shrine written on it. A small table is placed in front of it. On this are placed the suzu bells and a standing white candle. The description of the dance is as follows: the miko first sits facing the altar, and stands up with the sounds of the kagura daiko drum. She takes a few steps backwards and moves the hei wand and suzu bell up and down widely; then, she returns to the altar. Next, she dances in a circular motion in front of the altar in the same manner.

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44 They have two bells, one is for rehearsal and another is for the ritual.
These dance movements are counted as one term. She performs five or seven turns. The manner of counting the dance terms is different because two movements, one back and forth and the other circular, are considered as one term. It is difficult to reconcile these differences because each author has a different manner of description or there are differences in the dance itself. In other words, the dance that the authors examined can either be the same or may have changed. The book mentions the lyrics of the saitô bayashi song that is sung when the miko and the community members leave the shrine after the ritual. The lyrics are different from those I observed in 2005.

‘Furusato no matsuri to kankô Ibaraki’ (festivals and sightseeing, Ibaraki) was published in 1983, and this gives the origin of the miko mai. According to this publication, in the Edo era (1603-1867), a shrine maiden of the Kashima shrine45 came to Ôu to conduct a ritual and dedicate a dance, and this dance is the origin of the present-day miko mai.46 It further explains that a girl is selected from amongst the oldest daughters aged between 7 and 12 years, and her house is decorated with shimenawa. Rehearsals begin from 3rd November. The musical instruments used are two transverse flutes, kotsuzumi, ôtsuzumi, shimedaiko, ódaiko and kagura-daiko. It is worth mentioning something about the origin of the lyrics of the dance music. The book states that, although four verses had originally existed, only the melody is used today. The description of the dance is as follows: first, the miko sits facing the altar and, when the drumming of the kagura-daiko

45 One of the major shrines in Japan.
46 I enquired about this at the Kashima shrine in 2008. The reason of this assumption is unclear.
begins, takes a *hei* wand and a *suzu* bell from the table and waves them alternately. After the drumming ends, she stands and dances backward. Next, when the music plays,\(^{47}\) she dances in a clockwise direction and returns to the original position by taking steps forward. These movements constitute one turn. Five or seven terms are performed. Here, the two movements: forward and backward, and circular are as one turn.

The ‘*Furusato Itako dai 9*’ (Hometown Itako volume 9) (1993) describes the *miko mai shinji* in detail when a certain Mr. Ôkawa was the leader of the *sôdai*. The book mentions the specific words that the members uttered during the ritual. For example, when one of the musicians announced the name of the *miko* to the *sôdai* and other members, he stated: ‘by disposition of providence, this year’s *miko* is (name)’. The description of dance and music is as follows: in the past, the first day of their rehearsal, called *norikomi sai*, was held in the *miko*’s house and a scroll of paper was hung. In the paper, Ôu daijingû (*Ôu Shrine*) is written in the calligraphic style.\(^{48}\) Nowadays, the rehearsals are performed in the community\(^{49}\) centres. The *miko* learns the dance from a teacher who is asked in advance, to be a teacher by two people who act as leaders of the community. During the rehearsals, the *miko* danced to the music for three or five turns. In between the rehearsals, they perform a ritual called *nakaiwai sai*. In this ritual, the *miko* dances for five or seven terms. The movements of the dance are similar to those in Oba’s description.

\(^{47}\) I believe that this means solo *kagura·daiko* drumming.

\(^{48}\) Written by the grandfather of one of the musicians.

\(^{49}\) They have two community centers at present.
The ‘Itako shi’ (History of Itako), published in 1996, includes a description of the miko mai which is the same as that in the ‘Furusato Itako dai 9’. In both descriptions, Mr. Ôkawa was the teacher. Therefore, there are similarities in the context. According to the ‘Itako shi’, the time for selecting the miko differs from that in the ‘Furusato Itako dai 9’ (1993). The ritual for selecting the miko begins around 9 pm, and those in charge of the ritual go to the miko’s house around 10 pm to decorate it with shimenawa.

According to the ‘Itako shi’, the rei sai ritual, which is known as the hon sai or miko mai shinji ritual, was conducted on the 14th, 15th and 16th of November. In other words, the ritual was held for two nights and three days. It was conducted by a Saigû (priestess) and a priest from the Kashima shrine.

The ‘Itakoshi no bunkazai’ (Cultural assets of Itako city), published in 2003, notes the change of date on which the ritual is held. At present, the ritual is held on the third Sunday of November. The description of the dance is the same as that in ‘Ibaraki no matsuri to minzoku geinô’ (1983).

When the information from the above sources is collated, key points of difference between the various accounts of the ritual can be summarised as follows:
Table of differences in the above literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>local news page of the Asahi newspaper</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>The clothes of <em>miko</em> and the musicians were different from those nowadays. The music was described as <em>gagaku</em>. They conducted the ritual on the grounds of the shrine shown in the photograph.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ibarakiken mukei bunkazai shitei shinseisho</em></td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>The time for selecting <em>miko</em> is later than that today. The existence of lyrics for the music is described.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ibaraki no Bunkazai Dai 8 shū</em></td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>The description that the ritual was designated as a cultural asset. The description of <em>miko’s</em> hand holding items contradicts the photograph in the book.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hitachi Ōu kofungun</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ibarakilo matsuri</em></td>
<td>1976</td>
<td>In the past, the rehearsals continued till late in the night.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ibaraki no mukei minzoku bunkazai’</em></td>
<td>1982</td>
<td>No mention of dancing in a circular motion in front of the altar. The starting time of the performance on the eve of the ritual was later than that today. The date of selecting <em>miko</em> was different from that today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Ibaraki no matsuri to minzoku geinō</em></td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>The rehearsals are held in <em>miko’s</em> house. The manner in which dance turns are counted is different. The lyrics of the song <em>saitō bayashi</em> are written. <em>some of these lyrics differ from the ones that I listened to in 2006.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Furusato no matsuri to kankō Ibaraki’</em></td>
<td>1983</td>
<td>A description of the origin of the ritual is found. The <em>miko</em> is selected from amongst the eldest daughters in the area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Furusato Itako dai 9’</em></td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>A detailed description of the manner in which the ritual is conducted under the supervision of advisor Mr. Ôkawa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itako shi</td>
<td>1996</td>
<td>A description that the ritual was held for two nights and three days in the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Itakoshi no bunkazai’</em></td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>A description that the ritual date was changed to the third Sunday of November.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recorded data**

Unfortunately, there are few recorded sources including videos, photographs and musical recordings of this ritual from the past. In 2001, an edited 30-minute video of this ritual was created by *Ibaraki kenritsu rekishi kan*
In this video recording, a sequence of the rituals, starting from the selection of the *miko*, is shown although these are edited. Through my interviews, I found that members of the community sometimes performed the *miko mai* dance and music outside the shrine. However, I could not find any recorded evidence of this.

**Assumptions and postulations**

Many books describe the close relationship between the Ōu shrine and the Kashima shrine. For example, Owa (1984) mentions that the maiden of Kashima shrine came to the Ōu shrine to present a large Shinto offering of paper. She stepped out of the Kashima shrine only six times a year. One of these was for visiting the Ōu shrine. This ritual of the Ōu shrine was one of the major celebrations in the region until the Edo period. However, there is no description of the ritual in Owa’s publication.

In 2008, I exchanged several e-mails with one of the Shinto priests of the Kashima shrine. He also mentioned the close relationship between the Ōu shrine and the Kashima shrine. Some books trace the origin of the *miko mai* dance to the dance performed by the Shinto maiden of the Kashima shrine. However, the Shinto priest of the Kashima shrine expressed a view different from that expressed in Owa’s publication, and other above mentioned literature. He suggests that both the Kashima shrine and the Ōu shrine had similar religious rituals or services, and successive Kashima shrine maidens performed rituals at the Ōu shrine. He surmises that such religious services were conducted until the beginning of the Meiji era (1868-1912). Based on
the diary of a Kashima shrine maiden in the Edo era (1603-1867), he says that it is clear that she conducted services at the Ôu shrine at that time. However, the system of shrine maidens was abolished in 1871, and all the Shinto priests were dismissed. Thereafter, the service of the Kashima shrine maiden at the Ôu shrine was stopped. In 1869, the last Kashima shrine maiden was selected and it is possible that she conducted the ritual at Ôu for some time. However, around 1877, she stopped performing the ritual because of the dismissal of Shinto priests at this time. The shrine priest at Kashima infers that the miko mai dance was originally dedicated to the Ôu shrine.

According to him, there was a gap in the performance of the ritual at Ôu for a few years and, when it was revived, the community at Ôu may have tried to imitate and follow the services originally given by the Kashima shrine maidens. From this, the ritual gradually developed into what it is today. However, the shrine priest continues that, in a picture scroll called the ‘Nenjûgyôji emaki’ (picture scroll of annual events) which depicts a scene of the Ôu shrine festival, a few Shinto priests and servants can be seen around a portable shrine. In addition, only the waving of a hei wand is depicted. Therefore, the present-day form of the dance, which involves dancing in the hall of worship to the music of transverse flute and drums, seems to be completely different from the performance of the ritual by the Kashima shrine maiden at Ôu as depicted in this scroll. On seeing the scroll, I concurred with the shrine priest.

Another assumption that I made based on my interviews during my
fieldwork is that there was a change of musical instruments. In 2005, I interviewed the headman of the region at that time. He said that the gagaku instrument shō (mouthorgan) was used in shōga, a form of vocal singing used to teach music. However, there is no mention of this in the books published. Likewise, there are no descriptions of a red transverse flute called an aka-bue. This instrument is played in the ritual when the musician brings food and alcohol as offerings to the deity.

**From past to present**

From this literature, we can learn a great deal about the musical instruments, attires or ritual artefacts. However, we cannot know how the instruments were used or the music produced in the ritual performance. In particular, since the performers taught the music orally without any musical score, it is difficult to know how the rhythm and melody were played in the past. In addition, such published literature includes writers’ own interpretations. Similarly, although the edited 30-minute video of the ritual produced by the Ibaraki kenritsu rekishi kan noted above, naturally contains visual and aural information on the musical performances when it was shot in 2001, these performances were filmed from a particular angle and edited by the producers for the purpose of making a certain type of video. The information obtained in the literature or video depends on the purposes that the literature or video were produced for. For example, the purpose of the book ‘Furusato no matsuri to kankō Ibaraki’ is, as is evident from the title, to promote tourism in the Ibaraki area as well as to introduce local festivals. Therefore, the significance of the ritual is highlighted in the book.
The above-mentioned historical literature records some changes in the ritual. For example, there have been changes in the date of the ritual, the time of selecting the miko ritual, the eve on which the ritual was conducted, and changes in the ceremonial dress of the musicians. However, we are unable to perceive any changes in the music and dance through the literature.

**Miko mai shinji: A Reconstruction based on the fieldwork from 2005 to 2007**

As I am now aware of the limitations of the descriptions provided in the literature, I will, consequently, endeavour to describe miko mai shinji based on my fieldwork conducted from 2005 to 2007. The following is the schedule for miko mai shinji based on my data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name of Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st of November</td>
<td>Miko tsuke sai or miko sentei no gi</td>
<td>Selecting the girl who will become the shrine maiden, or miko</td>
<td>Fixed*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 days prior to the miko mai shinji</td>
<td>norikomi sai</td>
<td>First day of learning the dance</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth or sixth day of the rehearsals</td>
<td>nakaiwa sai</td>
<td>A celebration of the middle of the rehearsals</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The day after nakaiwa sai</td>
<td>naka yasumi</td>
<td>Day off</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the eve of the miko mai shinji</td>
<td>zenza sai</td>
<td>A dance at the shrine</td>
<td>Fixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Sunday of November</td>
<td>hon sai</td>
<td>Day of the ritual</td>
<td>Fixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The day after hon sai</td>
<td>takaharai sai</td>
<td>Musicians prepare a feast for the people</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Fixed means that the date of the event is unchangeable.
For an in-depth understanding of the ritual and to ascertain the changes that have taken place, I attempt to describe each event in detail.

**Miko tsuke sai**

On the first day of every November, *sôdai*, the headman of Ôu region, an assistant of the leader, musicians, *saiji*, *fuku saiji* and *sewanin* assemble in the shrine office in Ôu at around 7:00 p.m. They are dressed in casual clothes. Here, they prepare to perform the *miko tsuke sai*, which is the selection of a girl as *miko*. Three girls from the region, who are appropriate for being chosen as *miko*, are selected beforehand. Each of their names is written on a piece of white paper by the *saiji*; the paper is known as *koyori*. These papers are placed on a small offering stand called the *sanpô* and are carried in front of the altar in the hall of worship known as the *haiden*. A straw rope is tied to two long bamboo branches, and white strips of paper, called *shide*, are hung on the rope. The people who have assembled at the shrine drink tea and talk amongst themselves in a cheerful manner at the shrine office. After the preparation is complete, the headman of Ôu region presents a welcome speech and thanks everyone for coming. Following this, the *saiji* introduce themselves as the leaders of the year and announce the commencement of the *mikotsuke sai*.

The leader of the musicians and his assistant wear a white mask and enter the *haiden* around 8:00 p.m. They sit in front of the altar in the *haiden*; subsequently, they select a *miko* from one of the white papers on the small
They then return to the shrine office and report the name of the girl who has been selected as the miko for the year. Thereafter, one of the saiji announces the schedule for the miko mai shinji. If the musicians need to discuss something, they do so at this time. (One musician in 2006 and two musicians in 2007 informed the people that they would like to retire from their role as musicians because they had very demanding jobs and find it difficult to attend the rehearsals). The musicians sit in front of the sôdai, face-to-face, and inform the sôdai that they will need to go to the miko’s house to decorate it with shimenawa rope and will leave the shrine office around 9:00 p.m. Fujishima (1993) wrote that the musicians go to the miko’s house and return to the shrine office on foot; however, from 2005 to 2007, they used a car. After decorating the shimenawa, they returned to the shrine office and sat in front of the sôdai; they then reported that they had completed the decorating. Following this, they loudly clap their hands eight times. This small ritual is known as Yahirade no gi. Thereafter, they drink sake\(^{51}\) and raise a toast.

**Norikomi sai**

The first day of the rehearsal is called norikomi sai. On this day, in a ritual called norikomi sai, the members begin to rehearse and to teach the dance to the miko selected for the year. The headman of the Ôu region, his assistant, sôdai, saiji, fuku saiji, musicians and sewanin assemble at the Ôu shrine around 7:00 p.m. Apart from the sewanin, they all wear formal clothing, a

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50 The manner and timing of choosing a paper and unfolding it vary, as was noticed in the years spent doing fieldwork. In addition, the miko is selected in advance because there are fewer children in this region.

51 Japanese alcohol.
suit and tie. All the Japanese lanterns are lit, and two sôdai play the ôdaiko and shimedaiko to create what is known as sangiri music. Thereafter, sake is distributed to everyone, and sangiri music is played again. Following this, another rhythm known as baka bayashi is played; they then leave the shrine.

The rehearsals including norikomi sai are held at the community centre in the Ôu region. A straw-mat room at the community centre is used for the rehearsals. When the people from the shrine arrive at the centre, the miko and zashu are already waiting there for them. During the rehearsals, the miko wears a Japanese summer kimono. When everyone arrives at the community centre, sangiri music is again played; they enter the centre only after the music has been played. In the room, there is a scroll picture with Ôu daijingû (Ôu shrine) written on it; in front of the picture, there is a small table on which there is a sakaki tree branch in a bottle, a standing candle, hei and a bell. The members sit at approximately the same position during rehearsals. The senior members take seats of honour near the altar. Once everyone is seated, green tea is served by the women. Following this, preparations are made for the first rehearsal. The miko moves towards the small table along with her dancing teacher and sits facing the other members. The teacher then instructs her how to bow, and she does so according to the instructions. The other members also bow in response to her bow. Thereafter, the teacher stands behind the miko and holds her hands; they then begin to

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52 One of the sewanin and one of the sôdai played this in 2007.
53 The musicians of these two instruments ride on the back of a truck and keep playing their instruments.
54 There are two community centres in this area, and the miko's family can choose any one of them for the rehearsals.

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dance together. If any of the musicians are new, some of the sewanin sit beside them and teach them the music during the rehearsal. After the dance is over, everyone performs yahirade no gi on instruction from the saiji. Subsequently, they all feast together.

On every day after the norikomi sai, or the first day of the rehearsals, rehearsals are held every night until the eve of the miko mai shinji. Everyone comes to the centre individually at around 7:00 p.m., and rehearsals begin at 7:30 p.m. After a 30-minute break from 8:00 to 8:30 p.m., the rehearsal continues until 9:00 p.m. Thereafter, everyone has tea together and leaves the centre. The order in which everyone leaves the centre is as follows: the miko leaves first, followed by her teacher, then the senior members of sewanin, and then, the middle and junior members of sewanin. The sôdai group merely attends the rehearsals. The saiji, fuku saiji and musicians remain and sometimes conduct meetings.

The music for the dance is a continuous piece, and the musicians are not allowed to stop it till the entire musical piece is over. Some musicians are unable to attend the rehearsals at times because of their own work commitments. In such cases, some of the sewanin play the music at the rehearsals as substitutes for the absent musicians. During the rehearsals, with the exception of norikomi sai and nakaiwa sai, everyone wears casual clothing. However, the miko is required to dress formally for all the rehearsals. Further, the rehearsals are to some extent flexible. For instance,

\footnote{They have a day off after nakaiwa sai.}
\footnote{A few accidents have occurred in which the music was stopped because the musician was new and had not mastered the technique.}
if the miko is unwell on a particular day, the rehearsal time is reduced in half, and the dance is performed only once on that day. However, performing yahirade no gi is compulsory after every rehearsal.

**Nakaiwa sai**

*Nakaiwa sai*, which is the celebration marking the midpoint of the rehearsals, is held in the community centre where the rehearsals take place. The participants of the ritual need to show the extent of their dance and music preparation to the sôdai. The interiors of the room are the same as that for the rehearsals; there is the small table on which there is a sakaki tree branch and a candle. Apart from the sewanin and miko, everyone wears a suit and tie. The miko wears the same clothes as she does during the rehearsals. The sôdai enter the room and walk to its centre with their Japanese lanterns. Here, they sit; the lanterns are placed near the ceiling or placed in front of the sôdai. Thereafter, the sôdai offer congratulatory gifts of money to the saiji. The sewanin also move to the centre of the room. Green tea is served and everyone talks among themselves until around 8:00 p.m. After this, the women remove the cups of tea and the musicians tune their musical instruments. During this time, the dancing teacher lights the candle which is on the small table. The manner and performance of the dance and music that follows is the same as that during the rehearsals.

In 2005, one musician was late for the rehearsals. Therefore, one of the

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57 They usually play music and dance twice during the day.
58 In 2006 and 2007, they placed the lanterns in front of them, not the ceiling.
sewanin substituted for him until he arrived. In 2006, one of the transverse flute musicians was unable to attend nakaiwa sai. However, since the flute musician always has two or three supporting musicians, a substitute was not necessary. In 2007, the ôtsuzumi drummer was unable to attend, and hence, one of the sewanin played the drums, albeit dressed in casual wear. The dancing teacher’s behaviour depends on the miko’s performance. For instance, if she has mastered the dance, he merely watches her performance. However, if she has not mastered the dance, he supports her during the performance with gestures that serve as cues. During the performance, some of the sôdai talk among themselves; however, the other people present do not talk. Moreover, during the performance, there are some solo performances involving kagura-daiko drumming. Some of the sewanin converse during these solo performances. During this rehearsal, everyone sits on their legs throughout, with the exception of the sôdai.\textsuperscript{59} In 2005, a leader of this region played the kagura-daiko for a short time because he had played this instrument as a musician in the ritual in his earlier days. He advised one of the present musicians about the accent of the rhythm. After the performance is over, the musicians perform yahirade no gi.

Thereafter, they put away the instruments and prepare to feast. The women carry plates with food on them into the room. A leader of the region and the head of the sewanin present a congratulatory speech and raise a toast. The saiji and fuku saiji serve sake to the people who have gathered. Some of the sewanin, who normally do not attend the rehearsals, attend nakaiwai sai.

\textsuperscript{59} During the rehearsals, they do this only when the miko is dancing.
Zenya sai

*Zenya sai* is the eve of the *miko mai shinji*. On this day, the community members perform the dance and music at the shrine as a dedication; this takes place during the night. In the morning of the same day, they clean and decorate the grounds and precincts of the shrine. This task is performed by the shrine parishioners including women known as *keishin fujinkai*. The musicians collect two long bamboo branches from the bamboo grove for decorating the shrine gate, which is known as *torii*; they also collect more bamboo to place in front of the *haiden* which is the room in which the dance and music performance takes place. The bamboo on both sides of the *torii* are decorated with long white flags. Further, all *shimenawa* in the shrine are changed to new ones. There is a specific manner in which these ropes are tied. During the fieldwork, I sometimes observed the senior people teaching the younger ones how to tie the ropes.

Finally, everyone assembles at the community centre around 8:00 p.m. Prior to the event, the musicians prepare the *miko*’s clothes; they help her dress and also do her makeup. On this day, the *miko* wears a red ceremonial skirt, a white ceremonial robe and white Japanese socks. A white paper called *noshi* is placed on her head and is held in place by a red and white coloured rope, called *mizuhiki*, and a linen hemp rope which is tied around her head. One of the musicians makes black circles above each of her eyebrows. The *sōdai*, *saiji*, *fuku saiji* and musicians wear formal clothes, while the *sewanin* come dressed in casual wear. After the preparation is done, the musicians sit near the seat of honour which is near the scroll picture. The others also take their respective positions. First, tea is served. Following this, *sake* is served.
and a toast is raised and everyone says ‘Omedetō gozaimasu’, which is a congratulatory Japanese expression. For a while, everyone drinks sake and the women serve appetizers. Thereafter, the leader of the musicians says ‘Gochisōsama deshita’ (thank you for the feast) and all the musicians bow together. Then, the kagura-daiko musician moves to the front of the shrine, and two of the sôdai play the ōdaiko and shimedaiko outside the community centre. After playing the sangiri music, they play baka bayashi. While still playing baka bayashi, they leave the community centre and head towards the shrine, walking with lit Japanese lanterns.

The miko is carried on a musician’s back, and each musician carries her by rotation. At the torii, the sôdai, keishin fujinkai and Shinto priests, who have come from the Kashima shrine for the ritual, wait for everyone’s arrival. Then, one of the Shinto priests leads the procession into the haiden. On entering the haiden, the kagura-daiko is played. When everyone including the miko reaches the haiden, sangiri music is played. The haiden is a high-floored building with sliding doors. Therefore, everyone outside can look inside the room if the doors are open. It resembles a stage that has a roof when the sliding doors are open. Thin straw mats are spread on the floor, and there is an altar in the innermost part of the haiden (see diagram below).

![Figure 12. Inside of the haiden on the ritual day](image)

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In the figure above, A represents a big altar. The miko and zashu are seated at B, and the Shinto priests, at C. The musicians are seated in the area marked D, the sōdai and the guests are in E and saiji and fuku saiji sit in F. The dashed line represents the sliding doors which are kept open during the ritual. During the zeny sai, the miko, zashu, sōdai and guests sit on chairs, while the others sit on straw cushions on the floor. In the past, women were not allowed to enter the haiden, except for the miko. During my previous fieldwork, I had requested permission to enter the room and record the ritual: the room is dimly lit. The altar is in tiers, and a round mirror is placed on the top tier. Rice cake, sake and a variety of food is placed as offerings at the altar.

The ritual is started by one of the sōdai; he holds a microphone and announces the proceedings of the ritual. First of all, he declares that the ritual on the eve of miko mai shinji should be conducted. Then, one of the Shinto priests gets up and sits in front of the altar; everyone bows this time. Next, the priest reads a Shinto prayer, while the others remain prostrate. This is called shubatsu. The priest then picks up a big branch of the sakaki tree with white sacred paper attached and swings it first towards the altar, then towards the miko and zashu, then towards the sōdai, guests and musicians and finally towards the saiji and fuku saiji. Following this, one of the sōdai wears white gloves and picks up a key after bowing at the altar. He passes the key to the Shinto priest. Then, they both go out of the haiden and head towards a room that is behind the haiden. This room is called the

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60 In Kojiki, when Amaterasu Ômikami hid in the rock cave, a mirror was created by other divines for the purpose of bringing her out of the cave.
honden, and they open its door by using the key. During this time, the kagura daiko is being played, while the others remain prostrate. When they return to the haiden, they place the key back on the altar. Subsequently, the Shinto priest opens the bottles of sake that were placed as offerings at the altar. He then reads Shinto prayers in front of the altar. Again, during this time, everyone is in a prostrate position.

Once the prayer reading is over, the miko’s dance begins. The Shinto priest prepares a small table with a hei wand and a suzu bell on it. The miko moves towards the table along with her Japanese lantern and sits in front of it. The hei is placed on her right hand and the bell on her left hand. Two of the sewanin enter the room to help the shinobue musicians; they sit behind the musicians. Thereafter, the music and dance performance ensues in the same manner as it did during the rehearsals. When the dance is over, the miko puts the hei wand and the suzu bell back on the small table and bows on instruction by the Shinto priest. The Shinto priest then returns to the table, and the miko returns to her seat with her lantern. The two sewanin who had helped the flute musician also leave. Afterwards, the priest offers a sakaki tree branch with white paper called tamagushi at the altar. He then bows twice, loudly claps his hands twice and finally bows once again. This is then repeated by the miko and zashu. All the people in the room and one of the representatives of the keishin fujinkai also do the same. Once this is over, one of the sôdai and the Shinto priest close the door of the hondan. During this time, the kagura-daiko is played, while the others remain in a prostrate position.
When the door has been closed, everyone performs *yahirade no gi*. Thereafter, two of the *sōdai* take bottles of *sake* from the altar and serve it to the people in the room. This act is called *naorai*. Then, the Shinto priest offers a congratulatory speech and announces the end of the ritual. Everyone then leaves the room and returns to the community centre on foot. First, *sangiri* music is played in front of the *haiden*, then, *baka bayashi* is played and everyone starts walking. The *miko* is again carried by the musicians on their backs. When they reach the *torii*, the Shinto priests and *sōdai* from the other shrine bid everyone farewell while *sangiri* music is played. Thereafter, everyone walks towards the community centre and sings a song called *saitō bayashi*.

From the *torii* to the community centre, the musicians take turns to carry the *miko* on their shoulders. The lyrics of *saitō bayashi* are improvised every year, with the exception of the last phrase. The last phrase of the song is ‘shimeru’ (meaning close). This phrase is sung when they reach the community centre. During the fieldwork in 2007, one of the *sewanin* sang the last phrase before the procession had reached the community centre, and another *sewanin* informed him that they could not *close* till they reached the community centre.

At the community centre, the women wait for the arrival of the procession. They have prepared a feast for everyone. The *sōdai* do not attend this feast. The musicians sit in the seats of honour during the feast. *Sake* is served and a toast is raised. When the feast is over, the musicians leave in

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61 They stay at the shrine.
order to continue drinking till the early hours of the morning. This arrangement is made by the saiji. In the past, the musicians were required to make the rice balls that are served on the day of the ritual. Hence, they would not sleep on the night before the ritual. Today, however, the women, and not the musicians, prepare the rice balls.

**Hon sai**

The saiji, fuku saiji and musicians assemble at the community centre around 9:30 a.m. to dress the miko. On this day, the musicians wear a kimono, with white Japanese socks and Japanese clogs called geta. The musicians often complain of lack of sleep; this is because, as mentioned earlier, they have spent the night before drinking. The zashu wears a Japanese half-length coat called a haori and a Japanese trouser called hakama. The saiji and fuku saiji wear a suit and tie. During the fieldwork in 2005, I observed that the women were making the rice balls, and preparing the bags that are distributed to the people who come to the ritual with congratulatory gifts of money. The women assembled at 5 a.m. to prepare the rice balls and the bags. In the bag, there are white and red rice cakes, rice balls and a talisman called ofuda that is issued by the Ōu shrine. When the miko has been dressed, the sewanin assemble. Each of them bring congratulatory gifts of money, and offer it to the miko and zashu and congratulate them. The musicians, saiji and fuku saiji also offer congratulatory gifts to the miko and zashu. The musicians also receive gifts from the sewanin. When everyone has assembled, tea is served. Thereafter, sake is served along with small appetizers, and a toast is raised.
After the toast, everyone leaves the community centre and sangiri music is played; and baka bayashi music is played while they walk to the shrine. The miko is carried in the same manner as she was on the day before. At the torii, the Shinto priests, a leader of the region, his assistant and the keishin fujinkai wait for everyone’s arrival. At the entrance of the haiden, the kagura-daiko is played. When miko enters the haiden, sangiri music is played. Thereafter, the miko is carried on one of the musician’s backs to a room called monoimi den, which is beside the shrine office. There, she has lunch with the Shinto priests.

Beside the monoimi den, food that will be offered at the altar is prepared. A place for washing hands is prepared in front of the monoimi den. While the miko has her lunch, the sewanin begin to make preparations for the ritual. First, they spread straw mats on the ground from the haiden to the monoimi den. Bamboo is placed vertically in front of the haiden on both the right and left sides in order to create a sort of passage to the entrance. Then, red and white curtains are hung on a rope that is tied to the bamboo. Subsequently, chairs are placed alongside the curtains. During this preparation, the musicians, sewanin, saiji and fuku saiji have lunch and change into ceremonial clothing. The musicians wear a blue ceremonial skirt and a yellow ochre coloured half-coat; they also wear eboshi (black headgear) on this day. In the interviews that were conducted during the fieldwork in 2006, one of the musicians who was wearing these clothes for the first time expressed his sentiments as follows.
‘I felt like I was finally wearing the dress that I have wanted to wear for so long. I really wanted to wear it with the other musicians.’ (Tsutsuji 19/11/06)

He further said,

‘I thought I had finally become one of the musicians.’ (Tsutsuji 19/11/06)

Some food stalls were arranged on the shrine grounds. In addition, a tent was built and tables were placed inside so that the neighbours could also have lunch. During the fieldwork, I also came across some amateur cameramen. Around 2:00 p.m., the saiji, fuku saiji, musicians and guests wash their hands at the washing place. Thereafter, the miko and zasu also wash their hands and go to the place that is meant for achieving spiritual cleansing. At this place, there is a sakaki tree which is surrounded by shimenawa, sacred straw rope. The miko, zasu and others then come to the entrance of the haiden and sit on the chairs that are placed there. Once they are seated, one of the shinobue musicians who is wearing a white mask, vocalizes an ‘Ô’ sound and stands up. Thereafter, he carries a sakaki tree branch and moves in front of the haiden. He first swings it towards the haiden, then towards the miko, and finally towards the guests. He then returns the branch to the place of offering. Another shinobue musician carries salt and performs the same actions as the previous musician, although he sprinkles the salt instead of swinging it. A kagura-daiko musician also performs the same actions with rice. This is collectively
known as sanmai gyôji.

When this is over, the kagura-daiko musician enters the haiden. One of the sôdai and a Shinto priest move to the hondan in order to open the door in the same manner as it was done on the eve of miko mai shinji. During this time, the kagura-daiko is played. Then, the food is carried by the musicians; five musicians stand in a line with adequate space between them. The line extends from in front of the monoimiden to the haiden. A sôdai stands in front of the place where the offering is to be made and passes the offerings to a musician who stands in front of the haiden. The musician then walks towards the next musician and passes it to him. In this manner, they pass these offerings of food in a sequence. During this time, two shinobue musicians play a transverse flute called akabue, and another musician plays the ôdaiko. These offerings of food are received by a priest at the haiden who then places them at the altar.

The musicians do not rehearse this even during the rehearsals. During the fieldwork in 2007, I recorded a scene in which some sewanin were teaching the musicians how to carry the offerings. The sewanin also offered some advice, such as ‘carry the food at eye level’ and ‘vocalize the ‘Ô’ sound for a longer period of time.’ In 2007, a few musicians burst into laughter when they made the ‘Ô’ sound during the ritual. After the offering of food, a Shinto priest holds a big gold coloured piece of paper with bells attached, to a stick called heihaku and distributes the offerings at the centre of the haiden. Thereafter, the dance performance of the miko begins.
The miko, zashu, musicians, sódai, saiji, fuku saiji, leader of the region, his assistant and the guests enter the haiden and take their positions. Subsequently, a Shinto priest prepares a small table and the miko sits in front of it. She faces the altar and bows; then, she takes the hei and the bell in her hands. In 2005 and 2006, some of the amateur cameramen, who were trying to record the ritual for their own use, tried to enter the haiden without permission in order to take photographs or shoot videos. They used very harsh and bright flashes for this. In 2007, as a result of one cameraman’s rude behaviour, some of the community members were unable to watch the dance performance. Since the cameramen surround the haiden, the community members have now established a separate area meant just for them.

After the dance performance is over, they offer tamagushi in the same manner as they did on the eve of the miko mai shinji. Then, a priest replaces the cap of the sake bottle and closes the door of the hondan. Everyone performs yahirade no gi, and the sódai who had announced the beginning of the ritual reads a letter from the chief priest of the Kashima shrine. After this, two sódai serve sake to the people in the haiden. A Shinto priest makes a speech. Finally, all of the people bow towards the altar, thereby ending the ritual. The miko is carried back to the monoimi den. The sódai, saiji, fuku saiji, and sewanin change their clothes. The sewanin then clean the shrine. Afterwards, they drink some more sake, and the miko is carried back to the haiden by the musicians.

By the time the ritual is over, it is early evening. Sangiri music is played in
front of the *haiden*, and as was done on the eve of *miko mai shinji*, the procession stops at the *torii* and the *miko* is carried on the musician’s shoulders to the community centre. Since by mid-November it is cold in Japan, and since the shrine is deep in the forest where there is no sunshine even during daytime, the *miko* wears a coat over her shoulders when they return to the community centre. During the fieldwork in 2007, I recorded an interesting scene in which the *kagura-daiko* player and a *shinobue* player were playing *sangiri* and *baka bayashi* in jest. They laughed while they played these tunes. The rhythm was not the same as it was when the *sôdai* played it; however, they were able to play it in fragments despite the fact that they had never learnt it. A feast is prepared at the community centre, and a toast is raised before the feast begins; this is done in the same manner as was done on the eve of *miko mai shinji*. Some of community members make speeches during the feast. The *sôdai* do not attend this feast.

*Takaharai sai*

Both on the eve of *miko mai shinji* and on the day itself, a feast is prepared for the musicians. However, on *takaharai sai*, the musicians prepare a feast for the people. The musicians receive congratulatory gifts of money in special envelopes during the *miko mai shinji*. Therefore, on the morning of the *takaharai sai*, they return the envelopes to the people and inform them of the time of the feast; they also prepare a gift for the *miko*.\(^{62}\) The feast known as *takaharai sai* begins at around 7:00 p.m. The *sôdai*, a leader of the region and his assistant wear suits, while the others dress casually. The

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\(^{62}\) The parents ask the *miko* what she wants in advance and inform the musicians accordingly.
leader of the musicians is the host of this feast. Following a speech by the leader of the region and the leader of the sôdai, a toast is raised. At the feast, they offer a gift to the miko. When the feast is over, they visit a restaurant and continue the feast there.\footnote{While I have never attended the second feast, I have seen a bus that was booked to take people to the restaurant.}

In 2007, the zashu was a man whose wife had grown up in this region. He had attended this ritual only two or three times. He mentioned that he was under pressure during the rehearsals because of his own inexperience regarding the ritual.

‘If I had grown up in this region, I would have instinctively known the process of these rituals.’ (Shirakaba, 12/11/07)

Approximately 10 days are set aside for this ritual every year. During this time, there are many codes of conduct that need to be followed. Despite this fact, the ritual is performed every year.

### Changes and stability in the ritual

Despite the fact that some changes have been identified in the literature and from my fieldwork, the ritual is perceived to be ‘unchangeable’ among the community members, especially by elder members.

A dance teacher in 2005 made the following comment in an interview:
‘(The ritual when I was young and today’s ritual) are the same. We cannot change it. The ritual is a cultural asset (in our prefecture), so we absolutely cannot change it’. (Ishimoji, 12/11/05)

We can see similar comments in another interview with elders:

Interviewer: Do you feel that the ritual is something different from that conducted in your time?
A: What we do now is similar to what was done in the past. We have conducted the ritual in the same way.
B: We do it this way every year. Nothing has been changed.
Interviewer: Do you think that the ritual can be forever maintained without any changes?
A: Yes, if we do not do so, the ritual will be ruined.
B: Our members in the community have changed, but new members have taken over our tradition. (group interview, 14/11/05)

I consider this perception of being ‘unchangeable’ as their desire. Some of the middle-aged and young group members made the following comments:

‘I have attended the ritual because I want to hand down our old custom from generation to generation. I don’t feel like changing our custom now’. (Shimizu, 18/11/07)
‘I may not appear to, but I do uphold the value of handing down traditions…I think that it is nice to carry on traditions without any change from the past’. (Matsumi, 12/11/06)

Their recognition of the ritual has affected some members who are actively conducting the ritual today. For example, some of the musicians who are in their twenties stated the following:

‘I had a little trouble with attending the ritual before. But…gradually, I have sensed that our elder members feel that they have to maintain our ritual. So, I felt the need to attend the ritual. Well…another reason is probably that the ritual has traditionally been followed from the past’. (Kashiwa, 13/11/05)

‘I think that we have to continue the ritual because the older generations have handed it down to us’. (Tachibana, 17/11/05)

As I mentioned in chapter 2, one of the major characteristics of ritual is to project an ‘unchangeable’ image through repetition and a regulated or static structure of ritual. Miko mai shinji also possesses a similar ‘fixed’ nature. As is seen in the description of the ritual based on my fieldwork, there is a fixed schedule for the ritual, which is repeated annually. Even though they choose different girls as the miko every year, the process of selection is the same. Similarly, although the musicians have changed gradually, their leaning process of the music is regulated. Their rehearsals are ritualised in a repeated, static structure; each rehearsal is started after the miko bows
deeply at the beginning, the entire music and dance routine is performed once, and after a 30-minute break, they resume the music and dance. Finally, each rehearsal is concluded with *yahirade no gi*, a practice in which they clap their hands eight times.

Such stability, for example, the fixed schedule, is maintained; however, as mentioned before, changes have also been made to the ritual in response to changing circumstances. One of the major changes in circumstances today is in terms of family composition and occupation.

A headman of the region made the following observation about the community from the time he was one of the musicians:

‘Well…we (the sôdai group) were born in the 1940s and there was a baby boom at that time (in Japan)…only seven young males could become musicians of the community, whereas there were 60 or 70 young male contenders in this region. So, the musicians were proud of themselves because they were the selected ones from among such a large population. The same was true for the *miko*’.  
(Sugiyama, 15/11/05)

Another member in his fifties, whose son works in another city and has attended the ritual as a supporter of the musicians, stated the following:

‘It’s difficult for all musicians to attend the rehearsals today because they have jobs…but when we were young, almost all the
A member in his sixties said the following:

‘(When I was young,) we assembled for rehearsals quite late because we worked in the fields during daytime. Now, rehearsals are held much earlier (because the musicians have jobs to go to the next morning)’. (group interview, 15/11/05)

In my fieldwork, two musicians wished to retire from rituals to become community members, but only one of them was allowed to do so because the community found it difficult to find two young males as their replacements. This fact supports the headman’s comment. Similarly, my observation that some of the members attended the rehearsals wearing business suits supports the above statement of the member in his fifties.

The musician who has attended this ritual from 2006, revealed the reason why he had rejected the community’s offer to become a ritual musician.

‘My job is that of a male nurse, and I sometimes have the evening shift. So, (since they have the rehearsals at night,) I initially rejected their offer because I thought that I might cause them some inconvenience.’ (Tsuchihara, 0911/06)

Eventually he did accept the offer, even though he sometimes missed the
rehearsals.

Thus, the community sometimes faced difficulties in conducting or continuing the ritual because of changes in their circumstances.

One of sôdai group members stated the following when they assembled for the *mikotsuke sai* in 2005.

‘We cannot change this traditional *miko mai shinji* itself, and I believe that we have to hand down this ritual in the same manner. However, we need to modify a few logistical aspects related to the ritual to suit our circumstances when handing down the ritual’.

(Hinoki, 01/11/05)

Thus, what are the acceptable changes for the survival of the ritual? The major changes made in response to the changing circumstances faced by the community are mentioned below.

1. The day of the main ritual was changed from 15th November to the third Sunday of November. Some of the members who worked on weekdays and found it difficult to attend the ritual, as they were unable to take a day off, requested a change in the date to a weekend day. As a result of this change, the date of some other rituals also changed, for example, the *norikomi sai*, *nakaiwai sai* and *zenya sai*.

2. The time of the rehearsals, *mikotsuke sai* and *zenya sai*, were changed.
The rehearsals begin earlier now. I believe that this is to reduce the burden on the miko and the other members. Since the miko has to attend school and the others have jobs during the duration, a late start time was inconvenient for them.

3. The place where the rehearsals were conducted has changed. In the past, rehearsals generally took place at the miko’s family house. In addition, the family needed to arrange for drinks and food (a feast, in some cases) for each rehearsal; therefore, they had to spend a significant amount of money on the ritual. As a result, some of the families in the community rejected the offer for their daughter to act as the miko in the ritual because of the financial burden. The declining birth rate exacerbated this problem, and the community had difficulty in finding a miko. Thus, to reduce the burden on the miko’s family, the community centre came to be used as the venue for rehearsal around six or seven years ago, and the preparation for feasts has been covered by the community’s budget since 2005.

4. Flexible requirements for the musicians

In earlier times, only the eldest son or the only male child born and raised in the region was eligible to become a musician. Today, the scope has widened and all males who will eventually be the head of the household can become musicians. In addition, the family needed to arrange for drinks and food (a feast, in some cases) for each rehearsal; therefore, they had to spend a significant amount of money on the ritual. In addition, their average age is higher. In the past, the musicians were teenagers; however, almost all of today’s musicians are in their twenties. This change is because of the
smaller number of young males in the region.

In light of the above, what is the type of music and dance featured in the ritual? As I mentioned in chapter 2, music is dynamic in nature because it is the product of human action. Here, before we move on to the next chapter and an analysis of the ritual music, I will introduce some comments from the members regarding the music.

A member who was a *kagura-daiko* player when he was young stated the following:

‘These (musical performances in the past and the present) are almost the same. A *fue* (flute) musician has his own tone colour, but our style of playing has not changed from the past’. (Matsuyama, 14/11/05)

A group in their fifties commented as follows during their group interview:

A: *Fue* players and *kagura-daiko* players have individual differences, but others play the music along with the *fue*, so their playing has not changed.

B: There is no way that the music can change.

Interviewer: Forever?

B: Yes.

(group interview, 17/11/05)
Thus, the community members believe that their music is also unchangeable, although there is an individual difference with respect to the musical instruments. However, my fieldwork revealed subtle changes. I will now move on to analysing the music performed as part of the ritual in the next chapter.
Chapter 4

Music and dance in the miko mai shinji

In this chapter, I analyse the music and dance performed during the miko mai shinji ritual and provide examples of the manner in which continuity is maintained and, at the same time, change is brought about in the performances.

Nature of the music and dance performed during the miko mai shinji

There is only one type of music and dance that is dedicated to the shrine during the miko mai shinji ritual. Two other forms of music, baka bayashi and sangiri, are played by the ôdaiko and shime-daiko when the procession moves to the shrine; these musical forms, however, are played by two members of the sôdai, and not by the musicians. In addition, the community has a song called saitô bayashi, which is sung when the procession moves towards the community centre, where the community has a feast after the ritual. However, most of the musicians do not know how to play the song, and only a few community members are aware of its existence. Therefore,
for the purpose of my research I treat their traditional ritual music, the
divine music and dance routine that they perform in front of the altar, as part
of their annual ritual.

The music consists of monophonic melodies played with Japanese bamboo
flutes known as *fue* and rhythms played on different drums. The music has
no metre, unlike the duple or triple metres in Western classical music.
However, the *miko* is regarded as the conductor of the music and the
musicians play their instruments by following her movements; therefore, on
the basis of the *miko’s* movements, it is possible to say that the music has
four beats per measure. This music and dance is performed for
approximately 30 to 40 minutes, including the prelude and postlude played
solo with the *kagura-daiko*. There are two patterns of movement in the
dance. Since the arm movements in the dance are the same for both patterns,
the patterns are distinguished by the movement of the feet. In the first
pattern, the *miko* steps backwards and forwards, whereas in the second
pattern, she dances in circular motion. Here, I refer to the first dance pattern
as A; the second pattern, as B; and the musical interlude, as I. A and B
signify different dance patterns, but the music accompanying them is the
same.

The music and dance can thus be shown in the following pattern sequence:

$$I\ A\ I\ B\ I\ A\ I$$

The musical length of both A and B is a 32-beat cycle; this is computed by
translating the music and dance into descriptive Western language, even
though the community probably never used such a description for their music. I is played using only the kagura-daiko and the miko’s bell. The official arrangement for the music and dance ritual involves two fue players, and one musician each to play the kagura-daiko, ôtsuzumi, kotsuzumi, shimedaiko and ōdaiko. Currently, a few members from the sewanin group help out by playing the fue both in rehearsals and at the ritual.

The musicians are selected from amongst the young males who reside in this region. Brothers are traditionally not allowed to play music together. In the past, only the eldest brother was allowed to become a musician. In addition, men who hailed from other regions were not allowed to serve as musicians; they were only allowed to play the ōdaiko. The musicians, except for the fue players, usually play for six to seven years, which is longer than the tenures of past musicians; in earlier days, musicians would play for three to four years. The musicians then go on to become sewanin. Since fue players take longer to master their musical instrument, their term as musicians extends to around ten years.

For a girl to become a miko, she must be a resident of the region and should be under twelve years of age. In the past, only a girl whose parents were alive could be a miko; girls whose parents were divorced or deceased could not be a miko, or were considered unsuitable to be one. One of the members told me that his daughter had once been asked to be a miko, but that he had rejected the offer because she did not have a mother. As in the case of the musicians, only the eldest sister or an only child can become the miko.

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64 The member who stated this, was in his fifties. Therefore, this occurred more than thirty years ago.
65 This was because her mother was deceased.
Every year, the community chooses a new girl from amongst themselves for the position of the miko.

Except for the kagura-daiko and fue players, who only play their respective instruments, the musicians take turns to play the various musical instruments, changing when there is a vacancy or a need for new members. For instance, the ôtsuzumi player retired after the ritual in 2005; the community had a new musician take over in 2006. The new musician did not play the ôtsuzumi; he only played the ôdaiko. Therefore, the ôdaiko player began playing the shimedaiko. Thus, barring a few musicians, others are free to take up various musical instruments, a system that gives them the opportunity to learn to play the different instruments. This results in a very versatile group of musicians. Further, according to the customs of the community, members who have had a recent death in the family are not allowed to attend the ritual. Therefore, the community often finds itself having to find new musicians to make up for absences on such grounds; replacements are also frequently necessary to fill in gaps left by retired musicians.

The community does not have any of its music on record, its musical culture having been passed on from generation to generation by oral tradition. Today, around 80% of the active community members are elderly musicians; they have experience playing music and can therefore teach it, except for the parts played with the kagura-daiko and fue, to active musicians. The duration of each music and dance rehearsal is regulated. The members follow specific schedules that are repeated annually. Further, it is
common to witness annual changes in the composition of the group of community members who teach the dance to the miko. Since all the teachers are males, none of them have any experience of dancing as the miko in the ritual. Usually, the members’ daughters act as the miko, and the erstwhile kagura-daiko players become dance teachers; this is because it is widely believed within the community that of all members present during the ritual, the miko’s father and the kagura-daiko player (who does not play during the dance) have the most opportunities to watch the dance performances and are therefore the most familiar with them. The musicians and the miko must master the music by the end of the rehearsals.

As mentioned in chapter 2, the rehearsals are held in the community centre; the following diagram depicts the location of each member during these rehearsals.

Figure 13. Position of the members in the rehearsal room

The circle represents the space in which the miko dances.
The dashed line depicts the entrance to the room.

A': Supporters of fue
A: Fue players
B: Ôtsuzumi player
C: Tsuzumi player
D: Shimedaiko player
E: Ôdaiko player
F: Kagura-daiko player
G: members called sewanin
H: members called saiji, fuku saiji
I: father or male guardian of the miko,
J: the miko,
K: Altar
Even though there is no hierarchy among the musicians of today, these positions seem to express a hierarchical structure that may have existed at some point in the past. As mentioned previously, men who come from other regions are only allowed to play the ôdaiko; moreover, it is common for new members to begin with the ôdaiko. Their place is near the exit and opposite the altar. Therefore, it is quite likely that amongst musicians in the past, position E was deemed to denote low status.

Changes and continuity in the music

For a deep understanding of the music and dance, I have separately examined the changes that have taken place in each musical instrument and dance form.

*Kagura-daiko*

This instrument is called the *kagura* or *okagura* by the community. The *okagura* is played solo. In addition, this instrument is played during *miko*
*maí* as well as during other rites in the ritual. *Kagura-daiko* players usually play the same instrument until they retire as musicians. The figure suggests that the drum is an *okedô* drum, a drum where the two skin faces are attached to either side of the barrel by stretched strings. Musicians play it using two long, narrow wooden sticks. The top of the sticks are wrapped with paper. Musicians beat only one side of the instrument, although both sides of the drum are covered with a skin.

Mr. Kuwata, who was an *ôdaiko* player, became the *kagura-daiko* player in 2005 because Mr. Umeda, who had been the *kagura-daiko* player since 2004, could not attend the ritual owing to a death in his family that year. Mr. Kuwara had been the *kagura-daiko* player during the years in which I carried out my fieldwork, and Mr. Takeda, who was the *kagura-daiko* player until 2003, had taught him the music mainly during the 2005 rehearsals. Mr. Umeda, too, occasionally taught the music to Mr. Kuwata. In addition, another elderly musician, Mr. Sugiyama, who was the headman of the region in 2005, played a part in the musical performances by guiding Mr. Kuwata on the day of the *naka iwai sai* ritual. Mr. Sugiyama had been a player for around three decades.

Although they do not have a musical score, they do have an oral mnemonics to express the rhythms of the *kagura-daiko*; these are called *shôga*.

The rhythm can be onomatopoecically presented as follows:
*The underline denotes the accent.

Toten, Toten, Toten, Toten, Toten, Toten, Toten (Toten is repeated seven times.)

Totenten, Totenten, Totenten, Totenten, Totententen (Totenten is repeated five times.)

Ten
Tokotokotokotokoko...(The actual length of this part is unknown.)

Ten
Tokotokotokotokoko...

Ten
Tokotokotokotokoko...

The block of the rhythm outlined above is repeated twice. Therefore, I denote the first block as block 1 and the second block as block 2. These blocks correspond to I in the pattern sequence I A I B I A I B I A I given above.

How is the rhythm actually played? Included below is the rhythm score that I have created on the basis of Mr. Kuwata’s playing in 2007, by which time he had established his musical style with respect to the shóga.
Block 1

Rhythm **K1**: This is applied to the Toten part of the rhythm presented above.

It is played as follows:

Rhythm **K2**: This is applied to the Totenten part of the rhythm as follows:

**extra beat**

Rhythm **K3**: .. or .., This is applied to the Tokotokotokotoko… part of the rhythm as follows.
Block 2

(Rhythm K1)

(Rhythm K2)

(Rhythm K3)

Then, Rhythm K4 is given as follows:

(Rhythm K4)

indicates a tremolo; the length of this part of the rhythm is not fixed.
However, the first note is longer, the next is mid-ranged, and the last is shorter than the first two.
Figure 15. Comparison of *shōga* and actual rhythms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em>Shōga</em></th>
<th>The rhythms played by <em>kagura-daiko</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K1</strong></td>
<td>Toten × 7* number of repetitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image1" alt="Diagram" /> × 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K2</strong></td>
<td>Totenten × 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image2" alt="Diagram" /> × 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totententen × 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image3" alt="Diagram" /> × 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(4+1= 5)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image4" alt="Diagram" /> <em>(4+1= 5)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ten</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K3</strong></td>
<td>Tokotokotokotokoto…× 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image5" alt="Diagram" /> × 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Block 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K1</strong></td>
<td>Toten × 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image6" alt="Diagram" /> × 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K2</strong></td>
<td>Totenten × 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image7" alt="Diagram" /> × 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totententen × 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image8" alt="Diagram" /> × 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(4+1= 5)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image9" alt="Diagram" /> <em>(4+1= 5)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ten</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K3</strong></td>
<td>Tokotokotokotokoto…× 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><img src="image10" alt="Diagram" /> × 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>K4</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During my fieldwork, *kagura-daiko* players described their method of playing the drum by following patterns of seven, five and three, which refer to the number of repetitions for each rhythm.66

66 These numbers are also used in a traditional Japanese event called *Shichi go san*: which is a celebration for children aged three, five and seven years.
For example, a player from 2005 to 2007 explained this as follows:

‘Could you explain the manner in which the rhythm is played?’

‘The cycle of the rhythm comprises the numbers seven, five and three.’ (Kuwata, 13/11/06)

One of the community members who was around sixty years old, and was a drum player during his late teenage years stated the following:

‘Did you control the length of the (tremolo) part?

‘Yes, because that part does not have a fixed length. The parts with specific numbers are those that are repeated seven, five and three times. We adhere to a specific number of repetitions for the parts...I tried to play the rhythm with great precision because the elder members could easily detect any errors.’ (Matsuyama, 14/11/05)

Changes in the *kagura-daiko*

In addition to extensively covering Mr. Kuwata’s playing style on the *kagura-daiko*, I collected musical data related to the *kagura-daiko* performances of the other members: Mr. Takeda, who was Mr. Kuwata’s main teacher, and Mr. Sugiyama, who was the oldest of the three musicians. I compared their musical styles to Mr. Kuwata’s by referring to their respective *shōga*. 
Case 1: Mr. Takeda

1) Rhythm \textbf{K2}:

Rhythm \textbf{K2} is repeated five times in the \textit{shōga} and in Mr. Kuwata’s performances. However, Mr. Takeda’s style is different and dynamic. For example, on the 10\textsuperscript{th} and 11\textsuperscript{th} of November 2005, he repeated the rhythm almost six times in blocks 1 and 2.

2) Rhythm \textbf{K4}, as played by Mr. Takeda, is as follows:

Mr. Takeda often played five beats.

As mentioned above, Mr. Takeda was Kuwata’s teacher in 2005, and the latter’s musical performance was greatly influenced as a result of this association. For example, in 2005, Kuwata played rhythm \textbf{K2} irregularly, just as Mr. Takeda had done before him. In 2006, Mr. Kuwata’s style became more stable and he played four beats in rhythm \textbf{K2}, even though he made occasional errors.

Case 2: Mr. Sugiyama

On 14\textsuperscript{th} November that year, a day known as \textit{nakaiwai sai}, the community musicians held music and dance performances for a senior group. An ex-musician named Mr. Sugiyama, who was a member of the senior group, also played the instrument during the performance. Mr. Sugiyama played rhythm pattern \textbf{K2} with five beats in it.
Mr. Sugiyama’s style of playing rhythm K4 was different from Mr. Takeda’s.

Mr. Sugiyama’s performance was as follows:

Rhythm K4: 

Case 3: Rhythm K2

On 16th November 2005, Mr. Umeda, who had played this instrument until 2004, taught Mr. Kuwata to play the rhythms. Mr. Umeda’s pattern of representing rhythm K2 was similar to that outlined in the shōga. On 17th November, in the first half of the rehearsals, Mr. Kuwata almost managed to play rhythm K2 with five beats. However, after being tutored by Mr. Takeda, Mr. Kuwata played rhythm K2 with six beats in the second half of the rehearsals. Mr. Kuwata’s confusion, while playing the rhythms, was revealed in his performance of rhythm K4 on 18th November. He played Mr. Sugiyama’s pattern for the rhythm twice in the course of the rehearsal.

Fixing the kagura-daiko in 2006

In 2006, Mr. Kuwata played only Block 2 on the day of the norikomi sai. The next day, he played only Block 2 again, and some of the community members commented that the performance was too short. Since then, he has played both Blocks 1 and 2. Norikomi sai marks the first day of the rehearsal schedule. Owing to the 11-month lag in playing, it seems that Block 1 had slipped his memory, which is why he played only Block 2. However, with the intervention of the other members, he was able to recollect and play Block 1 as well. Indeed, since the middle of the 2006
rehearsals, he presented stable musical performances and played the rhythm constitution presented above. He also gave me an explanation of the *kagura-daiko* rhythm in the onomatopoeic manner using seven, five and three repetitions. In addition, he played each of these rhythms so that I could record them. His playing indicated clear accent location and distinct short lags between each rhythm. From this, it may be said that he had mastered the *kagura-daiko* rhythm, which had been accepted by the community, and had thus established his musical style.

Since *kagura-daiko* is a solo musical instrument, the musician consciously or unconsciously changes the rhythm. However, since the entire community is familiar with the music, a glaring mistake such as skipping block 1 can be easily detected by the community and corrected. However, it is difficult to detect subtle changes because all community members may not have played musical instruments. Although they may have heard the rhythm during rehearsals, they may not know how to actually play the rhythm.

**Other drums**

During the musical performances, apart from the *kagura-daiko*, the drums repeat one big phrase, which consists of four bars, eight times. This corresponds to *A* and *B* in the music structure \[ I A I B I A I B I A I \]. The table given below is the rhythm pattern played by the musicians, where * indicates the beat. This four-measure pattern is repeated consecutively. During rehearsals, it is common for community members to play these
instruments when the musicians are absent, because the members had experience playing the instruments when they were young.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ōdaiko</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shimedaiko</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tsuzumi</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ōtsuzumi</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 16. Rhythm patterns of other drums

Ōdaiko

The instrument in the figure is the miya daiko, although the musicians called it the ōdaiko (big drum). The musician who plays this instrument is seated at the end of the musician lineup. This is usually the first instrument played by new musicians. It is played less than the other instruments. Although this instrument has two sides, only one side is played with a stick.
**Shimedaiko**

![Shimedaiko](image)

Figure 18. Shimedaiko

The *shimedaiko*, which is called the *tsuke*,\(^{67}\) is a drum held together by bolts. In *nō* or *kabuki*, ropes are used instead of bolts and a small table is used for placing the drum on. Musicians play this drum using two sticks. They fix the instrument together before rehearsal starts and release it after rehearsal ends. As shown in the photograph, only side of the instrument is hit by two sticks.

**Kotsuzumi or tsuzumi**

![Kotsuzumi or tsuzumi](image)

Figure 19. Tsuzumi

This instrument is known as the ‘*tsuzumi*’. The *tsuzumi* comes in pairs;

\(^{67}\) This instrument is also called the *tsuke* in the Sawara region, which borders Ibaraki prefecture.
however, people generally do not use both instruments unless the situation demands it.

One of the musicians stated the following:

‘No, we don’t use both instruments unless the situation demands it. Both tsuzumi are always ready, but I use the red one. When this is the case, I don’t use the other one at all. I find it a bother to move the other one. But… if the need arises, two tsuzumi are ready. In my case, I always use this red one because I find it easy to use. Quite honestly, the other tsuzumi does not produce the desired sound when I play it.’ (Teranishi, 18/11/05).

The way in which people play this instrument is unusual. Traditionally, for example, in nô, musicians put it on their right shoulder and beat it with their right hand. (Details about how this instrument is played in nô and kabuki and its structure are provided by Malm, 1986.) However, musicians in the Ōu community play this instrument by putting it on their left shoulder. On occasion, some musicians switch shoulders and put it on their right shoulder because beating it with the same hand is painful.

A tsuzumi musician in 2006 commented as follows:

‘I am normally a right-handed player, but I cannot play this

68 I learnt to play a few Japanese traditional instruments at the Institute of Japanese Traditional Music (Senzoku Gakuen Gendai hogaku kenkyujo) from 2005 to 2006.
instrument without both hands because it is too painful.’ (Tachibana, 11/11/06)

Ôtsuzumi

Figure 20. Ôtsuzumi

This instrument is known as the ôtsuzumi. The community also calls it Ōga. Musicians play this with a long, narrow wooden stick. The way in which they play this instrument is unique.\(^{69}\) In nō or kabuki, the musician places this instrument on his/her left lap and plays it with his/her right hand. They cover their fingers with hard paper sucks (yubikawa). Malm (2000) explained that the purpose behind this is to create sharp sounds. However, in the community, the instrument is placed on the floor and is played using a stick that is also used for playing the kagura-daiko.

Since the rhythms of the ôtsuzumi and shimedaiko are almost identical, musicians are sometimes confused while playing these instruments. For instance, Mr. Teranishi, who began playing the ôtsuzumi in 2006, played the shimedaiko rhythm on his ôtsuzumi during the rehearsal sessions. The error

\(^{69}\) The instrument is played this way, even in the Sawara region.
was spotted by the other members. In the same year, Mr. Tachibana, who had changed his instrument to the *kotsuzumi*, also played an incorrect rhythm until the error was pointed out by the other members of the group. Several community members had played drums in this ritual. This showed that the members know how to play these instruments and are aware of the rhythm patterns, which indicates that they are qualified as music teachers. However, this musically knowledgeable membership can have a negative effect on the musicians. For example, one of the musicians said that he felt under pressure when playing in front of the teachers, lest he make a mistake while playing (interview in 2005).

When played without errors, there was no change in rhythm in the performances from 2005 to 2007. My surmise is that because many of the members often switch instruments, as almost all the community members are players, they find it easy to disguise changes in the rhythm or errors while playing. In fact, when drum musicians, except *kagura-daiko*, made mistakes, some of the other members looked at the musicians or directed them to correct the rhythm by moving their hands. The tone quality of an instrument depends on the ability of the musician playing it.
The ritual involves the use of two types of *fue*. One is played by two musicians during the dance, and the other is played by a musician while other musicians carry food to the altar during the ritual. The latter type of *fue* is called the *aka-bue* (red flute). Both the *fue* are bamboo flutes. There are two main types of bamboo flutes. One is tuned to a Western scale and is called the *uta-bue*, whereas the other is not tuned to a Western scale and is called the *hayashi-bue*. The latter is used in the ritual. The musical range of both types of *fue* depends on the *fue*’s length. The length is indicated by the number of the *fue*. For example, *fue* number 1, which is called an *ipon-chōshi*, is long and has a low musical range. On the other hand, *fue* number 13 is short and has a high musical range. These *fue* have six or seven holes. During the ritual, *fue* number 5, which has seven holes, is played. Some of the participants of the ritual have their own *fue*, while others use *fue* that belong to the shrine. Still others make and play their own *fue*. As a result, these *fue* produce more or less different sounds. Thus, even though the same fingering is required for the different types of *fue*, the sound produced with each *fue* is different.
To play the *fue*, one needs to master the art of fingering. People do this by watching how other *fue* musicians finger the instrument. Many *fue* members find it convenient to watch Mr. Hinoki, who is a *fue* player and the son of my first informant, playing the instrument because he holds the *fue* in a direction that is opposite to convention. Thus, for other players, observing Mr. Tsuga’s fingering is like watching themselves perform in front of a mirror. Even though Mr. Matsushima’s manner of holding the instrument is different from others, the matter is evidently not an issue within the community.

He commented about it as follows:

‘When I was first asked to play the *fue*, I held the *fue* on my left side. I was told that I could continue playing because the sound was the same no matter which side I held it’. (Matsushima, 17/11/05)

Thus, some changes in the way a musical instrument is played may not pose any problems so long as the same sound is generated.

The melody of *miko mai shinji*

Shown below is a part of the music that I transcribed on the basis of my fieldwork data. I have transcribed it with some fixed ornaments, which are circled. Although I describe the dance movements after this *fue* section in detail, I have combined the arm-movements of the *miko*’s dance with the melody for a better understanding of the music structure, since some
members considered the *miko* as the music conductor of the music.

The entire 16-beat cycle melody shown below is played twice, initially on the same keys as depicted on the stave and then one octave above.

* *Miko mai shinji* music (the part played with the *fue*)

* The circled notes are fixed ornamentations.

L1: moving her arms from right to left, R1: moving her arms from left to right

L2: moving her arms from up to down (left side), R2: (right side)

![Melody Diagram](image)

**Figure 22. The melody of the *miko mai shinji***

The melody goes up and down with *D♭* as the pivotal note. The range of each sound is narrow: the highest is *D♭* and *F*, or *A♭* and *C*, and this range constitutes only the major triad. Sounds *E* and *B* do not appear in the melody. In light of this observation, we can assume that the scale shown
below is used.

![Miyako-bushi scale](image)

Figure 23. Miyako-bushi scale

This pentatonic scale is a Japanese scale called the *miyako-bushi*.\(^{70}\) This scale is used in traditional Japanese music, for example, the urban popular music of the Edo period performed on the *koto*, *shamisen*, and *shakuhachi*. Since in the past, some musicians had built their own *fue*, it is not possible to ascertain the original pitch of the sounds in the melody. For example, Mr. Hinoki, who played at the ritual around thirty years ago, and Mr. Hayashi, who played one generation before Mr. Hinoki, used their own handmade instruments.

** Ornamentation of the *fue* melody **

The flute players learnt the music by watching the fingering of their teachers, even though they could not initially produce the sounds themselves. This means that they had copied the musicians who were playing correctly. Since the pitch of the instruments depends heavily on the musicians’ abilities and their health conditions, they did not play the melody at completely the same

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\(^{70}\) However, I suppose that the core note of the *miko mai* music is $D\flat$, and therefore, the *miyako-bushi* does not entirely apply to the *miko mai* melody. Koizumi provides a detailed discussion of Japanese scales, including *miyako-bushi*, in *Nihon no Onkai* (Japanese Music Scales) (1982). According to him, there are four basic Japanese scales: minyō-bushi, which is used in folk songs; miyako-bushi; ritsu-onkai (*gagaku* scale), and ryūkyū-onkai (Okinawa scale). He also assumes that miyako-bushi derives from ritsu-onkai.
pitch even though their fingering was the same. The melody did not include improvisation, but ornamentation called *asobi* (play), which is a term for *shinobue*. *Asobi* is achieved by certain movements of the musician’s fingers; it is a kind of improvisation, a musical embellishment. As mentioned earlier, since they imitated the fingerings of the senior members, they copied the ornamentations while learning the music. This implied that their ornamentations were more or less stable. However, Mr. Tsuchida, who had been a *fue* player in 2007, added layers of ornamentation to his performance. Since he had attended other community festivals and musical rehearsals, he was familiar with the musical instruments and knew how to play them. During his interview, he mentioned that he deliberately adds *asobi*.

Interviewer: I think you add ‘*asobi*’ in your music, don’t you?

Tsuchida: Yes. It’s because I think that the melody sounds smoother if I add ‘*asobi*’ to it. (Tsuchida, 11/11/07)

From his answer, it seems that he considered his musical judgment to be important. This does not imply that he ignored other members’ ornamentations. In fact, from the sound of the music, it is difficult to distinguish his ornamentations from the others.

Another *fue* called the *aka-bue*, a name given by the community because of the colour of the *fue*, i.e. *aka* (red), has six holes. The instrument is old and has no number, which is why we do not know the pitch of the *fue*. This *fue* is not played during rehearsals. The *aka-bue* is played only on the ritual day as a cue for the other musicians to start carrying food to the altar. On this
instrument, the melody is played with two notes, one of which is a low note and the other is the octave note. During my fieldwork, I asked some of the musicians to play the *aka-bue*. The fingering seemed to differ among several of the musicians.

Finger holes of the bamboo flute

![Figure 24. The finger holes of the bamboo flute](image)

Momiji’s fingering: ●●●/●●●

Tushima’s fingering: ●●●/●○○

They use one pattern of fingering for both high and low notes. They controlled the pitch by varying the pressure they applied while blowing; if they blew strongly, a higher pitch was emitted. In contrast, if the pressure was less, the key was lowered.

The *miko’s* dance teacher used an *aka-bue* to teach her dance. Almost all *fue* musicians have family members who, when they were young, played the *fue* during the ritual. In addition, after retirement, almost all musicians play this instrument as an accompanying instrument.
The miko’s dance

Items

Two items were used in the miko’s dance: the hei wand, which is a stick with holy white paper attached, and the suzu bell, which is a stick with three rings that have three, five and seven small bells attached to them (see the above picture). There were suzu bells of two sizes, and the bigger one was used during the ritual. Initially, the community bought the smaller one and used it for a certain period. However, some of the small bells went missing, and so they bought the new, bigger one.

Dance

Earlier in this chapter, I described the structure of the music as I A I B I A I B I A I. This implied that the music had three major patterns: A, B and C. Each of these patterns accompanied a specific dance movement by the miko.

In the dance, the miko first sits in front of and faces a small altar. Then, with
the *hei* wand in her right hand and the *suzu* bell in her left hand, she makes an upward and downward motion in front of her chest.

**Interlude (Pattern I):**

![Hands movement of pattern I](image)

When the *miko*'s right hand goes down, her left hand goes up, and vice versa.

At the same time, the *kagura-daiko* is played as a solo instrument. After this, the *miko* stands up and assumes the first dance position while facing the altar. She moves her left foot backward and raises her arms towards the right.

![Standing position of the foot](image)

A: right foot, B: left foot, C: altar

**Pattern A:**

She then brings both her arms down on her left side while drawing an arc, and the music begins to play. She does not move her feet. Then, she vigorously moves her arms up and down twice.
Next, she takes a step backwards to the right while moving her arms left to right, drawing an arc. She then moves her arms up and down in the same manner.

Pattern 1:

Next, she repeats the same moves from right to left by taking a step backwards to the left.

Pattern 2:

For sixteen steps, she alternates between these two patterns. On the
seventeenth step, she stops moving her feet. Here, she only moves her arms from right to left in the same manner and engages in an upward and downward movement. Then, she takes a step forward to the right while moving her arms from left to right. On the thirty-second step, she returns to the starting position. She then sits in front of the altar and once again engages in the pattern ‘I’ movement.

![Figure 31. Movement of steps](image)

The fifteenth and seventeenth steps are the same.

The length of the stride in this backward and forward movement differs from dance teacher to dance teacher. For example, a dance teacher in 2005 taught her students that the length of the stride should be half a step.

**Pattern B:**

The next step in the miko’s dance is the circular movement. She stands up, turns to the right and then assumes the same position she had taken at the beginning of the backward and forward movement. She puts her left foot behind her right foot. With the music, she moves her arms in an arc from above to her left side, and then vigorously engages in the upward and downward movement. Repeating the same steps she did during the
backward and forward movement, she moves in a circular pattern in a clockwise direction. This circular movement differs among dance teachers.

![Patterns of the circular movement](image)

Pattern B1  Pattern B2  Pattern B3

Figure 32. Patterns of the circular movement

In 2005, a dance teacher used patterns B2 and B3. He stated that it was difficult to engage in the circular movement while the music was playing. Therefore, he taught the *miko* to move in the shape of an ellipse. The teachers in 2006 and 2007 used pattern B1. In 2007, a teacher used packing tape to indicate the circle on the floor. Then, using pieces of tape as indicators, she danced around the circle. The students did not get an opportunity to play and dance in the *haiden*,\(^{71}\) which is where the ritual is held, until the eve of the ritual. In addition, the breadth of the room and the floor of the *haiden* were different. Therefore, they assumed the same positions that they took on the day of the ritual; in 2007, they had several rehearsals in the *haiden*. One day, some senior members came\(^{72}\) to watch their rehearsals. On that occasion, the tape markings were removed and they gave a repetition of the performance they had given on the first day of the rehearsal. These markings were also removed when another senior group

\(^{71}\) Worship hall.
\(^{72}\) They do not come to see the rehearsals without giving advance notice. Therefore, the musicians always know beforehand when they are coming.
called sôdai came to the rehearsal.

During my fieldwork from 2005 to 2007, the structure of the dance was as follows:

1: kagura-daiko solo, A: backward and forward movement, B: circular movement

The structure of the dance was as follows: I A I B I A I B I A I

During the rehearsals as well as the ritual, this structure remained the same.

**Teaching dance**

During the years of my fieldwork, each girl selected to be a miko was nine years old at the time of the ritual. The basic style of the dance did not change during the course of my fieldwork, with the exception of personal differences and errors. Some of these girls moved their arms slower than the others; some were more prone to fatigue and were not able to move their arms in the appropriate manner. However, the teaching styles of the teachers were quite different. Some of the dance teachers deliberately performed differently from the traditional teaching methods, by employing markings of the positions for the dance.

A different dance teacher taught the girls each year between 2005 and 2007. Undoubtedly, there were differences in each girl’s dancing abilities. Similarly, each teacher had a different approach to teaching the dance.

The teacher in 2005 said that he guided the miko to develop a sense of
rhythm while, for instance, performing the steps or dancing solo.

The teacher in 2006 said that the crux of his teaching style was to develop in the *miko* a passion for the dance.

This dance is monotonous and may not be fun for *miko*. Then, I try to teach it to her in a way that she feels good as she dances. (Yanagita, 11/11/06)

Finally, the teacher in 2007 stated the following:

I have tried to instil in her a feeling of confidence while dancing at the rehearsals. I remembered to say something to her to boost her confidence. For example, if she performed her steps well, I told her that she had mastered the steps and there was no reason to worry. Then, I told her that the next time we’d try to listen more carefully to the music as she danced. (Tanihara, 11/11/07)

Only one type of dance is performed at the ritual. The style of teaching is broadly classified into three patterns.

Pattern 1 (D1): The teacher stands behind the *miko* and grips each of her wrists as they dance together.
Pattern 2 (D2): The teacher faces the *miko* and mirrors her moves as they dance together.
Pattern 3 (D3): The teacher stands away from the *miko*, guides her from a
distance, moving his hands, tapping a rhythm or simply watching her perform.

The table below describes the processes used by each teacher to teach the dance. Usually, music is played and the dance is performed twice. ‘A’ denotes the first performance, and ‘B’, the second. Between the two performances, there is a 30-minute break. ‘C’ denotes the occasions on which the dance is performed only once. D1, D2 and D3 are teaching patterns 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Norikomi sai</strong></td>
<td>C: D1</td>
<td>C: D1</td>
<td>C: D1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1st day of rehearsals)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd day</strong></td>
<td>A: D1</td>
<td>A: D1</td>
<td>A: D2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B: D2</td>
<td>B: D1</td>
<td>B: D2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indicated the root dance positions on the floor with coloured packing tape.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3rd day</strong></td>
<td>A: D2, occasionally D1</td>
<td>A: D1</td>
<td>A: D3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B: D2</td>
<td>B: D2</td>
<td>B: D3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indicated the root dance positions on the floor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4th day</strong></td>
<td>A: D3, occasionally D1</td>
<td>A: D2</td>
<td>A: D3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B: D3</td>
<td>B: D2</td>
<td>B: D3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Changed the small <em>suzu</em> to a large <em>suzu</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5th day</strong></td>
<td>C: <em>Nakaiwai sai</em> (celebrations midway through the ritual period)</td>
<td>A: D2</td>
<td>Took off the tapes. A: D3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B: D2</td>
<td>B: D3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Did not move hands well</td>
<td>Changed the small bell to a large one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6th day</strong></td>
<td>Day off</td>
<td>C: <em>Nakaiwai sai</em></td>
<td>C: <em>Nakaiwai sai</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 33. Table comparing the learning process of the dance
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>A:</th>
<th>B:</th>
<th>C: *</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7th day</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>Day off</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th day</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>D3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Created a space in the room to mimic the place where the ritual is held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th day</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>D3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Created a space in the room to mimic the place where the ritual is held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eve of the ritual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritual day</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In 2006, a small bell was used in the ritual.

Each teacher instructed and advised the *miko* before, after, and during the dance performed with the *kagura-daiko* solo. However, because the teachers displayed differences in their teaching approaches, as revealed by the interviews, the rehearsals also differed.

The teacher in 2005 oscillated between Pattern 1 and Pattern 3. In other words, he changed patterns depending on the *miko*’s skill.

The teacher in 2007 oscillated between Pattern 1 to Pattern 3 on the 2\textsuperscript{nd} rehearsal day. From an early stage, he encouraged the *miko* to adopt an independent style during the performances.

The teachers in 2006 and 2007 created a space in the rehearsal room to mimic the place where the performance is held on the day of the ritual. Since the rehearsal room is larger than the space where the actual
performance is held, they simulated the atmosphere of the ritual day. This was to ensure that the miko did not feel awkward while dancing on the day of the ritual. This, as well as the use of packing tape, constituted a new method of teaching dance. The teachers used packing tape to indicate the root dance positions. Since the miko had to move in a circle while dancing to the music, the marking enabled her to retain a sense of the root position.

Musical practices and perceptions shared in the community
As mentioned in chapter 2, the community believes that their music and dance rituals have not changed over the years. However, in the case of the kagura-daiko, which is the musical instrument used for the solo performance, and the fue, which is the melody instrument, musical practices that are considered to have remained unchanged have, in reality, undergone subtle changes. On the other hand, in the case of the drum instruments, there have hardly been any changes apart from the occasional error. This is despite the fact that each player has a personal style of playing, which results, for instance, in different strengths in the drum beats. This is because almost all of the community members have played the different drums, except the kagura-daiko, in the past and, therefore, have knowledge of the musical performances of drums. Thus, if a musician unconsciously plays the wrong rhythm, someone is likely to spot it, making it possible to fix the error. A good example of this occurred during the rehearsals in 2006, as mentioned in the section on the ôtsuzumi. The rhythm of the kagura-daiko, on the other hand, which is the instrument used in the solo, has changed; however, these subtle changes have been accepted. This is because the
change may not have been perceived as incorrect by the community, since very few have any experience of playing the instrument even though all the participants and members listen to its rhythms during the rehearsals. In physical terms, they have no idea of the *kagura-daiko*’s rhythm.

Mr. Takeda, who was a *kagura-daiko* player and who was unconsciously responsible for changing the rhythm of the instrument as a result of his playing style, had this to say:

‘I used to count the number of beats when I was a beginner, but after I had become used to playing it, I didn’t count them anymore because I had physically memorised the rhythm’. (Takeda, 14/11/05)

Such subtle changes are not questioned by the community. However, as members of the community are familiar with the other drum parts, as noted above, glaring mistakes on these instruments, such as the error that Mr. Kuwata made during the first and second rehearsals in 2006, when he did not play block 1 at all, are corrected by the community. For the community, such mistakes stand out as being very different from the traditional rhythm and are thus not accepted on the *ôdaiko* as legitimate change.

Changes are also made consciously. I had mentioned earlier that Mr. Tsuchida, who played the musical instrument both within and beyond the community circle, added his own ornamentations; the changes introduced
by him were conscious ones. He spoke about it when I interviewed him:

‘I try to add ‘asobi’ (ornamentation) only to an extent that allows other members to recognise it. I think too much ‘asobi’ disturbs the melody because the melody doesn’t match the rhythm of the other drums.’ (Tsuchida, 11/11/07)

Similarly, some intentional changes are found in the teaching of the dance, even though the community believes that the music and dance have not changed in any way.

Fortunately, I was able to observe the activities of three dance teachers during the course of my fieldwork. The teacher in 2005 was a man who had retired from active membership in the community; he was older than the active members. However, since no one from among the active members in 2005 was qualified to take over as the dance teacher, the members asked him to come back for one year. This meant that the teacher in 2005 and the teachers in 2006 and 2007 belonged to different generations.

The big difference between the two generations lay in their methods of introducing the dance: the teachers in 2006 and 2007 taped markings onto the floor for the miko. This was because they were afraid that the miko would not be able to dance well on the day of the ritual, since the width of the rehearsal room and that of the actual stage was different. As mentioned earlier, they made a small circle, the size of which was appropriate for the dimensions of the stage used on the ritual day by marking the rehearsal
room with red packing tape. This way seems to have been accepted by the community, with the exception of the sôdai of the senior group and the previous generation to which the teacher in 2005 belonged. The teacher in 2007 commented as follows:

‘The sôdai group is present on the first day of the rehearsals, so we cannot use the markings’. (Tanihara, 11/11/07)

Since members belonging to the two elderly groups were not present at the rehearsals every day, they did not come to know of the new methods that were being employed to teach the traditional dance. When these senior members were present, the active members would take off the tape and conduct the music and dance rehearsals without any markings.

Even though members from the current generation think that the new method is efficient and helps girls master the dance, they know that their methods are not in keeping with tradition. In my journal, I wrote about this issue:

*Mr. Taguchi’s comment, ‘we should teach the dance by using the traditional way, but I teach the dance in a way that suits the present children’, is thought-provoking.* (Extract from my journal in 2007)

The teachers in 2006 and 2007 also fashioned the rehearsal space by setting
their musical instruments and Japanese lanterns in a way that made it identical to the stage setup on the ritual day. However, some members seemed to be uncomfortable with this new style, although this could have been because I was there to record their innovative rehearsal methods. The problem that I mentioned in chapter 2 existed here as well: some of the members asked me to refrain from showing my films to outsiders.

These new methods were not used when the sôdai or the other elderly group was present. This suggests that even when a change in the music performance is tacitly accepted by the community, there is nevertheless a certain importance ascribed to executing ‘exactly the same’ traditional form of music and dance.

**Summary**

In chapters 3 and 4, I examined in depth the *miko mai shinji* ritual and the accompanying dance and music routines. In my view, the tradition or continuity in the values recognised by a community is in fact ‘preserved’ through adaptation or change. In other words, ritual and music are preserved as a result of the community performing them. Performance always includes the possibility of change because it is a human action. Even though the performer has mastered his/her music and possesses skills required to play it correctly, some changes may be introduced while physically playing the music after having already mastered it. Mr. Takeda’s comment is a clear example; he did not count the rhythm because he had physically mastered it. However, this led to a change in the rhythm he played. Thus, although a
significant change occurred in the rhythmic pattern, it was completely assimilated in a very unconscious manner with the rhythms played by the other performers.

In *miko mai shinji*, the changes were wrapped by or hidden within fixed actions that included the ritual itself, and the ritualised rehearsals. Even though the traditional music has changed slightly, in actual terms, the ritual and ritualised rehearsals cover these changes because the music is performed in the ritual and ritualised rehearsals: it seems that they repeat the same actions regularly and precisely. In addition, such repeated actions and customs create a shared disposition among the community. This disposition directs their actions and performances towards their preferences, and their customised actions are reinforced. In addition, because human performances in such areas as music and rituals are ephemeral, they can preserve the appearance of continuity in the ritual and music while allowing for subtle but important levels of adaptation and change. Thus, the *miko mai shinji* and the music facilitate each other and create a kind of ‘continuity’. The continuation of these ritual practices, including the ritualised rehearsals, allows the community to honour tradition, and at the same time, through their ability to adapt and change, to become truly contemporary.
Chapter 5
Continuity through change

In chapters three and four, I focused on one particular ritual called *miko mai shinji*, and the Ôu community, which conducts the ritual. Further, I provided an in-depth survey to support my central hypothesis in this thesis, which is that continuity is brought about by or through changes in rituals. In the fieldwork, I found that the ritual and ritual music, which according to the Ôu community have not changed have, in reality, changed, although the degree of change is subtle. For example, the date on which the ritual is held, the conditions for young men to become musicians, the girls who are chosen to become the *miko*, and the method of teaching the dance and music itself have changed. On the other hand, the ritualised music rehearsals and the structure of the ritual, whose origins are unknown and have, for the community seemingly remained unchanged, have created a kind of continuity, in other words, an appearance of continuity. Further, such practices, which include the method of teaching music, the manner of preparing the ritual and associated events such as feasts, and the music rehearsals facilitate in creating an appearance of continuity in the ritual. Moreover, it is a fact that the members of the community value their ritual
because they believe that it has been passed down in the community without any changes, generation after generation, and they have the desire to continue preserving the ritual in the same manner.

However, as I mentioned in chapters three and four, in reality, the ritual has changed and in most likelihood, the ritual would be extinct if it were not allowed to change, especially since the social environment around it has changed. In other words, this means that continuity requires changes. This is the aspect that I have explored in my ethnographic description of the ritual. Does this theory apply to only one particular ritual, miko mai shinji? What is the implication of this thesis for the disciplinary or interdisciplinary study of ritual practice?

In order to address these questions, this chapter will commence with a brief overview of the proposal for this thesis, which argues that continuity is facilitated by change in the context of ritual practice. This will be followed by a broader discussion of the implications of this proposal for the study of ritual, arguing that traditional approaches to theorising ritual are challenged by the inclusion of a performative lens through which ritual dynamics may be understood. In doing so, I will consider two historically influential approaches in ritual studies: one is that of Émile Durkheim, which emphasises continuity and stability in ritual, and the other is that of Victor Turner and Clifford Geertz, which emphasises the changing and dynamic character of rituals. These approaches may seem contradictory. However, through a performative lens, these are not understood as binaries, but rather as dynamically interacting in the processes of ritual performances. This
understanding is further explored with reference to the work of Talal Asad, which focuses on performative dimensions of ritual practice. In the third section, I focus on the role of music in ritual in order to ascertain whether there are certain characteristics of music which render it particularly amenable to supporting this characteristic of ritual, through functioning simultaneously as an expression of individual creativity and also as a force of communal identity. These characteristics of music are explored primarily with reference to the work of cultural sociologist, Tia DeNora.

Summary of the findings and thesis proposal

In chapter one, I described that until I began ritual studies, I had never reflected on festivals and rituals as they were just an integral part of my life. These events did not have religious connotations for me, even though some rituals were held at Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines or some other places that were related to religion. They were simply a part of my life. However, after I began ritual studies in Ireland, I began to question some of the rituals that I had experienced as a Japanese person: Why do rituals and festivals survive in contemporary Japan? What is the value or meaning of these in contemporary Japan? Despite the passage of time and a changing society evolving around these events, they are performed regularly. Through annual fieldwork of miko mai shinji, conducted from 2005 to 2007, I established some hypotheses regarding my questions. First, tradition and change are not contradictory, tradition is preserved through adaptation. Second, rituals and music are particularly adept at facilitating this kind of continuity because they are ephemeral; human activities can preserve the appearance of
continuity, while allowing for subtle but important levels of adaptation and change. Third, continuation of these ritual practices, thereby, allows for the honouring of tradition through its ability to adapt and change and, therefore, to be truly contemporary. In short, music has the potential to facilitate changes, and ritual can easily create an appearance of continuity. These characteristics do not contradict, but rather facilitate each other.

In order to further explore the central hypothesis of continuity through change, I conducted a survey of relevant literature on both ritual and music. The survey revealed the dynamic nature of musical performance and the appearance of the continuity of ritual. For a more in-depth examination of the central hypothesis, I focused on the miko mai shinji and the community that hosts it; and described the ritual and the ritualised rehearsal of the music and dance on the basis of my three years fieldwork. By observing the annual ritual, and the process of the ritual and the rehearsals by which members of the community pass down their music and dance in the same manner, I illustrate that the music and dance as performances play an important role in preserving the ritual.

Does the proposal in this thesis, namely that continuity is facilitated by change, which is supported by the ethnographic description, apply only to miko mai shinji? From a historical perspective, ritual studies tended to be related to the study of myths and religion (myths and ritual school), society (functionalism and structuralism), and culture and meanings (symbolism and culturalism). Further back still, scholars in the nineteenth century focused on actions or performances in rituals. Within this diversity of
approaches, it was Durkheim who emphasised the continuity and stability of ritual, and conversely Victor Turner presented a new perspective, which dealt with ritual as a dynamic in ritual studies, and approached ritual as something that causes change or has a dynamic nature. Are these opposites? How does my proposal for this thesis establish a position within the field of ritual studies? To answer this, I will briefly view the following approaches to the study of ritual: Émile Durkheim’s continuity and stability approach, and Victor Turner’s dynamic and changes approach. Moreover, I also briefly consider the work of Clifford Geertz and Mary Catherine Bateson who emphasised ‘change’ in society.

Stability and dynamism in ritual studies

Durkheim emphasised continuity and stability in ritual in his seminal book *The elementary forms of the religious life* (1915). He studied totems and insisted that religion comprises three elements. The first involves beliefs, which discriminates the sacred from the secular; the second is practices, which are actions of creating reverence for the sacred; and the third is the institution, the church, the temple or the shrine, which represents the organisation. Thus, for him in totem studies, a ritual is a rule of actions that prescribes how people should behave towards the sacred. Through or by the rituals, where totems are worshipped, a collective of people identifies each other as members of the same social community that has the same belief and creates a social bond amongst themselves. In other words, people feel homogeneity, that is, a sense of ‘sameness’, when they worship together what they unanimously regard as important, for example totems. This act of
worshiping is called ritual. In other words, people are united through or by rituals, and they share a bond, which is activated or reinforced by repeated rituals.

In summary, Durkheim established the following theory by his study on totems: belief is shared by a particular collective. Thus, the place where a given religion or belief arises is called society. The collective, which is connected by religious beliefs, needs to practice rituals that are connected to that belief. This is because rituals convey a shared belief between individuals in the collective. Thus, ritual facilitates the continuity of the belief in the collective. Not only is such a belief shared by members of the collective, it also binds them. Thus, according to Durkheim, people who build collectives are bound by a shared belief. Therefore, rituals play an important role in creating and maintaining solidarity amongst the people of a society. Further, their belief is transmitted through the community by means of performing rituals. Thus, Durkheim emphasised continuity and stability in ritual. His approach influenced Radcliffe-Brown (e.g., *Structure and function in primitive society: essays and addresses*, 1952), who insisted that ritual reinforced a sense of solidarity amongst people, enhanced social bonding and propagated unity in society.

However, Victor Turner’s book *Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure* (1969) brought about a turning point in Durkheim’s abovementioned approach to ritual studies, which dealt with ritual as possessing a certain stability and continuity. As I mentioned in the second chapter, Turner’s approach deals with ritual as a process in which changes are allowed and
have a dynamic nature.

I discussed Turner’s concept regarding ritual in chapter two, but I re-emphasise his concept of ritual dynamism here. Turner was influenced by Gennep’s concept of the rite of passage: Here, the rite consists of three stages: separation, margin and incorporation. Turner focused on the second stage margin and developed this concept and termed it ‘liminality’. The status or attributes of people in liminality is ambiguous and obscure and belongs neither before nor after a new status/situation. In liminality, social structures, to which people belong in their daily lives, lose their meanings. Turner then focused on the relationships among people in a state of liminality. He termed such human relationships, which exist in liminal or anti-structural mode and by which people relate to each other freely and equally beyond social status or gender, as communitas. Such human relationships in liminality are different from those in their usual social life. In his study of the Ndembu tribe of central Africa, who are located in modern northern Zimbabwe, Turner insisted that considering society as static or with minimum changes is incorrect. For Turner, a society incorporates transient or fluid aspects of society by rituals. According to Turner, society is not static; it is processional. Thus, ritual is a kind of device that causes changes, and people experience those changes in their society.

Clifford Geertz, another influential anthropologist in ritual studies, also emphasised the existence of change. According to Geertz, no one remains unchanged, and everything changes. The entire world possesses the nature of instability. Geertz’s concept of change is explored in the book Narrative
Inquiry (2000) by Clandinin and Connelly. In his retrospective analysis of his anthropological research in Indonesia and Morocco, which lasted over four decades, Geertz notes that processes of change influenced every aspect of his understanding and research; it influenced not only the world he was attempting to understand and explore, but also himself as the researcher, and the disciplinary world within which he worked. Thus, for Geertz, everything that surrounds us, including ourselves, changes.

When everything changes, from the small and immediate to the vast and abstract—the object of study, the world immediately around it, the student, the world immediately around him, and the wider world around them both—there seems to be no place to stand so as to locate just what has altered and how. (Geertz 1995: p.2)

Therefore, the situation or society surrounding rituals, rituals themselves and interpretation of rituals, which includes meanings of symbols or actions, imply instability. He insisted that what anthropologists do is to create late explanations of continuation, which is what seems to have happened. This implies that anthropology studies events, which happen with uncertainty; establish connections, which provide relationships to the event; synthesise the events and other elements; and create general explanations of events. In other words, it is concerned with the interpretation of events. From this perspective, for Geertz, ritual is important in understanding cultures as ritual seems to emerge from events that have taken place. However, the ritual objects and the researcher’s stance also have to change, in order to interpret the changes. Therefore, whatever anthropologists produce, be it the
interpretation or explanation of events, is awkward, dubious and badly formed. What Geertz ponders upon is the manner of interpretation, understanding and description of subjects of research that have constantly changed

The same book, *Narrative Inquiry*, also explores Mary Catherine Bateson’s focus on change, particularly with reference to the agents of change, namely the people. For example, while Geertz focused on the changed world, Bateson focused on how people understand the changing world. Therefore, her central argument was about learning. Learning is a human endeavour and, according to her, continuity is possible because humans improvise and adapt to changes. For Bateson, improvisation is a response to uncertainty, and adaptation rises from confrontations with uniqueness that may appear chaotic. Both improvisation and adaptation are inevitable social products which help people stay connected to the past while building continuity with the future. Thus, according to her, human agencies bring about change and continuity. Although her study is not directly related to ritual, it is clear that her approach (like that of Geertz, who believes that rituals can be included in human actions) is towards human actions; moreover, for her, human actions have to be studied or dealt with as a dynamic nature. (For details, see her work *Peripheral Visions*, 1994.)

I have briefly described two approaches with respect to human actions and rituals. One approach is that adopted by Durkheim and his adherents, which emphasises continuity and stability in ritual, and the other is that adopted by Turner, Geertz and Bateson, which emphasises the dynamics and changes in
human actions, including rituals. Are these contradictory? It may be true that to some it may seem that these are opposite understandings of what ritual is. However, by using a performative lens, we can see that these are not binaries and that the appearance of continuity and belief in continuity can bring about change. So how should we perceive these approaches? How does this appearance of and belief in continuity become possible? To explain the relationship between continuity and changes through a performance lens, I will explore Talal Asad’s theory, which focuses on ritual as practice. His work has influenced this thesis and the proposal that ritual processes are essentially performative and are capable of ‘performing’ continuity through change and adaptation.

According to Talal Asad, performance is ‘inscribed’ on the body. His ideas were influenced by those of Michel Foucault. (Foucault’s outstanding works that depict his concept of power and strategy include *Discipline and Punish*, 1979, and *The History of Sexuality vol.1: An Introduction*, 1979.) According to Foucault, such inscribed actions were tacit and habitual. However, Asad believed that inscribed actions create both habitual knowledge and the site of change. Thus, it is dynamic, not fixed. Here, I explore his theory regarding performance practice in his 1993 publication: *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and reason of power in Christianity and Islam*.

Asad critically viewed symbolic and interpretative approaches which insist that ritual itself is a specific code or that ritual conveys something. To counter this, in the second chapter of his book, he explored the historical integration of ritual: how the concept of ritual has changed in history. By
exploring historical definitions of ritual as contained in, for example, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Asad explained that early definitions and understandings of ritual described the rubrics or regulation of actions in rituals. Therefore, according to Asad, rituals originally referred to directions of actions in rituals. At the beginning of the twentieth century, rituals came to be dealt with as actions that were symbolic or expressed something. He criticised anthropologists who have a symbolic or interpretative approach to rituals because, according to him, they see the ritual processes as symbolic in nature; Geertz defined symbols as everything that conveyed meaning, and such anthropologists dealt with rituals as if they were conveying a message. Further, according to Asad, this is because such an approach always requires interpretation, and such bases of interpretations are expanded upon by specialists like anthropologists. Consequently, a diversification of interpretation and variety of meanings are expected. Instead, according to Asad, rituals are not objects for interpretation. Rather, the aim of ritual is to conduct correctly prescribed or regulated performances. Therefore, rituals lean on practical discipline. He maintains that performing rituals correctly does not require interpreting the symbols; it requires physical or language abilities, which are mastered by rules and regulations which are accepted by specific authorities.

Another of his criticisms with regard to certain approaches towards ritual in anthropology is that these approaches separate the rituals from the feelings of the actors in the rituals. He insists that feelings, which anthropologists consider as internal or accidental, could be gradually developed by gradually mastering formalised actions. Thus, according to Asad, rituals are
neither something that convey various meanings, nor something that need to be interpreted. For him, a ritual is a moment in which actions are inscribed on actors’ bodies, and their actions create their feelings.

An interesting example of this approach to ritual can be demonstrated through Asad’s analysis regarding Christian medieval monastic rituals. He postulates that the purpose of a Medieval Christian programme, which defined or regulated manners of rituals, was to create and re-create Christian virtues or dispositions in the monks. However, according to him, this is not to say that the performance of these actions correctly created such a virtue. Asad states that such a discipline programme in Medieval Christianity needed to be one that could connect the ‘outer behaviour’ and ‘inner motive’ (p.64). In other words, through a discipline programme, the visible code or actions, and invisible morality are inseparable. Thus, the aim of the monastic discipline programme is to create a will or feeling of obedience in the monks. In addition, the obedience, which monks need to achieve, means a self-motivated submission. Therefore, the final goal of the programme is for monks to evoke within themselves the feeling by which they believe that obedience to Christianity is a virtue. To create that feeling, it is essential to follow the practices that are defined or regulated in the programme. Thus, according to Asad, mastering performances, or physical learning, and the knowledge acquired from that learning were inter-related: actions develop feelings and vice versa. Feelings influence behaviour. So, how did the Medieval Christian monks inscribe actions on their body in the programme, and how did they re-create themselves using such inscribed actions?
Asad recognises that one of the characteristics that rituals possess is formalised speech and actions. However, he insists that monks are not disciplined only by formalisation. According to him, learning or mastering correct forms are necessary to become disciplined, and such formalisation was accepted by the authorities. As I mentioned earlier, Asad was influenced by Michel Foucault. For Foucault, disciplined acts or behaviour were not merely physical techniques but rather they correctly and appropriately organised understanding, feelings, desires and will. In his book *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* (1979), Foucault described how criminals are always overseen by authority and that they reproduce their bodies by details and strict rules. For Foucault, killing criminals is unproductive for society. Correcting criminals is in some ways a process of recycling for society. In other words, prison is a special device to reproduce human material for society. In prison where prisoners are strictly monitored, criminals are reformed and reproduced as people who are valid for society, with sound minds, as the result of disciplined actions. Thus, modification of their minds happened through their bodies. In addition, these modifications were always monitored under authority. For Foucault, the power of such an authority is the means to structuralise criminals’ actions by fear. Thus, the disciplined actions intensely corrected not only their bodies but also their minds. Foucault relates the following processes.

‘These methods, which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility, might be called ‘disciplines’.’ (Foucault 1979: p.135)
Further, this restricted system is what takes away freedom from criminals, in other words, it imposes discipline upon them. Asad says that Christian monasteries are open-door prisons, based on similar principles and disciplines, implemented, not through the enforcement of punishment but through the authoritarian structure of religious life. He focused on religious discipline in Medieval Christianity and described how autonomic obedience of monks was created under specific authorities. For the process of creating obedience, a monastery, which is the communal living place, was necessary. Proper performances of liturgies are one of the instruments of the monk’s ‘spiritual craft’ (p. 62), which he must acquire or achieve by practice and which is necessary in the concept of discipline for developing oneself as a Christian. According to Asad, liturgical texts were the process of teaching and contained the contents of the teachings, and these were transmitted by God’s vicegerents. The liturgical texts were concepts that covered everything that needed to be done in order for the authorities to control monks in the name of God. Therefore, it took on the form of authority. Asad dealt with the Rule of Saint Benedict in the Middle Ages because this was the solo programme for the proper governing of a monastic community and the Christian formation of the members. Not only were these texts in the Rule of Saint Benedict general statements regarding the essential Christian life, they were also strict regulations about what could be done, how, when, where and by whom. In addition, these actions were regulated under the authorities. The concepts of the texts are not only for understanding the meanings; they are also parts of actual actions for reading and listening. According to him, such programmes, with the purpose of constructing
submitive behaviour, will achieve a good effect in closed spaces, meaning monasteries, and under the authority of an abbot.

Asad also described how the programme built virtuous desire. In other words, the programme was intended for ‘reorganising the souls’ (p.138). He selected Jean Leclercq’s, who was a Benedictine monk and medieval historian, detailed discussion of a French abbot, Bernard of Clairvaux, who developed ritual techniques for developing virtuous desire, and analysed monastic rituals as a programme for learning Christian virtues under the law of God. In the twelfth century, a new pattern of recruitment was implemented in the new monastic orders. Previously, monks grew up in the monasteries from their childhood; later, however, emergent monks were almost adults, and they were from the nobility or were knights. Therefore, they had experienced secular society with all its pleasures and tribulations. According to Asad, Leclercq states that Bernard did not suppress such secular experiences but rather used them in the monastic programme. In fact, the programme invoked ‘caritas’, which is the love of God, and required that the emergent monks, who had sensuous and secular ‘cupiditas’, to voluntarily transform that cupiditas into caritas. In short, the programme was to create religious desire in monks from their secular experiences. According to Asad, Leclercq states how Bernard emphasised that it was possible to transform love among humans with love for God. For this reason, in order to not remove pleasurable memories, the programme was conducted so that pleasurable memories were appropriately directed under the authority. This was achieved through the exercise of the daily liturgy: the listening to, reading and memorisation of sacred texts; in other words, the entire process
of monastic practice. The monastic rituals, according to Asad, are not considered to be merely teaching new values to the participants. They are a process of creating themselves through disciplined manners in speech and actions, or in other words, performance. This re-description of memories should be performed through dialogues between the monks and the preacher, who has the authority, and through learning about religious life. However, this programme, which attempted to connect fundamental contradictions by activity, is not perfect in reality and therefore the possibility of failure remained.

Asad also described how a ‘monastic revival’ occurred in the twelfth century, which focused on the idea of poverty and manual labour. The Cistercian order, which emerged in the revival, cut down on the time for liturgies and emphasised manual labour. Various works were reconstructed as devotional practices, and these were amended to resemble liturgies as closely as possible. Thus, different types of labour became rituals, and the rituals became one of the programmes which aimed to attain moral transformation.

In his discussion regarding rituals, Asad repeats the importance of the programme, which includes practical performances for creating the virtue needed for Christianity. Inscribed actions or practice on the body creates self in the body and directs the mind. Like Foucault, Asad also believed that actions that are disciplined carefully under authority correct the human mind. However, as I mentioned earlier, Asad considered such described performances as dynamic; this means that it creates not only habitual knowledge but also the site for changes.
Practices or performances in monasteries are inscribed on the bodies of the monks and therefore, habitual knowledge is created within the monks. For example, the liturgical knowledge of proper behaviour and godly behaviour are mastered by, or through, the exercise of daily liturgies and the reading of and listening to texts through performance. Thus, the knowledge is created by the body and accumulated in the body. Knowledge is not given, but is created within the actor by habitual performance. Further, the virtue of Christianity is created voluntarily by, or through, the performance. Thus, monks obey God voluntarily or autonomously.

However, it is also possible to change practiced actions when something unexpected happens. The body responds to unexpected situations in order to somehow survive the situation. The most effective way for creating Christian virtue in monasteries in the Middle Ages was ritual practice. If the practices worked well towards the formation of the virtue, they were continued. However, if because of social changes or changes in conditions around the monks, those practices could not accomplish the desired achievements, new practices and programmes would be required and created.

In my observations of the Ôu community, habitual performances of community members related to rituals created habitual knowledge. For example, proper behaviour or performances in the rituals and rehearsals, the manner of entering the rehearsal room, the order of leaving the room after the rehearsals and the method of teaching the music, are all learnt by or
through actions. New members learn such customs from senior members who teach them first by means of dialogue. Such practices have been passed down from generation to generation. By mastering such performances and creating habitual knowledge, namely the feelings or desires of the community members to continue their ritual without any changes, is created in the actors’ minds. For example, with regard to attending the ritual and musical rehearsals, one member of the community commented:

While I felt annoyed, because my time was restricted by the rehearsals, I also felt a sense of responsibility to continue the ritual.

(Kashiwa, 12/11/05)

While at first he felt annoyed, over the years he gradually felt a responsibility to attend the ritual and the rehearsal. It may be said that by attending the ritual and rehearsals, his negative feelings gradually transformed into responsibility for performances that were regulated. Thus, repeated performances in a specific manner create an inner motive for the performers. When we see such feelings in a whole community, the feelings possess continuity. For example, the will of the community to continue their ritual without changing it has been passed down from generation to generation. As Durkheim mentioned, ritual has continuity. Such feelings or religious beliefs are shared by the community; therefore, it creates the core of the community and a kind of stability. In the Middle Ages, the virtue of Christianity was at the core of the rituals to be performed; the will to continue the ritual, without change, is at the core of the Ōu community and is one of the reasons they conduct the ritual annually.
On the other hand, ritual is controlled by human action and therefore changes slightly. As Geertz described, everything in the world changes by the minute. Research objects, researchers and their environment change to various degrees, some of them seem unchanged, others change dramatically, but in reality they all change. However, repeated actions in rituals can easily create an appearance of continuity. Thus, they mask change. Rituals change while creating the appearance of continuity through repeated actions. In other words, changes produce the appearance of continuity and the will or feelings of the collective, and the ritual, is allowed to survive. In fact, changes in rituals are responses or adaptations for survival. In other words, it is a protective response which enables the continuance of the ritual. Therefore, continuity and change are not binary. They facilitate each other in the survival of the ritual.

Music in Ritual

In my ethnographic observations concerning the miko mai shinji, I have suggested that this characteristic of continuity through change in ritual is facilitated particularly well through musical practice. Music works at both the collective and individual levels; facilitating the dynamism of individual creativity, but also manifesting this through the collective expression of the group. Therefore, the musical dimension of ritual, as works of both collectives and individuals, require consideration. This section draws on the work of cultural sociologist Tia DeNora and her exploration of these aspects of musical practice. While DeNora is not talking about these in a
specifically ritual context, aspects of her proposal can be usefully explored in terms of ritual music performance.

In her book, *Music in everyday life* (2000), DeNora explores a number of characteristics of the phenomenon of human music making, several of which are relevant to this work.

DeNora suggests that the relational potential of music is an important characteristic in our understanding of its use in human life. This can be suggested, for example, through an exploration of the role of music in personal relationships. Imagine a woman, whose boyfriend visits her room for the first time. Music is playing in the room. The mood for the women and her boyfriend is created by her choice of music, for example slow-tempo music and/or love songs. In the case of some couples, both of them select music together. In other cases, only one of them makes a selection. In the case of yet another couple, they may not be interested in music at all. If the couple select the music together, the music reinforces their relationship. But on the other hand, bad relationships can be negatively represented by music negatively. For example, DeNora described the use of music of a couple close to divorce: Lesley and her husband liked different genres of music. When their relationship was good, Lesley avoided music that she liked as her husband did not like that genre of music. Instead, she listened to the music that her husband liked. However, when they were close to getting divorced, she played the music that she liked in their house at a high volume even though her husband did not like the music. According to DeNora, the
music Lesley played projected how she was different from her husband and also conveyed her feelings towards him that she had not yet conveyed in words. At the same time, she considered divorcing him while listening and playing the music. The changes in her musical practice, from listening to the music that her husband liked, to playing the music that she liked, provided her with the means to express her feelings through the action of playing her music up to the time when she finally left the house. Thus, in human relationships, music can be the means to convey feelings through action. Actions can be directed either by or through the use of music.

This relational dimension of music demonstrates how musical behaviour can be utilised to reinforce or challenge collective identity (we are a couple / we are not a couple) but can also be used by individuals as a catalyst to create change.

Another characteristic of music described by DeNora in her research is the power of music in public places, and the ability of music to create a public or communal identity. She conducted fieldwork in small shops in England and researched how music is used for the power it has. First, she pointed out that music is played to create identities for shops. The music that was played in each shop related to the image that the shop manager’s desired for their shops. This implied that the music that is played in the shop is the one that the shop predicts would give it the image that it wants to project to its customers. According to one of the shop managers, such music affects customers when they select clothes. For example, the manager said that when drums and bass music is played in the shop, customers buy street
clothes; similarly, they buy body hugging clothes if club music is played. Thus, customers buy clothes that relate to the music played in the shop. In other words, music influences customers’ purchases. These outcomes illustrate how shoppers can project their identities by playing specific music for the public and also how the music connects insiders (shoppers) and outsiders (customers). Thus, a communal identity is formed through music.

Music works on collectives and collectives consist of individuals. Therefore, we cannot disregard the influence of music on individuals. According to DeNora, music also creates individual identities. Through many interviews which she conducted, she describes how music relates to self-regulation and how it elaborates the individual self, and the individual process of creation. This brings up the issue about how music relates itself to the structure of the self, in other words, the individual identity and the dynamic and adaptable nature of human self expression. DeNora focused on interviewing females regarding this issue, and almost all of the responses show that music is considered as a device that transforms individuals to a specific condition. Specific mental states are created, enhanced and maintained by the device: ‘music’. Therefore, the device is used for regulating individuals. For example, someone listens to some specific music when they want to relax. Alternatively, someone who is not in the right mood plays music in order to change their mood. For example, music is used when someone wants to get out of a particular mood, say a bad mood. Thus, music works as a means of developing feelings. However, a particular music does not build the same feelings in all human beings. For example, music that relaxes someone may not affect another person in the same manner, or it may affect the individual
differently and create no feelings. Thus, even listening to or playing the same music affects the feelings developed in the listeners or players.

While music is therefore a powerful agent in the creation and transformation of human identity and self expression, it should also be remembered that individual expressive agents contribute to the formation of collective identities. The relationship between the individual / communal is therefore not a simplistic case of dynamic individual versus stable community, but rather aspects of continuity and change exist at both the individual and communal levels.

Music can also revive events or important moments. In other words, music has the ability to evoke feelings from the past. Therefore, music is related to experiences in the past, and sometimes, becomes an emotional or complex emblem. According to DeNora, the powerful evocation of music comes from situational existences, dependent on the context in which the music is listened to. A person may remember an old friend while listening to a particular piece of music because the music and the old friend were in the same situation. Therefore, when we listen to particular music, we may remember someone who was related to that music.

The preceding section has explored four central characteristics of music, as articulated by DeNora, in terms of its relational potential, its ability to reinforce and challenge collective and individual identities, and its ability to act as a potent evocation of past experience.
It is interesting to note the resonances between these general characteristics of music and the particular role played by music in the *miko mai shinji*.

In the case of the Ôu community, there are two major ways of using music. One is its use in the ritual as dedication for *kami*, and the other is its use in their music and dance rehearsals. When the music is played, not only the musicians but also other members behave properly. For example, while playing music, almost all the members who attend the rehearsals sit on their heels, which is the Japanese formal style of sitting on the floor. The whole sequence of the music lasts approximately 40 minutes, and having to sit in this position makes people’s legs hurt. However, they maintain the posture while playing the music and, only as soon as the last note of the music is completed, do they stretch their legs. Thus, while music directs their actions, it also creates an atmosphere of solemnity. Such actions directed by playing the music reinforce their collective identity as community members, who have acquired a communal sense of what behaviour is expected or appropriated among the members. Retiring from the community means to leave the musical practice. In other words, the musical practice is a kind of proof that members belong to the Ôu community. The ritual atmosphere created by the ritual music is also enhanced by the use of ceremonial dress and the sacred ropes which decorate the area of performance. The ceremonial dress and the sacred rope, which are used only in the ritual, are simultaneously integrated into the ritual with the playing of the music. By playing music, the music fills in the spaces between the musicians, other members, ritual items, spectators and everything that exists there. Therefore,
music is of central importance for the community.

In the space where the music is played, some of them play the music, others listen to the music and some others may merely be present there. However, they share the musical space together by being present there. Therefore, a collective identity of the Ôu community is created and is reinforced by the music. In other words, their musical behaviour, which includes listening and playing, creates uniformity at the collective level, uniting or strengthening the solidarity of the community and creating concepts of communal values such as tradition, which they have passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, the music possesses value for the collective, and consequently, the community continues to play the music. This also creates continuity and stability among the community. This collective identity is shared by not only the members but also outsiders during ritual performances in public. The ritual includes various events, for example, purification and offering of food. Visitors witness such events separately on the ground of the Ôu shrine. However, when the musical performance is about to begin, they surround the stage on which the performance is held, and there is no space between visitors. Thus, the musical performance is the central action in the ritual for both the community and the visitors, and the identity created by the music is also enhanced in public.

On the other hand, at the individual level, their music has a variety of effects. This does not mean that the members, who may have played the music, have a strong connection to the music. The effects of the music are various, and these depend on their context. This is because the minimum unit that
produces/reproduces the music is each member. Thus, the music is not merely a stimulus of sounds but a power created in or by relationships among the members. Therefore, at the individual level, music permits individuals to change it. One musician of the Ôu community, who was mentioned in chapter three, is also a member of another community. Therefore, he brought in changes to the ritual music of the Ôu community at an individual level: his playing the ritual music was influenced by his musical experience in another community. However, his subtle individual changes were covered up by the unity of the community at the collective level, and therefore, the changes were difficult to distinguish on the surface. Thus, music can create a platform of change for individuals.

In addition, by playing or listening to the music, past experiences are evoked in the Ôu community at individual levels. For example, in casual conversation, one of the members whose daughter acted as the *miko*, said that he remembers the days when his daughter attended the rehearsals. Thus, their music includes such memories of community members. Some memories could be shared amongst the community, for example, an incident during their rehearsals could become the shared experience. Other experience could be more personal. Thus, the music includes both individual and collective levels of memories and experiences in the community and sometimes acts as a trigger to recalling past memories or experiences.

In this way, the general characteristics of music and the role played by music, as discussed by DeNora, are also seen in the musical behaviours of the *miko mai shinji*. Music can create both the unity of the collective but
allow for change at the individual level because music deals with both the collective and the individual. Therefore, music in rituals is a strong device or tool that supports changes that can be brought about within an appearance of continuity. This power of music applies to not only the *miko mai shinji* but also other rituals because especially at the individual level, there are various choices that can be accessed outside the communities to which they belong, and that allow them to experience a world different from their own community. For example, the master’s programme, which I undertook several years ago, included lectures and performance lessons on Gregorian chant by various background specialists. The programme also provided one to one vocal technique lessons for developing students’ ability as singers. This programme is connected with Glenstal Abbey, a Benedictine Abbey located in Limerick which has retained elements of the Latin monastic office since the formation of the monastery in 1929. (For details, see their webpage http://www.glenstal.org/) Gregorian chant is an important part of the Abbey since it is chanted daily. Since some monks of the Abbey also undertook the master’s programme (one of them was my classmate and is now the first chanter of the community), they brought some changes based on what they learnt in the programme, for example, changes in the chant performance style, to the community. Therefore, although the office has continued in a specific manner, it has also introduced individual changes brought about by such monks.
Summary

In this chapter, I explored the implications of this thesis for a disciplinary or interdisciplinary study of rituals as an aspect of human action. The central idea of this thesis, which is that continuity is facilitated by change, is not only related to the particular ritual called miko mai shinji. Because of repeated formalised performances, rituals create the appearance of continuity and can create a sense of community through shared repeated or habitual performances. This continuity is brought about through changes. This is because ritual is a human act and therefore changes happen. Another reason for this is due to the responses to the changes that have happened around the ritual and the community. Therefore, ritual can be preserved through changes. In other words, changes allow the preservation and survival of the ritual.

Ritual implies actions performed by humans. Almost all actions in a ritual have formality and are repetitive. The actions inscribed on the body of the performers by, or because of, performing the ritual creates habitual knowledge in the performers. This habitual knowledge is strongly connected to the body and senses. For example, as is shown through the comments of a musician in the fourth chapter, who plays kagura-daiko, the musician played the music without thinking because his body remembered the rhythms. By playing it again and again, the actions were inscribed on his body and created a sense of playing the rhythms. Therefore, he did not count how many times he played the beats while playing the music. However, such reliance upon senses brought changes to the music: his rhythms were incorrect. When the musicians teach the music, they pay attention to passing
down their music without any changes at the community level. Thus the above-mentioned changes were brought about by individuals.

Furthermore, this practice creates in the actors not only habitual knowledge but also feelings or ways of thinking. As Asad describes monks creating the virtue of Christianity in their mind by or through the exercise of liturgies, such repeated and regulated performances assist in creating a collective idea of the community. For example, the Ôu community has created and shared the belief that they want their rituals and ritual music passed down unchanged through the generations by the performance of the ritual through the rehearsals.

Music plays an important role in rituals in supporting the relationship between continuity and changes in rituals. This is because music is utilised both by the collective and the individual. In other words, music unifies the community and creates a sense of sharing in the community. For example, the community shares the value of considering their ritual as a tradition. On the other hand, music works at individual levels; for example, playing the music can make the musician a fan of the music or, alternatively, cause mental distress because of the pressure to play music without mistakes. In addition, subtle changes in music are brought about by individuals based on their experiences. Therefore, people in the community experience the power of music at both collective and individual levels.

Thus, the central proposal ‘continuity is facilitated by change’, which I deal with in this thesis does not apply only to the Ôu community. When a ritual is
observed through a performative lens, continuity and change are not binaries; the appearance of continuity can be brought about through change. This is especially facilitated by the musical performance. Therefore, although time has passed, rituals have survived.
**Conclusion**

In modern-day Japan, we probably have no idea of the actual number of festivals and rituals. Numerous festivals and rituals of various sizes and formats are held all over Japan. Like the Ishioka festival, which I introduced in chapter one, some big festivals attract a massive number of tourists and thus boost the tourism industry. Other smaller scale festivals consist of local children parading through their town with small portable shrines. In addition, there are some festivals, like the Edo *tenka matsuri* festival introduced in chapter one, that are revived after having been discontinued at one point. There also are some festivals and rituals which have been sustained for a long time and which are held in specific religious places such as temples or shrines, or are somehow related to specific religions as Shinto or Buddhism. Even so, we cannot undermine the value of these rituals and festivals as tradition. In fact, some people attend or conduct their festivals or rituals without any knowledge of their origins. However, they conduct the festivals or rituals and honour them as tradition.

In this thesis, I posed a question concerning why rituals and festivals have survived in twenty-first century Japan even though the society in which the
rituals and festivals originated is different from today’s society; in sum, why rituals and festivals survive in a changing society. Then, through an examination of the miko mai shinji held in the Kantō area in Eastern Japan, I explored the core of my hypothesis, which states that rituals are characterised by both continuity and change and that these two facilitate each other. In this chapter, I return to the starting point, in other words, why festivals and rituals survive in modern Japan, and attempt to find an appropriate answer. I will need to review this thesis briefly again before learning the final answer.

In chapter one, I described the question of festivals and rituals in modern Japan and what was responsible for raising that question: the context of rituals and festivals in my life. I treat them not as religious but rather as traditional or conventional events which have been incorporated into my life. In fact, even now I visit some festivals which are held in my prefecture during the summer, enjoy the atmosphere created by the seasonal events, and visit a Shinto shrine with my family every New Year’s Day. Such aspects of my life that are connected with rituals and festivals are depicted in my autoethnographic description in the first chapter. Such events which I attended or visited without any question in my mind, raised a question after I studied ritual studies in Ireland: why are such rituals and events conducted regularly in modern Japan? This forms the core question in my thesis. Through the observation of a particular ritual called miko mai shinji in 2005, I formulated a primary proposal for this thesis, which is that tradition/continuity and change are not opposites; on the contrary, tradition/continuity is preserved through adaptation, and ritual and music,
which are human activities which can create and preserve the appearance of continuity while allowing for subtle but important levels of adaptation and change.

This central hypothesis of continuity through change is explored in chapter two. In the literature survey, I revealed a characteristic of rituals: specific formats and their repetition. Repetition of specific or regulated formats tends to give the ritual an appearance of being stable, unchanged and ongoing. However, under this appearance changes do occur. This is because rituals are human activities, and human activities are ephemeral; we cannot repeat or reproduce an action in the exact same manner. Even though we try to carry out the actions in exactly the same manner, subtle changes occur in these actions. Therefore, actions which include musical performances in rituals form the basis for occasioning change in rituals. Moreover, changes are inevitable in rituals or festivals which have continued from generation to generation because they are performed by different performers. Thus, one characteristic of a ritual is creating an appearance of continuity, though human actions, which include musical performances, can easily occasion subtle changes. Therefore, rituals possess both change and continuity. These two characteristics, though seemingly opposite, facilitate each other. In fact, the continuity of rituals and festivals is possible through change.

For a more in-depth examination of this outcome from the literature survey, I described the ethnography of the miko mai shinji, based on three years of fieldwork, in chapters three and four. In these chapters, I revealed the desire and attempts of the community to hand down their rituals from generation to generation without any changes; on the other hand, changes in reality are
caused by social changes around them, and by human performance in the process of handing down their music and dance to the next generation. Certainly, the community members have the firm belief that their ritual has been passed down without any change, and wish to keep it this way because their ancestors have passed it down to their generation. In the interviews conducted during my fieldwork, I received comments that they were proud of their tradition since it has been passed down without any changes. However, the fact remains that changes have taken place. Some changes were necessary for the sake of sustaining the ritual and adapting to the changing society around the community. These includes, for example, shifting performances to weekends and during the middle of the day. Likewise, the music and dance rehearsal venue has changed from the miko’s house to the community centre to reduce the burden on the miko’s family. These changes were made consciously to adapt to altered social circumstances. Another type of change may have occurred almost unconsciously, that is, changes caused in the process of passing down the tradition through the generations. I described the records of my three years of observation regarding the process of learning and teaching music and dance in chapter four. The musicians in the community pay attention to performing it with care until they have mastered it; and they try to hand down the music without any changes. However, once the music is mastered, they do not pay as much attention to its performance as its learning. This point is emphasised by one musician in chapter four. I have recorded some kagura-daiko players from different generations and there are subtle changes in their musical performances. The differences are described in chapter four. There are similar changes in the miko mai shinji though
continuity also exists: their ritual has a specific format and is conducted in the same manner.

Thus, continuity and change exist in miko mai shinji, and such changes, especially those required for adapting to the social situation, are permitted for the sake of sustaining the tradition. Does this outcome apply to only the miko mai shinji? In chapter five, I explored the implication of this thesis, which is that continuity is facilitated by change. In ritual studies, some scholars, such as Durkheim, consider that rituals have a stability and continuity which are conveyed through thought systems; other scholars, such as Turner, consider rituals to be dynamic. These two approaches to rituals seem contradictory; however, performance theory shows that they are not. To demonstrate this, I focused on Talal Asad’s practice theory in this chapter. Since this thesis focuses on musical performances in rituals, I also described the power of music, both at individual and collective levels, by introducing DeNora’s discussion on the role of music in human relational processes in the final section of this chapter.

Including the miko mai shinji, dealt with in this thesis, various rituals and festivals have survived all over Japan today. In a society that undergoes various changes every day, various obstacles appear in the way of continuing the festivals and rituals. One of these obstacles is the lack of successors to the tradition. Due to a low birth rate, the number of members of the next generation who can take over traditions is decreasing in almost every regional area of Japan. The reduction in number of the younger generation is evident when the number of baby boomers after the Second World War is compared with those born during the present-day declining
birth rate. Today, it is both the generation of people in their 50s or 60s, born in or immediately after the baby boom, and the generation of people in their 20s and early 30s, born around the onset of the declining birth rate, who are maintaining the rituals and festivals.

In addition, some people have jobs or attend universities located away from their hometowns. Some of them may watch the rituals and festivals of their hometown; however, it may be difficult to actually participate in them because they are unable to attend music rehearsals or meetings about the events. Some people are free only on weekends and therefore cannot attend events if they are held on weekdays. Moreover, even if events are held on weekdays, some rituals and festivals require prior rehearsal or preparation. Even if the event lasts only a few hours, it may be a burden for people who work on weekdays, because they would be required to put in some hours of preparation after returning from work. In some areas, the relationship among local residents is weakening. There is also tension, especially in areas inhabited by both new and native residents. For example, some native residents do not approve of the participation of new residents; conversely, some new residents avoid participating in local events.

The Ōu community, which conducts the miko mai shinji, is one such community which faces problems in continuing its traditional events. In fact, one of the significant problems of the Ōu community is the possible absence of miko due to a falling population. Today, the number of girls who are eligible to become miko in the Ōu area is small. Therefore, the community needs to find a way to resolve this problem. Some solutions that are under
consideration are borrowing *miko* from neighbouring areas or changing some criteria, for example, the age of the *miko*. This means changing some aspects of the Ôu tradition. Furthermore, acquiring new musicians for the community is becoming more difficult. Therefore, upon becoming musicians, these individuals have to remain as musicians for a longer period than their forefathers. In addition, the average age of the musicians is increasing. The ritual is now held on weekends instead of weekdays. This is because almost all the members work weekdays and hence find it difficult to take leave during the week. However, some members insisted that since it is a sacred ritual, the day on which it is held should not have been changed just for convenience sake. On the other hand, some insisted that the date should have been changed because almost all the members of the community find it difficult to attend the ritual on weekdays. They work on weekdays, and for them, work takes priority over the ritual as it is their work, not their ritual, that earns them their daily bread. As I mentioned in chapter three, almost all the community members used to be farmers; today, however, most of them are corporate employees. Since the ritual is performed by community members, their inability to attend would result in the discontinuation of the ritual. Therefore, performing the ritual on weekends instead of weekdays was a change which was essential to continue the ritual. Thus, almost all the changes in rituals are related to social changes surrounding the events. This is because rituals or festivals are produced / reproduced by humans living in a constantly changing society.

Furthermore, even though such events have specific forms and are always conducted in the same manner, when we look at rituals and festivals as
human activities, there is a possibility of effecting changes, because these
activities are ephemeral. Sustained festivals and rituals have been performed
from generation to generation. The process of handing them down is carried
out by humans. Even if a musician masters all the key notes of his/her music,
his/her speed, phrasing, and timing may be different from those of his/her
teacher. The musician may also play the music in a slightly different style
depending on his/her physical or mental condition. Music or sound, in
particular, is an ephemeral and invisible phenomenon. In other words,
handing down the music used in rituals is like handing down that invisible
and ephemeral something from generation to generation. In oral traditions,
such an invisible quality of music affects that tradition. Some may say that
musical performance is visible. For example, striking a drum with sticks is
visible because the performer raises his/her arms for striking it, and the
fingering of a bamboo flute indicates the melody coming out of it. In fact, in
the Ōu community, bamboo flute musicians learn the melody by watching
and imitating their teachers’ fingering. However, what they eventually hand
down is not just this visible aspect of the performance but also invisible
music. The visual dimension of the process of handing down their tradition
is their performances, and their music comes out in these performances.
Therefore, musical performances and music itself are inseparable. In
addition, since music is invisible and ephemeral, it is difficult to detect any
subtle changes in the music. However, changes have occurred in the music
of the Ōu community, some of which have been identified while others have
not. The changes that were recognised by the community as errors were
fixed, while the unrecognised ones continue to be handed down to the next
generation.
In this thesis, I treat rituals as human activities, especially focusing on musical performances in rituals and the process of handing them down. Musical performance in rituals or festivals, and the process of handing down the tradition, can cause changes in rituals or festivals which may appear unchanged or barely so. Music and dance have played important roles in Japanese rituals and festivals. One of the roles is that of dedication towards and entertainment for the *kami*. At the same time, such performances serve as entertainment for the people who come to witness these rituals and festivals. Furthermore, people are also drawn to such performances as they affect people at both individual and collective levels. At the collective level, music shapes and strengthens the community’s identity and disposition through its repetitive renditions, and by the sharing of the musical experience with the entire community. For example, in the Ôu community, it is an honour to continue the music and rituals which their ancestors passed on to them, and the unspoken roles of the musical instruments are created, shared, and fixed throughout the community by performing the music again and again. At the individual level, the role of music may vary from member to member. For example, the music may remind the members of their forefathers, or some members may be motivated to attend the ritual by listening to its music. The music sometimes helps distinguish between members. For instance, members of the community, whose family members play the bamboo flute, believe that they will also play these musical instruments in the ritual. Thus, music works both individually and collectively.
Like change, continuity also exists in rituals and festivals. The fixed elements of rituals and festivals, such as regulated structure, musical instruments used, and the specific manner of preparation creates stability in the rituals and festivals, and various subtle changes lie unnoticed under their seemingly unchanged appearance. Of course, one source of continuity in the rituals and festivals that have survived in contemporary Japan is the process of handing down their tradition from generation to generation. In other words, performing rituals or festivals regularly leads to their continuity. Moreover, such continuity allows for these traditions to be honoured. Such honour motivates people to continue their rituals or festivals. Thus, continuity is maintained through changes and people honour their tradition. They strive to hand down the festivals and rituals as part of their tradition, attempting to preserve the original form, since in Japan people value tradition that does not change easily. Furthermore, it is not only the visual aspects, such as dance or musical performances, but also invisible aspects like knowledge and attitude that are handed down from generation to generation through the conduct of rituals, festivals, and their rehearsals. This is because rituals and festivals are human activities, and therefore there is an interrelationship amongst people. Through this interrelationship, people create their individual and collective identity. Collective identity creates shared value amongst the community and sometimes, such value includes the community’s desires. Such collective desires are also handed down from generation to generation through continued rituals and festivals. In other words, community members pass on not only the performances in rituals and festivals, but also their collective sense of value and desire from
generation to generation. For example, for the Ōu community, their collective sense of value is in maintaining their ritual and its music without any changes. I heard this comment several times during my fieldwork from members of various generations. As I mentioned earlier, they focus on keeping their tradition unchanged. This is done during the process of learning and teaching their music and dance. In addition to the ritual itself, they have also tried to conduct small activities related to the ritual in the same manner. Thus, their feelings and desires of keeping the ritual unchanged are clear and strong.

In Japan, where tradition is honoured and valued as a stable entity in its original form, ‘continuity’ may be a core reason for the survival of rituals and festivals in a changing society. The intention for sustaining rituals and festivals in Japan may have changed from their time of origin to the present day. Does contemporary Japan, which has highly advanced medical technology and an abundance of food, require festivals that serve to counteract epidemics and rituals conducted in order to pray for agricultural fertility? The Ishioka festival, which I introduced in chapter one and which attracts a massive number of tourists, was not started for this purpose. The festival began to attract a number of people, which is how it came to be associated with the tourism industry, and which has now begun to be used to sustain the future of Ishioka city. Changing society is not always responsible for the discontinuation of some rituals and festivals; most of the time, this may happen owing to financial problems or a lack of participants.

Continuity and change facilitate each other in practice, and continuity is
possible through change. The reason that rituals and festivals possess both continuity and change is that these are human activities. In other words, these two characteristics appear to have a paradoxical relationship in which the two actually facilitate each other. In this manner, rituals and festivals create an appearance of continuity through their regulated structure and repetition of formalised actions. This also bedims the existence of changes in the rituals and festivals. The honour of tradition is created and consolidated by this continuity. In fact, various levels of changes take place, and these changes are another core factor for the survival of rituals and festivals in a changing society.

Society in Japan changes by the minute. However, throughout the year the sounds of various rituals and festivals can be heard everywhere, from the time these rituals and festivals originated to the present day. Tall buildings were erected and floats parade between these buildings. Even in business districts, which are usually quiet, temporal space is created by the colourful floats, sounds, music and dance performances on these floats, and also the excitement of the spectators. Of course, some local regions are faced with problems of depopulation, while some communities are faced with a crisis of survival of their rituals or festivals. Moreover, the way people celebrate festivals and rituals has changed. In the past, people would pray to the kami for agricultural fertility by conducting rituals to bring about stability in their lives because their produce was affected by the weather. However, nowadays various vegetables are available in shops irrespective of the weather and season. Some of these items are imported. Thus, we probably would not conduct rituals to give us reassurance about the regular supply of
food. Moreover, there are various recreational facilities like amusement parks and concert halls. Japan also has an extensive transport system; therefore, people can easily avail themselves of such recreational facilities. In other words, thanks to the transport system, people’s entertainment is not restricted to the festivals and rituals in their towns or cities. However, some festivals and rituals still attract people and tourists. Certainly, the people who participate in festivals and rituals may find it difficult to find new members. Meanwhile, people from various generations still visit festivals and rituals, and in summer, some of them wear *yukata*, the Japanese summer kimono. Moreover, because of a convenient transport system, tourists from all over the country come to witness the festivals.

Festivals and rituals have been incorporated into the Japanese lifestyle. This is because rituals and festivals of various sizes and forms are still being held, and the sounds and performances have become part of our seasonal landscape. These rituals are conducted at regular intervals and form the rhythm to which Japanese society moves. The seasonal Japanese traditions may be an enjoyable experience for the spectators of such festivals and rituals. However, for the people responsible for carrying on the tradition, it may be difficult to sustain their tradition in a changing society and it can sometimes be a burden. Despite this, almost all communities have made efforts to sustain their rituals or festivals and will strive to keep doing so. This is because they value and honour their rituals or festivals as part of their tradition. Such feelings may be intense and a driving force for continuing their tradition.
Rituals and festivals are human activities characterised by ephemerality. Handing down such activities from generation to generation is difficult. It has taken many generations for the traditional activities to finally reach the present day. In addition, through such activities, humans have transmitted feelings, desires, and attitudes from generation to generation. In a constantly changing society, when continuing their tradition becomes a challenge, they somehow try to seek ways of sustaining it. In order to survive, they even change aspects of their tradition. Thus, such changes serve to preserve the continuity of their tradition. Another type of change that can occur is change due to human performance. Subtle changes have occurred in the process of handing down musical performances in the Ôu community, because music is a result of human performance and is both invisible and ephemeral; such characteristics facilitate changes. However, some changes which are identified as errors can be fixed.

Thus, festivals and rituals are characterised by both continuity and change. Especially for some communities or countries like Japan, which value and honour tradition in its original form, the continuity of rituals and festivals could add more value to the tradition. However, such continuity must be accompanied by changes, because continuity depends on change. Therefore, rituals and festivals continue to survive in contemporary Japan and are still a source of attraction for people, like myself, irrespective of age.

Music, a dynamic product of human behaviour, possesses a relational aspect, which can be particularly observed amongst humans. The communities that regularly conduct festivals or rituals reinforce their collective identities
through their musical behaviour. Furthermore, music can project such collective identities onto the public. Like in the Edo Tenka festival, music fills up the office area in Tokyo through performances, forging a communal identity between performers and visitors. Therefore, people can share this lively atmosphere despite hailing from diverse backgrounds. For some, playing music may be a form of self-expression, while for others, such as myself, it may evoke past experiences by replicating the sounds of the festivals or rituals. Some may attend festivals or rituals because of pleasant memories attached to them. Therefore, music also assumes important roles, such as reinforcing communities which have continued their traditional activities, and attracting outsiders of such communities. It also has the invisible power to draw people to rituals and festivals celebrated in contemporary Japan.
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Appendix A

Questionnaire for musicians

Note: The original questionnaire was written in Japanese and was subsequently translated into English.

1. How long have you played the role of a musician?
2. Which musical instruments have you played in the ritual?
3. Have your family members played music or acted as the miko? Also, please specify the relationship between you and the member; e.g., my grandfather played the bamboo flute in the ritual.
4. If you were given a choice, which instrument would you play?
5. Which instruments would you not wish to play? If you wish to mention several instruments, feel free to do so.
6. On what aspect do you focus when you play an instrument?
7. What is your most important task as one of the musicians?
8. Among the tasks of the musicians, which task do you consider difficult to perform?
9. Do you notice the mistakes made by other musicians while playing the instruments?
   Yes / No / Depends on the instruments
11. What kind of place do you consider the Ou shrine to be?
12. What is your opinion on the genre of ‘ritual music’?
13. If you were asked to join another ritual/festival as musician, would you do so?
14. For how long do you want to or intend to perform as a musician?
Appendix B

Questionnaire for *sewanin* members

1. Were you one of the musicians when you were young?
   
   Yes / No

   If your answer is yes, for how long had you performed as a musician?

   Which instruments did you play?

   If your answer is no,

   which is your favourite musical instrument used in the ritual?

2. Have your family members played music or acted as the *miko*? Also, please specify the relationship between you and the member; e.g., my grandfather played the bamboo flute in the ritual.