

A Case Study on the Gion Festival in the Castle Town of Tsuchiura Depicted in Two Drawings

HAGIYA Ryouta

This paper will introduce a case study on the ordinary Gion festival that took place in the castle town of Tsuchiura in the modern era. Past studies on the festival focused on the Socho main festival, an occasion for special festivities in which all neighborhood associations in the area participated. Four sessions of the festival were confirmed on record, three of which are captured in drawings and have been closely examined. For the Gion festival held continuously in Tsuchiura, neighborhood associations took turns organizing the festival every year, and this indicates that the main festival only shows one aspect of castle town festivals.

Here, the nature and proceedings of the ordinary Gion festival will be introduced based on the diary of Minaka and Mitoshi Irokawa, two brothers who ran a pharmaceutical business in Tsuchiura. There was a regularity as to which neighborhood association hosted the festival each year. Each association in charge offered floats and stalls in line with its taste and economic strength, and performing the Japanese lion dance was also required. By reviewing the festival drawings with these points in mind, it was found that the ordinary Gion festival was depicted at the beginning and end of *The Drawing of Festivals in Tozakimachi* and *The Festival Drawing* by geographer Bokusen Numajiri. The restoration of the diary—or written material—and the discovery of these drawings—namely, non-written material—enabled the author to identify details about the ordinary Gion festival.

Moreover, with the aim of assessing the significance of the two drawings as a record, the author looked at three years of the Irokawa brothers' diary written when their neighborhood association was in charge of the festival. The townspeople seemed eager to prepare and wear a uniform that indicated their affiliation with the association in charge. *The Drawing of Festivals in Tozakimachi* depicts the pattern of the uniform and the people wearing it, and likely reflects the interest of the townspeople. Written material and non-written material are different in nature, but an examination of both reveals the intentions of the producers. Discovering why a given material was created and how later generations have utilized it is a great challenge in this academic field.