Hierarchies of a Japanese Community Festival

Natalie Frances Close

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Except where otherwise indicated this research is entirely the work of the author, Natalie Close

Natalie Close

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Hierarchies of a Japanese Community Festival

Abstract

This thesis looks at how hierarchies are formed and maintained within a *mikoshi* festival, which is a form of common Japanese community festival involving a portable shrine carried around the neighbourhood in order for the god to bless the local homes and businesses within. The festival in question is located in Kichijoji, a district that lies to the West of central Tokyo. Of particular note in this festival is that in addition to the usual *mikoshi* teams representing the shopping districts (*shotenkai*), there is a team (Musashi), representing the local shrine, and by extension the entire town. This has led to a complex hierarchical dynamic between the two kinds of team.

In this thesis I examine the hierarchical relationships that exist within the festival teams, and how they were formed, including the relationships between the Musashi team and the *shotenkai* teams, and the ways individual members advance between them. Methodologically film has been integral to my research and I used a camera from the beginning of my fieldwork. The use of a camera not only allowed me access to the participants and the performance, but in addition the analysis of the film and the editing process itself revealed aspects of hierarchy that would otherwise have been difficult to discern. Using a camera, as well as more traditional ethnographic methodologies, enabled me to record the event in greater detail than I would otherwise have been able to.

In my thesis film and text work together, complementing each other in enabling me to analyse and represent the working of hierarchy within the Kichijoji Autumn festival. The filmmaking process allowed for the complex and often subtle relationships between individual team members to come to light. On the other hand, the thesis allowed for a wider analysis of the teams themselves within a historical and structural context.
# Hierarchies of a Japanese Community Festival

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The following terms have been chosen to be included in this list as they appear frequently within this thesis. Some terms are particular to the Kichijoji Autumn festival as opposed to mikoshi festivals in general. Translations are provided for other Japanese terms as and when required within the text.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chonai kai</td>
<td>neighbourhood association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happi</td>
<td>jacket worn at festivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jikkōinchō</td>
<td>chairman of the executive committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kami</td>
<td>god (Shinto)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumito</td>
<td>leader (particularly of the Musashi mikoshi team)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matsuri</td>
<td>festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikisho</td>
<td>festival team headquarters housing the altar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mikoshi</td>
<td>portable shrine used in Japanese festivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitama</td>
<td>ritual to enshrine the god in the mikoshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miyairi</td>
<td>ritual where the Miyamikoshi is carried back to the shrine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miyamikoshi</td>
<td>name of the shrine mikoshi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nomiya</td>
<td>small drinking establishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sekininsha</td>
<td>leader of the mikoshi bearers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shinto</td>
<td>native faith of Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shotengai</td>
<td>shopping street or arcade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shotenkai</td>
<td>merchant’s association or an organisation in charge of a shopping district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Torii</td>
<td>gateway at the entrance of the shrine grounds</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1

Introduction

Background to this Research

Upon arriving in Japan, 13 years ago, one of the first things I experienced was the local festival. I was living in a small city, a couple of hours north of Tokyo, famous for its summer festival featuring a long procession of people dressed as lords and samurai, portable shrines and fireworks. The spectacle of watching the huge procession of people made a lasting impression.

Once I moved to Tokyo where there are festivals held almost every weekend in spring and summer, my interest increased further. For a while I was working in the district of Kanda in central Tokyo, where the employees of my company were invited to take part in the local festival. The Kanda festival is renowned for being one of the top-three festivals in Tokyo and therefore I jumped at the chance to carry the mikoshi (portable shrine). It turned out that we couldn’t carry the mikoshi in the actual Kanda festival, as we were not members of a mikoshi team, however, in an effort to attract local company workers some of the teams had organised for amateurs, such as ourselves, to carry the mikoshi on the evening before the festival.

We were told to buy special shoes called tabi, which have a separation between the big toe, and turn up a certain time to receive our festival jackets called happi. In addition, some members of a local college were also going to join in; due to the number of students (and possibly their age) they wore t-shirts printed to look like the festival jackets as opposed to the official ones. At the appointed time we all gathered around the mikoshi and attempted to lift it in unison. Being a team almost exclusively made up of amateurs this wasn’t as easy or successful as I’ve seen done by seasoned veterans, but
in the end we did it and managed to transport the mikoshi, veering wildly, to the next rest spot. This continued for several hours, by which time, we all exhausted and agreed that we would never be able to carry the mikoshi for a whole day.

My interested was further increased when I moved to the town of Kichijoji in the west of Tokyo. As my partner and I were new to the area we started to go to a few of the nomiyas, which are small bars that seat about 10-15 people, in order to meet people. The nomiyas are run by a ‘master’ and the clientele tend to consist of a small group of regulars who either live or work in the area. Many nomiyas do not encourage the presence of outsiders, preferring instead to concentrate on a small group of regular customers. However, this area was fairly accommodating to outsiders (including foreigners). After going to one of the nomiyas regularly my partner was invited to join in the local mikoshi matsuri (portable shrine festival) called the Kichijoji Autumn festival.

My partner ended up taking part in the 2007 Kichijoji Autumn Festival as a member of the Daiya Gai team (most of the people that frequented the bars in the area became a member of the Daiya Gai team). After having taken part in the festival it became clear that the festival had a greater meaning to those taking part than might first appear. As a fellow member of the Daiya Gai team, my partner was welcomed (and by extension myself as well) more fully by the local people frequenting the bars. The festival was also a topic of conversation throughout the year. It became clear that the festival was treated as a form of community creation by the members of the loosely structured drinking group, and formed a large part of their communal identity. Those who took part were seen as insiders in comparison to those who did not. This was demonstrated by the conversations that took place; festival participants could contribute to conversation on previous festivals, whilst those who were not a member of a team could
only listen, as they did not have the knowledge or shared experience to able to contribute to the conversation. Often these conversations reminisced about much older festival times. The master of the nomiya was particularly prominent in these conversations as he had been taking part in the festival since the seventies and still had an old poster advertising the festival in which he could clearly be seen at the front of the mikoshi parade.

**The Mikoshi Matsuri**

Before looking at my specific research ideas and questions I would like to briefly introduce the mikoshi matsuri in more general terms in order to provide a better framework for my initial hypotheses. I will start by defining basic terms of the festival, before moving on to look at the basic structure of mikoshi matsuri in general. Throughout this thesis the Japanese terms will be used; a glossary of terms has also been included at the front of this thesis for reference.

**Definitions**

**Mikoshi.** A mikoshi can be defined as a portable shrine or palanquin, which is carried by teams of people during various shrine or community festivals. At the centre of the structure is a small shrine in which a representation of the local kami (god) is placed. This is usually attached to four long beams\(^1\) with which the mikoshi is carried. The mikoshi is incredibly heavy, usually weighing 1-2 tonnes, thus it takes a large team of people to carry the mikoshi\(^2\).

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\(^1\) Other configurations of poles are also sometimes used, for example, the Shinagawa festival in Tokyo has a configuration of 6 side poles, which force the bearers to face in different directions. This increases the unpredictability of the mikoshi’s movements.

\(^2\) Famously, the largest and heaviest mikoshi, at 4 tonnes, is the Senkan-mikoshi in the Torikoe festival.
A team usually consists of approximately 200 people, with around 40 people carrying the *mikoshi* at any one time in rotation. The *mikoshi* is carried on the shoulders of bearers who walk with a bouncing motion. This bouncing is done partly to facilitate the carrying of such a large burden, and partly to entertain the god within and provide a great spectacle (Ikeda, 1999; Schnell, 1999). The *mikoshi* is often referred to using the honorific *o-mikoshi*, however, following the lead of my research participants, I will use the term ‘*mikoshi*’ in this thesis.

*Matsuri.* A ‘*matsuri*’ can simply be translated as a ‘festival’ in English, and as such, follows many of the same broad definitions as ‘festival’ does. Robertson (1987; 1991) has noted how the word *matsuri* is used in many ways: “The mass media provides countless examples of “used-book *matsuri,*” “furniture *matsuri,*” and “imported-wine *matsuri,*” among others. There are also “family sports *matsuri*” and “hydrangea *matsuri*”, in addition to “citizens *matsuri*”.” (Robertson, 1991, p.40). However Robertson (1991) then goes on to state how the word *matsuri* endows these seemingly
non-religious events with a sense of importance due to the connection with a word that is religious in nature. I would suggest that today the word ‘matsuri’ can be used in a similar way to the English use of the term ‘festival’ without necessarily having religious connotations. In English-speaking countries it is common to apply the word festival, to ‘an event’ as opposed to a connection with something religious, for example ‘film festival’ or ‘flower festival’. Similarly, the term matsuri is used to describe a variety of secular events including book fairs or department store sales. However, when used by itself most people in Japan will understand matsuri to refer to the kind of festival on which this research is based, which does have religious connotations or at least a connection to religious practice.

*Mikoshi Matsuri*. The mikoshi matsuri is an annual Shinto-based festival that is held at different times of the year, but usually in spring or autumn, in many communities across Japan. Throughout the year, there are many rituals performed in Shintoism; some are for individual benefit, for example asking the gods for success in school exams, and others are for public benefit, for example asking the gods to bless the whole community. The mikoshi matsuri falls into the latter category. There is some debate over whether the mikoshi matsuri can be classed as festival or ritual. Schnell (1999) describes how the word matsuri is used by Shinto priests to describe all of the rituals they perform. However, for most people it would refer to the acts surrounding the specific festival. Schnell (1999) also notes that the matsuri performed by towns and villages is not only a way for people to interact with their god(s), but also to provide entertainment for the god. He states:

> Another commonly mentioned feature is that the deity, after being summoned into the society of humans, is treated in the manner of an honored guest. This
includes offering of food and drink as well as lively entertainment. Matsuri, therefore, almost invariably contain a conspicuous “play” element, in which the deity, too, is thought to take pleasure. This aspect is perhaps better represented by the term “festivity” than by “ritual”, and the event as a whole encompasses both categories. (p. 14)

Schnell (1999) is arguing that the matsuri can be seen as both ritual and festivity, a perspective that is congruent with Victor Turners overall approach to ritual, and in particular the idea of ‘celebration’. In the introduction to the book, Celebration: Studies in Festivity and Ritual (1982), Turner discusses how ‘celebration’ contains aspects of both ritual and play. He goes on to define ritual and play according to the difference in their ‘frames’, a term that has come to mean, anthropologically, the boundaries (whether physical or metaphorical) of such actions. He shows how ritual is bounded by ideas of tradition, faith and prescriptive actions, whereas play is seen as just the opposite. When related to the mikoshi matsuri, we can see that there are aspects of both ritual and play, as defined by Turner. At times there are solemn rituals, such as the mitama, when the god is placed into the mikoshi. In addition, there are also set prescriptions that must be followed, such as wearing the assigned clothing, or keeping within the territorial boundaries of the shrine. There is also an aspect of play, which as noted by Schnell (1999), can include drinking (both with each other and the god), and generally entertaining the god. In fact, it is generally considered that the kami prefer to “enjoy a good time” rather than be reverently worshipped (Kasulis, 2004). Ashkenazi (1987) argues that the reasons for holding the mikoshi matsuri are numerous. Whilst at heart the festival is religious, the performative aspects are just as, if not more, important.
The Five Stages of the Mikoshi Matsuri

Sonoda (1975) has shown how both ritual and festivity contain five stages, which closely resemble how the Japanese treat their guests. These can be roughly defined as: “preparation, going out to meet the guest and conduct him to the place of entertainment, offering food and hospitality, communication, seeing him off” (Sonoda, 1975, p105). As Sonoda (1975) states the mikoshi matsuri can be seen as following a similar pattern to that outlined above.

The mikoshi festival starts with preparation. This takes the form of both practical preparations such as construction of the mikoshi, and rituals that are performed before the festival starts to invite the deity into the mikoshi. These are often performed in secret and are not open to the public.

The mikoshi is then paraded around the town on the shoulders of the mikoshi team members. Whilst the mikoshi is being carried around the neighbourhood it is bounced on the shoulders of the bearers. As there is often a lot of alcohol consumed, the mikoshi veers wildly as it is bounced. This could be seen to equate to conducting the God to the place of entertainment.

At various points, the mikoshi is laid down whilst the bearers rest and take refreshments. This can be seen as offering hospitality. The places where the mikoshi stops are usually at the mikisho, “the place where the sanctified sake (O-miki) for the gods is kept” (Bestor, 1989, p.236). The mikisho acts as the mikoshi team’s headquarters, a place for team members to rest and for the team to display their donations.

It is important that the mikoshi is carried around the boundaries of the neighbourhood, and past as many of the houses and businesses contained within as possible. This could be seen as the ‘communication’ part of the festival. One of the
purposes of the festival is for the god to bless the houses and businesses within the
neighbourhood for the coming year, and to rid the community of evil influences (Sadler,
1969). On the one hand, it is important from a religious point of view for the mikoshi to
pass all the residents and businesses, but it is also important from a social point of view.
It is argued that the passing of the mikoshi draws the houses into a symbolic association,
which unites the community (Schnell, 1999; Roemer, 2007; Ashkenazi, 1988). In this
way the festival can be seen as both creating and representing the community through
the passage of the mikoshi.

At the end of the festival, another ritual is performed to return the god to the shrine,
which can be seen as equating to seeing the guest off. This, like the initial rituals, is a
more solemn affair than the rest of the festival.

**Historical context of the Mikoshi Matsuri**

The dialectic between the ritual and festive components of the mikoshi needs to seen
in a historical context. The mikoshi matsuri was not always the raucous event that we
see today, historically the occasion was more sombre in nature. For example, prior to
the Edo period (1603-1868), the festival was a series of solemn religious rituals
performed at night. However, over time they became more fair-like in nature, and
eventually became the loud, exciting spectacle that is seen today (Robertson 1991). The
various guises that the mikoshi matsuri has gone through can actually still be seen in
festivals today. As will be discussed later, the Kichijoji Autumn festival has both the
solemn religious moments of pre-Edo times, and the raucous celebrations of community
that have been more commonly associated with the mikoshi matsuri since then. As
Robertson (1991) states:
In fact, the prototypes of the consumer-orientated urban citizens’ festivals of today may be traced to the matsuri staged in the newly created capital city of Edo, where the de facto power of the merchant class was demonstrated in a variety of festival spectacles, from fantastical processions of licensed courtesans and their pimps to the rambunctious parades of elaborate palanquin shrines (mikoshı). (p. 40)

Similarly, Ikeda (1999) shows how the yatai\(^3\) in the Kenka Matsuri underwent change from a simple religious symbol, to a large ornate structure; representing the change from a religious ritual to a raucous festival for the people. Today, the festivals of Tokyo are seen as the trendsetters, which influence many of the festivals that are held in the out-lying regions. In research conducted by Ashkenzai (1988) on a festival in Akita prefecture in the north of Japan, one festival group actually hired a Tokyo-based group and their mikoshi to bring an added attraction.

In the evening they [the Tokyo team] serve as entertainers, parading their mikoshi through the neighbourhood that has hired them, drinking and singing ribald songs. This mikoshi -- the “Edo mikoshi” – is an acknowledged part of the evening’s entertainment and is listed as such along with the fireworks and the public song show.” (Ashkenazi, 1988, p.53) [my brackets]

Within Tokyo there is a ranking of festivals, with the Sanja matsuri held at the Asakusa shrine being one of the most influential. The festival in Kichijoji follows the same basic format as most, with some specific points, some of which are adopted from the famous festivals such as Sanja matsuri. As I will discuss in chapter 3, the Kichijoji Autumn festival is relatively new, having started in 1933. Some of the teams adopted practices

\(^3\) A kind of wheeled vehicle, which performs much the same role as a mikoshi in a festival. The yatai is pulled using great ropes and often there are people sitting in the yatai, or drums attached to it.
used by other, more famous festivals in Tokyo and openly advertise this fact, a point that I will address later.

**Research questions/hypothesis**

Once I started investigating the *mikoshi matsuri* I became more interested in the various levels and relations that exist both within and between the teams. Therefore I wished to look further into these fields. It seemed that visual anthropological methods could be used to investigate and discuss ideas of hierarchy and the *mikoshi matsuri*. These initial ideas led to formulate the following hypotheses.

**Hierarchy**

Japan is a society based on complex group hierarchies, and therefore it is difficult to conceive of a group that wasn't predicated on these intricate social relations. I wished to learn more about the hierarchies that exist in the festival, both within a festival team, and between the various festival teams, and if there were any other forms of hierarchy on display. This led me to think more about hierarchy in these areas. I was interested in how hierarchical relationships were manifest formed and demonstrated within the structure organisation and performance of the *mikoshi*. I was also interested in how newer members were incorporated in the chain of hierarchy within the *mikoshi* teams, how they progressed, and indeed whether or not gaining a position within a hierarchy was one of the motivations behind joining the festival. This would involve looking into individual motivations including identity formation in the context of team membership.

Before starting my research on the Kichijoji Autumn festival and having had only brief contact with the Daiya Gai team, I was already aware that there were many teams involved in the festival. Hence from the perspective of the festival as a whole, I was
also interested in establishing whether there was a hierarchy between the teams themselves and how that might relate to individual team members motivations. I was interested in what form the hierarchical relationship between the teams might take and the reasons behind formation of the hierarchy.

Finally, I was also interested in looking at what other hierarchical relationships existed around the festival. The festival is not held in a vacuum and therefore many other groups of people would be affected by the festival. I wanted to look at if, and how, the festival affected outside groups of people, specifically members of the media, as this was a group to which I could more strongly relate. Continuing with the theme of my research, I was additionally interested in whether a hierarchical relationship existed between the members of the media and how this was connected to the festival teams.

**Visual Anthropology**

Initially I just wanted to make a film about hierarchy in the *mikoshi matsuri*. However, as my research and fieldwork progressed it became clear that the use of a camera was also becoming an important part of my hypotheses in several ways.

First, I wished to investigate filming and the use of a camera as a research method. Anthropology has long had a preference for the use of field notes and other written forms of data collection. Despite the fact that both Anthropology and the camera developed during a similar period in time, there has been a continued reluctance to engage more fully with the medium. As Margaret Mead argues when discussing some of the film projects developed in anthropology during the 60s and 70s,

I venture to say that more words have been used, spoken and written, disputing the value of, refusing funds for, and rejecting these projects than ever went into the efforts themselves. Department after department and research project after...
research project fail to include filming and insist on continuing the hopelessly inadequate note-taking of an earlier age...(Mead, 1995, p. 4)

Much has been written on the use of photography within anthropology. It has been lauded as a useful means of elicitation during field research, an interview tool, as a way of keeping a record of scenes (especially those which may contain a wealth of information that is difficult to take in initially), and mapping (Collier & Collier, 1986; Pink, 2007; MacDougall, 1998). Collier & Collier (1986) argue that ethnographic film has the potential to show more than a photograph can; it has the ability to communicate the emotions of the subjects (p. 143). Mead (1995) demonstrates how film can be used to capture movement in a way that written ethnography or photography cannot⁴. And yet ethnographic film as a mode of ethnography within the field of anthropology still remains largely underutilized and viewed with skepticism. One of the reasons why film has been less successful, is partly due to issues of perspective and representation (Banks 1995), an issue that will be explored further in this thesis. Film is often a supplementary form of data collection, and in many cases is utilized as a form of follow-up research. In some cases the film is recorded and edited long after the initial research has been conducted⁵. I, on the other hand, wished to use a camera from the start, in order to research the festival and reveal elements of hierarchy that were integral to the process.

Secondly, I wished to look at how film could be utilized, in particular the analysis of hierarchy in a mikoshi festival, and how it could be presented. The use of film and consequent analysis of the footage allowed for the relationships between the mikoshi team members to become apparent, and therefore aided in the analysis of my theme. However, I felt that the presentation of hierarchy might be the most difficult part of my

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⁴ This argument is made largely in connection with ‘salvage’ ethnography
⁵ An example of this kind of situation would be *Bored in Heaven* (2011) which was filmed decades into Kenneth Dean’s research, and was in actual fact produced by his daughter, Cora Dean, a professional filmmaker, not an anthropologist.
research as abstract concepts can be difficult to represent in film. My aim was to portray a particular ritual event from the perspective of hierarchy, and therefore greater explanation might be needed. This was especially difficult given my training in visual anthropology, which encouraged discussion over the use of the written word vs. film. The debate over whether ethnographic film can stand alone without the need for text, or stand as the equivalent to text, has been long and is yet to be resolved (Macdougall, 1998; Loizos 1993). In addition, there are the added complications of the use of subtitles and narration. I believe that this debate is even more relevant when making a film about an abstract concept such as group hierarchy, therefore I was interested in researching if and how this could be done in film, without the need for an accompanying, explanatory text.

**Fieldwork site - Kichijoji**

Kichijoji is an area within the city of Musashino in the western region of Tokyo prefecture. It is connected to the rest of Tokyo by Kichioji station on the Chuo line, a major line that runs west from Tokyo station, via Shinjuku, to the outlying suburbs near Hachioji and Mt. Takao (See figure 1.2). Musashino city actually has three stations on

![Figure 1.2. Musashino city’s location within Tokyo prefecture](image)

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the Chuo line; Kichijoji, Mitaka and Musashi Sakai, however, Kichijoji is by far the busiest in terms of visitors. Kichijoji is also connected to Shibuya by the Inokashira train line, which means that not only can Kichijoji be reached from two main locations in Tokyo within 16 minutes, but it is also a place where many commuters transfer between lines. (See figure 1.3).

Figure 1.3. The location of major transportation routes within the city of Musashino

Historically the main commercial district in the area was centred on Itsukaichi-kaido, a road that runs roughly south-east to north-west just to the north of Kichijoji station (see figure 1.3). During the seventeenth century the road was built in order to carry traffic from Edo⁶ to the outlying towns and villages in the west (Allinson, 1979, p. 31). The road was a major thoroughfare, and a large number of shops, businesses and homes had built up along the road. At the turn of the 19th century about half of the homes and businesses within the boundaries of Musashino village were situated along Itsukaichi-kaido (Allinson, 1979, p. 31). This concentration of businesses and homes along Itsukaichi-kaido has in turn shaped the festival in significant ways. This will be

⁶ Edo was renamed Tokyo in 1868 when the Emperor Meiji moved the capital city from Kyoto at the start of his reign.
discussed in more detail in Chapter 3, where I look at the history of the festival. When Kichijoji station was built in 1899, it was located south of the business district on Itsukaichi-kaido, in a largely unpopulated area. However, due to the presence of the railway station, which provided a quick 30 minute commute to Tokyo station, people started to move closer to Kichioji station and shops began to build up in the area.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century the population of Musashino steadily increased and during the 1930s it dramatically increased due to some major factories moving to the area (Allinson, 1979, p. 65). This growth was also assisted by Kichioji becoming the terminus station for the Inokashira line, which ran between Kichijoji and Shibuya (Allinson, 1979, p. 153). At this stage the village of Musashino was upgraded to that of a town due to the large influx of people. By the late 1950s, Kichijoji accounted for two thirds of the population of Musashino, with around three quarters of the town’s commercial interests located in the area just north of Kichijoji station and to the south of Itsukaichi-kaido. During the war, the area immediately north of the station had been cleared of residences to ensure that any fire damage to surrounding buildings would not affect the railway (Allinson, 1979, p. 104). This meant that following the war the land could be quickly utilized for commercial purposes, as it was free of any residential buildings.

The area located between the Chuo line and Itsukaichi-kaido had become the main commercial district due in part to activities after the Second World War. In the post-war period there were many food and other shortages across Japan, and black market areas opened up in many locations. The area just north of Kichijoji station became an active black market district with many narrow alleyways of shops and other businesses. The owners of these businesses tended to live above the shops and a thriving community was formed (Allinson, 1979). Whilst this kind of area was useful in the period following
the war, it became unattractive to the city due to the association with illegal activities. Therefore, during the 1960s and 70s, the city actively removed large sections of the narrow alleyways of shops and replaced them with shopping malls and department stores. As the small shops left, so too did the families who owned and lived above them. This contributed to a breakdown of community in the area. By the late 1960s, over 700 families had left the area (Allinson, 1979, p. 154).

By replacing the small black market shops with department stores, the city hoped to attract a different clientele. Allinson (1979) describes the new style of Kichijoji as follows:

Shoppers drawn to the business style of the Kansai merchant could browse through the spacious new Kintetsu Department Store, built and operated by a private rail firm from the Osaka area. Former residents of the Shinjuku and Nihonbashi areas may have preferred the new orange symbol of Isetan, a Tokyo department chain that began exploiting the suburban market with its branch in 1971. And those from the Shibuya area who had grown accustomed to the hearty blue of the Tokyu chain could satisfy their wants at its elegant new store around the corner from Isetan. Lingering along the way, a shopper might stop at one of many coffee shops, have a sweet at Dunkin’ Donuts, a pizza at Shakey’s, a sandwich at MacDonald’s, or a cone at the Dairy Queen. Capstones of Kichijoji’s maturity as a commercial district, such shops were a powerful lure for thousands of young strollers and middle-aged shoppers who were gradually converting the area to the commercial hub of Tokyo’s western suburbs. (p. 153)

Currently, Kichijoji looks much as it did during the redevelopment of the 1960s and 70s. Most of the shops and restaurants referred to by Allinson are still there and as popular as ever. Many of the same department stores are in place and the covered
shopping malls of Sun Road and Daiya Gai to the north of the station make up the main shopping areas. There have been some cosmetic advancements with Sun Road and Daiya Gai replacing the street canopies with more up-to-date ones recently. In the last few years the department store in the Kichijoji station building changed from LonLon to Atre (a move seen as making Kichijoji slightly more up-market). However, these changes have not altered the general structure of Kichijoji, which has remained largely the same since the department stores first arrived in the 1960s and 1970s.

The history and location of the shopping streets surrounding Kichijoji station have had a profound effect on the festivals and its teams. This connection between history, geography, and hierarchy will be discussed in later chapters. However, it is important to note for now that Kichijoji has experienced great change and growth in the last hundred years, and that most of the change has been commercial in nature. This has in turn influenced and shaped the Kichijoji Autumn festival.
Methodology

In order to investigate the hypotheses outlined earlier I decided to use a combination of methods. Primarily I used the participant observation method, but I also made use of other forms of data collection. As much of my hypotheses focused on the use of film I was engaged in filming most of the festival and the associated events. In addition, I collected documents related to the festival and attended festival meetings. I also made use of a translator at many of the times that I was participating in or filming the festival. These methods will be outlined in more detail below.

Participant Observation

Hierarchy is manifest in the subtleties of social relationships, and participant observation provides an essential method for apprehending its presence. Through long-term participant observation I could distinguish the subtle ways in which hierarchical relationships were carried out between members of the mikoshi teams and between the teams themselves. In order to do this I adopted the following method.

First, contact was made with one of the teams. As will be discussed later in more detail, the structure of the Kichijoji Autumn Festival is somewhat different to most other mikoshi festivals in Japan. Whilst most mikoshi festivals have teams that either represent a shotenkaı (neighbourhood association) or chonaikeı (merchants association), Kichijoji has an additional team that represents the shrine itself. Initially, I made contact with the Kumito (leader), Ogura-san, of the shrine-based team, which is called Musashi. This contact was made possible through the assistance of the local community centre in the town of Musashi Sakai. I had been regularly attending Japanese lessons there for many years and when I told them of my research one of the volunteers helped me to
make contact with Ogura-san. After having explained my objective to him, he allowed me to conduct research on his team and by extension the Kichioji Autumn Festival. Because of this initial contact with Ogura-san, and due to the theme of my study, most of my research was conducted with the Musashi team. However, due to the structure of the festival and the relationship between the teams, I also had contact with other teams as well. My experience in joining the various teams in their festival preparation, as well as the festival itself, led me to greater understand the complex relationships that exist within the festival.

**Filming**

Using film as a research method meant that I filmed almost every event, meeting and interview that I conducted. I was aware of the potentially sensitive nature of using film and of the ethical issues involved in its use. I had to receive permission from participants in order to film them, but due to the number of people involved and the nature of the festival it wasn’t practical or possible to seek written permission from each person in the festival. Therefore I relied on permission coming from the festival organisers, and obtaining individual permission only from those that I interviewed specifically. Initially I sought permission from Ogura-san, the leader of the Musashi team, who gave me permission to film the festival and the team’s festival preparations. At each of the official festival meetings my presence was explained and at some of these, there were also other filmmakers present representing various media outlets. I also sought permission from the priest of the Musashino Hachimangu shrine to film the rituals that would take place there.
Meetings

Meetings provided logistical information on the festival as well as an opportunity to observe the subtle demonstrations of hierarchy displayed by the individual members. These meetings involved both the main Musashi team, with which most of my research was conducted, as well some of the other festival meetings. This contact with the various team members led to increased contact with the festival members, individual interviews, and being able to attend other festival-based events.

Printed Materials

In addition to observing and interviewing participants, I was also able to gather a lot of printed material from the official meetings, private collections and the media. These documents enabled me to have a greater understanding of the festival, as well as a good idea of the festival preparation and procedures. Some of the documents were accessible to the public, such as the brochures, however, others were produced solely for the use of the team members or the committee members. All of the documents were produced in Japanese and therefore needed translating.

Translator

One final factor in my research methodology that must be mentioned is the language difficulty when conducting research in another country. Whilst my Japanese was of a high enough level for casual conversations, it was not good enough for in depth conversations on the festival. Therefore, at each of the interviews I conducted a translator was on hand to help me. I also used a translator at some of the meetings and other festival related events, in addition to needing help translating some of the documents, brochures and newspapers from which some of my data was collected.
Using a translator brought it its own issues, as the various people I asked to help me were unpaid, and therefore their time was not limitless. The time delay in the communication process involving myself, the translator and the interviewee, led at times to somewhat stilted conversations. However, most of the time the interviewees were not put off by the translator’s presence, and occasionally their prior friendships with some of the festival participants actually helped my research, as they were familiar with them.

**Chapter Overview**

In the next chapter I will discuss the research conducted by other scholars on the *mikoshi* festival and look at individual areas in more detail. These include the background religious context and history of the festival, the relationship between the festival, identity and hierarchy, and issues surrounding the use of film for research, and the use of text and film. I will look at what comments have been made on these topics and where my research fits into the wider academic dialogue.

In Chapter 3, I will go into more detail about the Kichijoji Autumn Festival. I will start by investigating the history of the festival and its teams, as this has a direct impact on the hierarchy of both the teams and the participants. I will also give a more detailed account of the relationship between the teams to show how hierarchy is related to the various kinds of team. In addition, I will look at how new members can join both the *shotenkai* and Musashi teams in order to show some of the hierarchical differences between the teams.

Chapter 4 will describe some of the organisational events that took place before the festival. In order to coordinate the festival there are many meetings that need to take
place, in addition to the fun events, such as the team party. I will describe what happens in the events as well as give an analysis of each from the perspective of hierarchy.

In Chapter 5, I will focus mainly on the areas that make up the film about hierarchy. I decided to focus on some key events held prior to the festival in order to show how hierarchy is formed and maintained within the Musashi team. These include the setting up of the team shrine, the making of the mikoshi and the ritual for inviting the god into the mikoshi.

I will then go on to look at the festival itself in Chapter 6, some of which is portrayed in the film. The festival is held over two days, with an emphasis on different teams on each day. This emphasis will be looked at in more detail in order to investigate the hierarchical differences between the teams. Other events in the festival, such as main procession and closing ceremony, will also be described to demonstrate various levels within the festival itself.

In Chapter 7, I will look at the practical details of making a film on hierarchy and how choices made by filmmakers can affect the end result. I will also look at the use of subtitles and narration in this section and how these can also affect the portrayal of anthropological data.

In addition to looking at the hierarchy of the festival members I think it is important to look at the role I played as a researcher, filmmaker and participant and the effect of these roles on researching using a camera. In chapter 8, I will show how my role was created and accepted within the teams, and where I, as a researcher and filmmaker fit into the hierarchy.

Finally, in chapter 9, I will analyse all the evidence as a whole and discuss how this research in the form of a thesis and film demonstrates the place of hierarchy in a Japanese festival today. I will draw together some of the conclusions made throughout
the thesis and show how my research uniquely fits into the broader concepts of hierarchy. In addition, I will look at the limitations of using film as part of my investigation and what can be learned from this process.
Chapter 2
A Background to Filming the Kichijoji Autumn Festival

In reviewing the relevant literature my aim is to provide a background to the historical context of mikoshi festivals and the methodological approach I have adopted to research the Kichijoji Autumn Festival. The chapter begins by placing the festival in the context of Japanese religious practice. While religion is only one dimension of the mikoshi festivals and only one of the structuring components, it is nonetheless an important part of their history and place in Japanese society. Shintoism with its emphasis on community and calendrical rituals articulates loosely with the festival cycle.

The next section deals with hierarchy and identity formation. My particular focus is on the ways in which hierarchical relationships at different levels are manifest in the organization and performance of the festival, both within and between participating teams. Hierarchy needs to be understood in terms of identity formation and the motivation that moves people to participate in the festival and use it as means of demonstrating and acquiring status.

In the latter section of the chapter I will consider the theoretical and methodological issues of using film as part of fieldwork, specifically when trying to investigate an abstract theme such as hierarchy, and how this can be portrayed in an ethnographic film. As a visual anthropologist who uses film as a central method of recording and analysing cultural events as well as a medium of communicating the results of the research, I am cognisant of the heated debates about the use of visual media in research.
Religion

As the festival is founded on a religious event it is important to look into the religious background of the mikoshi festival, and investigate what affect this could have on hierarchy. The festival that I am investigating has a close relationship with the local shrine, and therefore, I believe that it is important to look into religious motivations with regard to the mikoshi festival. I will start by looking at the history of the two main religions in Japan; Buddhism and Shinto. I will then move on to investigate the role that religion plays in local communities and more specifically in community festivals across Japan.

Religion in Japan

Whilst there are many religions that are followed in Japan, most of these have a relatively small following compared to the two main national religions; Shintoism and Buddhism. These two religions are both simultaneously adhered to, in varying degrees, by most Japanese people.

Buddhism: Buddhism came to Japan, from China via Korea, in 552 A.D. however the first national establishment of Buddhist practices wasn’t until the 7th century (Umehara, 1991: 172). Buddhism differs from Shintoism not only in being a different religion but also in the way it is practiced. Unlike Shintoism, which is largely based on rituals, Buddhism is strongly based in doctrine (Umehara, 1991). Buddhism spread rapidly following its arrival on the archipelago. Buddhism was quickly seen as a way bringing good fortune to those who practiced it, especially due to its “Words of Power”, or the mantras that are chanted during rituals (Reader, 1991, p. 34). Buddhism quickly became associated with death rituals, a role that has increased over time so that now most
Japanese adhere to the saying “Born Shinto, Die Buddhist” (Covell, 2009, p.148). This can be seen in many of the yearly rituals that take place in temples across Japan, including the Obon rituals, which involve prayers for ancestors, and the ringing of temple bells to mark the end of the year on December 31st. Shinto, on the other hand, is currently associated more with life and rebirth, and rituals along these themes (such as the New Year’s day festivities) are held in Shinto shrines. This further relates to the mikoshi festival, which can be seen as ritual to renew the life-force of the community, a practice not often associated with Buddhism in Japan (Sadler, 1969; Nelson, 1996a; Kasulis, 2004).

**Shintoism:** Shintoism is the indigenous religion of Japan and is based on the worship of kami, which are the Shinto gods. According to Teeuwen & Scheid (2002), Shintoism is “everything that has to with native deities (kami 神) or shrines, from imperial ritual to folk religion” (p.196). Shintoism, in a form that is recognizable today, was started in about the fourteenth century (Teeuwen & Scheid, 2002). Previous to this Shintoism was not a unified national system, and therefore the beliefs and deities very much differed across the country. In Shintoism, just about any person has the potential to become a kami upon their death, as well as many prominent natural features such as trees, mountains and waterfalls (Pye, 1996). This meant that beliefs differed widely from village to village, as individual shrines represented a different god. There were, however, some kami that were worshipped in many shrines, including the kami that the Musashino Hachimangu shrine in Kichijoji represents, Hachiman.

From the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries Shinto was used for kito, a system of performing “ritual prayers for practical benefits” (Thal, 2002:381). This idea of using Shintoism to directly improve one’s material lot although outlawed in the seventeenth
century, still continues as a theme in practice (Thal, 2002). By the Meiji era\(^1\), practices such as selling talismans for personal gain from the gods that was common during the time of *kito* practices, were banned. In 1868 the government banned personal gain from *kami*, including specifically the *kami*, Hachiman, who was redefined as a deified emperor (Thal, 2002). This was part of the process of Shinto becoming closely associated with the state. ‘State Shinto’ was developed in order to unify the country under a system that encouraged viewing the actions of the Emperor, and by extension his government, as divine, and to solidify the identity of the Japanese people as a whole (Mullins 2011). Due to the strong influence of State Shinto and the connection between religion and the government, the post-war Occupying Forces quickly enforced its separation, which resulted in Shinto becoming more of a voluntary organisation, subject to the same laws as all other religions in Japan (Mullins 2011; Davis, 1992).

**Role of Religion in Japanese Communities**

Shintoism has continued as religion based mainly on ritual. Nelson (1996b) has argued that the lack of a strict doctrine, and therefore emphasis on parishioner agency in the way that they use shrines, is one of the reasons why Shintoism has survived through to today. People are free to visit the shrines to ask for what they want and may converse with the gods freely. Shintoism does not expect followers to come for regular services as with other religions, such as Christianity. Instead, anyone entering the shrine grounds is seen as a Shinto worshipper.

In the yearly shrine calendar there are many rituals that must be followed. Some scholars have posited that religion’s primary role in Japan is to look after the community and to adhere to this calendar of events (Miller, 1998; Umehara, 1991;)

\(^{1}\) 1868-1912
Kasulis, 2004). However, despite the parishioners’ participation in many of these yearly rituals, many Japanese do not see themselves as being particularly religious. Martinez (1995) comments that the village in which she conducted research had many rituals that had to be performed on a regular basis, but that this didn’t necessarily reflect religious feeling.

Yet despite the number and frequency of village rituals, the people of Kuzaki do not see themselves as especially ‘religious’ or pious…For the people of Kuzaki, ‘religious’ is what churchgoing Westerners are, what they do is just the way life is. (Martinez 1995, p. 188)

It is also interesting to note the level of obligation that exists in these rituals. Whilst there may not be any obligation to regularly attend the shrine, there are still obligations that parishioners must (or should) adhere to. In the past this was more easily achieved due to the fact that most people stayed in the same neighbourhood where they grew up. Because of this they were parishioners of one shrine and knew their obligation to donate and participate in shrine related events (Mullins 2011). Indeed the locally-based nature of the ritual is in itself a central motivation for participation in the rituals. One of the key aspects of religious behaviour that can be seen in Japan today is that the obligation to perform religious duties are not always motivated by belief (Hendry, 1995; Roemer, 2007). A good example of the lack of participant belief in religiously based rituals can be seen in the work of Ambros (2009). Ambros researched a yearly pilgrimage undertaken by a company-based confraternity to the top of a religiously significant mountain. As part of her paper, she noted how the pilgrimage was seen more as a team-building exercise than one of religious significance:

A sense of belonging to the group is mostly based on professional and personal relationships rather than a common sense of faith. The yearly pilgrimage is an
example of how contemporary corporations use religious rituals to foster social relations and promote productive work ethic among their employees. (Ambros, 2009, p.167)

In this way participation in rituals is demonstrated as being as much, if not more, about identity and solidarity than religious faith. Action is emphasised over belief.

Identity and Religious Motivation in Japanese Festivals

A survey conducted in 1981 by the national media company, NHK, produced an interesting result; when respondents were asked about their religious beliefs, 65% said that they ‘had no religious belief(s)’ (Reader 1991: p.5; Mullins 2011). There have since been many debates over this result, however one of the main theories is that the wording of the survey was misleading. The term shūkyō, which can be translated as ‘religion’, was used in the question on religious belief; a term which many Japanese relate with the strict doctrine and rituals more commonly seen with religions such as Christianity (Reader 1991, Reader 2005, Mullins 2011). Many respondents, who usually adhere to religious rituals through the year (both Shinto and Buddhist), did not view themselves as ‘religious’, instead they saw themselves as just following the usual practices of a ‘Japanese person’. In this way religion in Japan can be seen as way of perpetuating Japanese identity. Group membership is important to Japanese people, especially in terms of identity creation. Therefore when we relate this to religion we can see how adhering to the rituals of religion, also results in identifying with a particular group (Reader 1991). This is taken further when we look at the role of individual shrines and temples within communities in Japan.

Identity can be seen as one of the major aspects of participation in ritual or shrine events. The local Shinto shrine forms the focus of the identity of neighbourhoods. Not
least because of the fact that neighbourhood boundaries are established along parish boundaries. Technically all those living within the boundaries of the neighbourhood are members of the Shinto shrine. At one time this meant having to make a monetary donation to the shrine every year, however this is not necessarily the case these days.

Morioka (1975), conducting research on Shinto affiliation in Tokyo, noted that newcomers to an area were less inclined to pay the annual ‘shrine fees’ expected of residents. Many more paid the donation for the yearly *mikoshi* festival to be held, but most did not want to contribute to the shrine. One of the reasons for a general lack of enthusiasm in contributing to the shrine may be that many of these people were new residents, may not be staying long, and generally had little connection to the area.

Morioka did note that those who had lived in the area longer were more inclined to support the shrine. Sonoda (1975) also commented on the decreasing number of people who identify with the local shrine. He noted that less than 40% of residents identified with the local shrine, on the other hand almost all of the residents had something to do with the community festival (Sonoda, 1975:124). He goes on to note that people were more likely to view their sense of identity in relation to the neighbourhood, as opposed to the shrine. This is an important point, which is further supported and explained by the neighbourhood groups themselves. Following the Second World War, with the separation of Shintoism and state affairs, the neighbourhood festival was exclusively run by the neighbourhood association, not the Shinto shrine.

What is important from looking at Sonoda’s work is the general lack of religious feeling with regard to festival participation. In his article, Sonoda was looking at the motivations behind the mobilization of participants. Sonoda (1975) notes:

> The activities of a Shinto festival symbolically express not only the religio-cultural aspect of community life but also the social relations in the community.
Consequently, the dynamics of the matsuri can be thought of as having its origin in religious symbolization but requiring social mobilization for its realization.

(p.124)

He goes on to note that the motivations for joining the festival centre more on the social side than the religious. It is for this reason that the festival helps the people to identify with their individual neighbourhood and less with the shrine that represents the neighbourhood.

This is not to say that all other mikoshi festivals are lacking in religious motivation. There has been work done that acknowledges that the presence of religious aspects is still regarded by participants. Robertson (1991) in her work on a community festival in Kodaira city in Tokyo noted the different viewpoints that participants felt regarding religion. The community festival studied was organised by the city council and contained many different aspects, such as parades and beauty pageants, as well as mikoshi. Robertson’s research was partly focused on the contentions between long-standing residents and newcomers to the area, and their different levels of participation and reaction to the festival. The festival was not organised by the neighbourhood groups who owned the mikoshi and did not follow the neighbourhood boundaries as is more common with mikoshi festivals. Robertson (1991) notes:

Akashia Road is not included within a native parish; therefore the “adult” shrines featured at the citizens’ festival do not house a shintai, or kami-body.

Similarly, the purification ritual at the outset only simulated the oharai performed at a Shinto shrine or in the presence of kami evoked for that ceremony. (p. 64)

She then goes on to note that because of the lack of kami the long-standing members of Kodaira city did not view the festival as an authentic mikoshi festival. However, the fact
that the *mikoshi* did not contain a real *kami* was only known by the local people. Most of the newcomers to the area had no idea that there was no *kami* within the *mikoshi*. To them the festival had *mikoshi* and they were suitably used (the local people had partaken of a lot of alcohol and therefore the *mikoshi* moved as they should despite the fact that they were not being influenced by the *kami*’s presence) so the festival was not seen as unusual.

**Identity**

Identity is a concept that is key to the understanding of any cultural system and network and one that is strongly related to hierarchy. Whilst much has been written on general identity theory within anthropology, I wish to focus on the formation and maintenance of identity within and between groups, specifically in Japan. I will first look at more general theories on group identity and its formation in Japan before moving on to look at theories on identity that relate more specifically to festivals in Japan. I will look at some of the ways in which group identity is formed, and maintained, in festival teams as well as between them.

**Group Identity in Japan**

When looking at the literature on Japanese society in general, it is clear that group membership is an important part of Japanese culture and plays a key role in the individual sense of identity. Hirayama and Hirayama (1985) make reference to the popular Japanese saying, “Nails which stick out must be hammered in” (p. 12). This saying is very common in Japan and refers to the fact that for group harmony, people cannot act as individuals; instead they must prioritise the group and act accordingly. The authors then go on to show how the group has precedence over individuals, even to
the extent that when a junior member of the group makes a mistake, the more senior members share in the responsibility. There is a sense of obligation that is felt by all the members of the group, and this sense of group obligation is a key aspect of Japanese culture (Hirayama & Hirayama, 1985). This is particularly relevant when viewed in terms of team obligation and learning how to be a member of the group.

Other authors have commented on the way the individual is seen in a group context. Eisenstadt (1996), depicts how the concept of the individual, and individual personality, differs from that in the West. Whereas in the West, people are judged by their individual personality and actions, in Japan this is not the case; the individual cannot be separated from their context (or group). As Eisenstadt (1996) states on the Japanese concept of ‘self’, “Neither self nor environment can be defined without reference to the other, and the relations between them are redefined according to the numerous specific contexts of action” (p. 333). This further strengthens the argument that in Japan the ‘group’ is important in terms of self-identity. Eisenstadt (1996) then goes on to comment on how this sense of identity that comes from group membership, also comes with a sense of obligation. This obligation ties members to the group and emphasises “the fact that a person has meaning only in relation to others” (p.341). This is an important point when it is related to a study on hierarchy, as a relationship in Japan suggests a hierarchical relationship.

The idea of a person being defined by their group is one that is repeated in other research on Japanese society. Cox (2013), takes the argument one-step further by allowing for individual agency within this system. Whilst the group is very important, Cox stresses the importance of the individual’s achievements in connection to the achievements of the group. Cox shows how the achievements of one individual are done on behalf of the group, instead of being absorbed by the group. In this way group
membership can be seen as much more dynamic than just being an anonymous group member. This interpretation of Japanese group membership acknowledges the need to be part of a group, whilst still recognising the actions of the individual. I feel this is an important viewpoint to take when conducting research on hierarchy, as ultimately individuals will be researched in order to comment on the nature of both individual and group relationships.

The importance of group membership in Japanese society leads us to question how these groups come to be formed and identified. One of the ways in which groups are defined is in opposition to other groups. Nakane (1970/1973) demonstrates how groups are formed according to their ‘frame’, as opposed to a shared attribute. The example given is of being part of X company, rather than being a filing clerk (p. 15). In the West, group membership is often based on a shared attribute, for example, all members being accountants even though they work for different companies, however in Japan the ‘frame’ is more important than individual attributes. In this way, groups in Japan consist of people that may have largely differing attributes and skills, but who are still part of the same group. Therefore, in order to foster a positive feeling towards the group and ensure loyalty, groups define themselves in opposition to other groups. As Nakane (1970/1973) states,

People with different attributes can be led to feel that they are members of the same group, and that this feeling is justified, by stressing the group consciousness of “us” against “them,” i.e. the external, and by fostering a feeling of rivalry against other similar groups. In this way there develops internally the sentimental tie of “members of the same troop”. (p. 24)

Nakane then goes on to demonstrate how this feeling of sentimental ties to the group is created through increased involvement with the group or “continual human contact”
It is clear that group membership not only offers an identity as being part of a collective, but also offers an identity in opposition to others, which cannot be separated from individual identity (Bachnik, 1986).

Festival Team Identity

The themes discussed above are repeated when looking specifically at festival group formation and membership in Japan. Continuing Nakane’s idea of groups being strengthened by their opposition to other groups, we can see a similar idea in the literature on festival groups in Japan. In her research on a community festival in Tokyo, which in part included a mikoshi parade, Robertson (1991), showed how membership of the festival’s mikoshi teams demarcated some members as ‘insiders,’ whereas the relative ‘newcomers’ to the area were distinctly outside of the mikoshi team. In this way group membership in the mikoshi team served to demonstrate the identity of the established ‘local’ people in opposition to the ‘newcomers’ to the area.

Onjo (2006), writing on the history of the Yamakasa festival in Fukuoka, demonstrates the importance of identity in, and between, festival groups. Each of the festival teams created symbolic, territorially based, group boundaries, which served to create a greater sense of identity for the members, whilst still managing to maintain relationships between the teams. Each team can be seen as having an identity, whilst still being part of the greater ‘festival’ identity. As Onjo (2006) states:

The Yamakasa Festival is principally about membership in and rivalries among indigenous communities and nagare groups. Local people got their own sense of belonging first to their own neighbourhoods, second to nagare groups, and finally to Hakata. The processes of identification were contingent and

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2 The festival’s other events included parades and floats, which were open to anyone in the community who wished to join, whereas mikoshi team membership was exclusive.
inhabitants did not always feel an attachment to the place of Hakata as some unified whole. These nested identities were formed only in relation to other individuals or groups at different scales. The identity of each neighbourhood community, *nagare* group and Hakata itself was always incomplete, because it needed and relied on the existence of various others. (p. 144)

In this case multiple identities are being formed through participation in the festival. Not only are the individuals members of a small local community, but they are also members of a larger neighbourhood team (*nagare*) and by extension the town that the festival is representing (Hakata). Onjo (2006) goes on to show how the formation of identity in opposition to the ‘other’ necessarily requires an ‘other’ in the first place. Group identity that is based on its opposition to other groups cannot be formed in a vacuum, and therefore all the groups are necessary for the identity of each group. In the case of my own research I wish to concentrate on how the different team’s identities may differ within the context of the festival, looking specifically at how a team’s identity may change according to specific festival events. Within the Kichijoji *mikoshi* festival there are many events, which require the inclusion of different teams, and therefore I wish to look at how this relates to the identity, and by extension hierarchy, of each team.

**Collective Community Identity**

In addition, collective identity can also be formed through a shared past. Ellefson (2006) notes how participation in the Kishiwada Danjiri *Matsuri* created a link to the past for the residents of the area. This festival has had a rich history and long tradition, which in turn led to a strong feeling of community identity for the participants of the
festival and the residents of the area, who can use their intimate knowledge of the festival as a means of identifying themselves with the area, and as locals.

Schnell (1999) comments on how a connection to the past is an important tool for collective identity making, even if the ‘tradition’ has changed significantly over time, or indeed, is a new one. Quoting Brow (1990), Schnell demonstrates how a sense of shared past and tradition is important in the formation of community identity, and how newly formed collectives will make group histories in order to facilitate the sense of identity. Schnell (1999) comments later in the work that the reality of tradition (e.g. the true history and/or its length) is of importance only to those studying the tradition. To those using and experiencing tradition, the fact that tradition exists is the important point, in part, because it provides a sense of identity (p. 295-6).

The invention of festivals in Japan is a practice that has been happening since the Second World War, when many community festivals were cancelled due to lack of funding or through the forced separation of religion and state in the post-war Occupation period. As Guichard-Anguis (1995) notes, many festivals were invented or reintroduced in order to create and provide a sense of community identity in the post-war period.

**Hierarchy**

**Hierarchy and Group in Japan**

Hierarchies exist in all societies but are especially evident in Japan. Hierarchy, and the consideration of hierarchical differences, is integral to all relationships in Japan. As Hendry (1995) states, “There is no doubt that hierarchical differences affect interaction between Japanese people in everyday lives. Indeed, in many situations it is difficult to know how to behave unless one can place the other people present in a hierarchical
order in relation to oneself.” (p. 77). Hierarchy is most clearly seen when it comes to groups. Chie Nakane has written many seminal works on the topic of Japanese society, especially with regard to hierarchy in groups. She shows in her work *Japanese Society* (1970) how large organisations are often made up of smaller groups organised hierarchically with each other. Within groups there is a distinct hierarchy, even between members that outwardly share the same characteristics. Nakane (1988) states,

> Even among people with the same training, qualifications, or status, differences based on rank are always perceptible. Because the individuals concerned are deeply aware of their existence, these distinctions tend to overshadow and obscure even differences of occupation, status, or class. (p.10)

This is especially relevant when looking at the individuals that make up a *mikoshi* team. They often come from different backgrounds, however, their hierarchical position reflects the same rules that apply to other groups in Japan.

Nakane (1970, 1988) has noted on the importance of age when it comes to hierarchy formation within groups. In general hierarchical promotions are based on age as opposed to skill or qualification (Nakane 1988). An alternative to the age-based hierarchy is one based on the year of entry to the group, however, this often goes hand-in-hand with an age-based hierarchy. Age-based hierarchy is something that can often be seen within *mikoshi* groups, however there are also other factors which are important.

**Hierarchy, Identity and Motivation**

Hierarchy, identity and motivation to take part in a community festival are intrinsically linked. Hierarchy is a defining quality of Japanese society and helps to define a person’s identity as well as position in society. As Rosenberger (1994) states,
It is a condition that so pervades social life as an assumption that the task is not to define hierarchy as a concept but to understand how actors constantly manipulate this “valued difference between people” in a meaningful way in various contexts and spheres of life. The most we can say about the “nature” of hierarchy in Japanese society is that unequal relations can take the form of indulgor and indulgee (amaeru/amayakasu) and that these relationships shift positions as they move along an axis ranging form private to public, spontaneity to discipline (uchi/soto). (p. 108-109)

The difference between insider and outsider go a long way in identity formation. Within Japan there are many ways of seeing and sensing oneself, as well as a wealth of terminology to express these differences.

The meanings for self include personal feelings (ninjō), inner feelings (honne), and what is hidden from others (ura); meanings for society include social obligations (giri), the surface reality (tattemae), and appearance (omote).

(Bachnik 1992, 153)

All of these aspects combine to create a person’s identity. These factors are all important when taking into account the reasons for joining in a community festival. In Japan there are many factors contributing to motivation within society. At a basic level obligation forms much of the Japanese sense of self (Bachnik 1994), and this sense of obligation works on both an inside and outside level.

Bachnik (1992) goes on to suggest that all these factors defining self and society work to enable a person’s position within society, and these are learned through a process called kejime. Kejime is defined as a person’s “ability to shift successfully from spontaneous to disciplined behaviour, through identification of a particular situation along an “inner” or “outer” axis,” (Bachnik 1992, 155). This can be applied to analysing
the training received by the participants of the festival at the various hierarchical levels. Festival participants move up the hierarchical ladder within their festival team in an ordered manner. The ability to learn and change is key to Japanese society and society in turn makes allowances for it.

In terms of identity the concepts of inside and outside are key to understanding Japanese society. Lebra (2004) has written extensively on *ura* (inside) and *omote* (outside) and suggests that these complex terms change and conspire to make up a person’s identity. A community festival is an ideal situation in which these terms can be clearly observed. In addition the various hierarchical levels present within the festival teams means that the participants have to negotiate these complex and delicate realms of inside and outside with finesse. The training received by the festival participants can go a long way to predicting how successful they will be in this endeavour.

It could be argued that in addition to learning the complexities of the festival in terms of the creation of the *mikoshi* and the organization of the festival events, the participants are also learning their position in society and how to switch between their various identities when the situation requires it. In learning the minutiae of the relationship requirements at each of the levels, the festival is actually preparing the participants to able to function in their various roles. The training takes place in stages related to their age, experience and general position within the society. This includes learning and putting into practice the various forms of inner and outer identity. It could be argued that this makes up another reason for joining in the festival, and actively seeking to move up the team’s hierarchical levels.

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3 This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3
Hierarchical and Festival Group Motivation

When looking at hierarchy, many scholars take a functional approach. In festivals there are many reasons hypothesized for the presence of hierarchies. In a broader sense it could be said that ritual serves to control hierarchy. Clammer (1995) posits that hierarchy and ritual are intrinsically linked. He states, “Hierarchy and ritual go together: indeed hierarchy is in many respects the ritualization of behaviour” (p. 106). This idea is also supported by other scholars such as Bremen (1995) and Bell (1992). This would suggest that hierarchy is a natural state in everyday life and therefore it isn’t surprising when it is found in ritual actions as well as everyday actions.

Once it is accepted that hierarchy exists in ritual situations we can take the idea further to look at the role of hierarchy within ritual actions such as those within mikoshi festivals. It has been suggested that hierarchy within festivals serves as a means of displaying and controlling hierarchies present in everyday society. In particular festivals can show society the ideal hierarchical nature that they could follow. Ben-Ari (1991a), suggests that the hierarchical nature of festivals serve to remind participants of an ideal past. Many rites and rituals are actually recreated traditional events and therefore by recreating them, societies are demonstrating a need for hierarchy and identity. Whilst it may be true that there is a certain amount of nostalgia in the recreation of neighbourhood festivals I am not sure that this is one of the main motivating factors for holding a festival. Instead more concrete ideas, such as local revenue generation, as well as increasing the status of both the town and individuals must be looked at.

Function of Festival Group Hierarchy

Within the mikoshi festival there are several ways in which hierarchy is formed. The most obvious way is the roles that each of the members play within the festival and its
organisation. Most mikoshi festival groups follow a similar pattern in that they have a young people’s group (often made up only of males), a higher and older managerial group, and an Old Boys group made up of members who have long since retired from active duty in the festival, but who are still recognized for their previous efforts. These main groups are arranged in a vertical age-based hierarchy, as such:

- Old Boys (OB’s)
- Senior team members
- Young person’s group

Traphagan (2000) has taken this idea further by referring to these groups and their members as “age grade associations” (p. 86). He explains how people of a certain group move through these associations as they age, and suggests that age is the pre-requisite for membership, as opposed to other qualifications. This is certainly true with the mikoshi teams, if for no other reason than the physical requirements of the activity. Carrying the mikoshi requires the bearers to be fit enough to lift the one or two tonne mikoshi, therefore anyone of advanced years may struggle with this. Instead, provision is made for them to move to the higher, less physically active positions. The higher positions occupied by the elders of the teams can be considered as largely ceremonial as the actual organisation is done by younger participants, they do still however have a role to play. Traphagan (2000) writes in reference to the kabosai or fire festival:

Members of the Women’s Association and women in the Old Persons Club prepare food throughout the morning. The younger men who will carry the mikoshi prepare their clothing, while the older men and the Vice-Head of the Young Men’s Association sit in a circle on the floor and confirm the route for the processional and what needs to be done along the way. All of the men involved in this meeting have performed kabōsai many times in their lives and
are completely aware of how the procession operates. Thus, the actual consultation seems less significant than the importance of the meeting as formal confirmation of the advisory role of the elder men as they instruct the Vice-Head of the Young Men’s Association on the day’s events. The elders involved in this meeting are the neighbourhood headmen, with whom most of the local power is situated (p. 89)

So whilst they no longer have an active role to play they are still recognised as holding important positions within the local society and this is acknowledged through the particular rituals involved in the festival.

Whilst the Kichijoji Autumn festival has the same hierarchical levels as outlined above I feel that what happens within these age-based groups and how individual movement between the various levels is achieved is also of importance. Traditionally the group that actually does the carrying of the mikoshi is referred to as the ‘Young Men’s Association’, however, the festival in Kichijoji readily includes women and therefore many of the traditional ways of viewing hierarchy within the Kichijoji festival teams is different to that in other festivals across Japan, many of which still do not allow women to partake (Ikeda 1999, Roemer 2007). On top of this are the individual personalities of those involved and the way in which personal relationships affect the various levels.

**Displays of Hierarchy**

Festivals demonstrate hierarchy in a number of ways. In terms of the hierarchies between mikoshi teams the most obvious way that hierarchy is displayed is with the mikoshi itself. Many teams try to outdo each other in the size and value of their mikoshi. Bestor (1989) noted in research conducted into a festival in a neighbourhood in Tokyo,
how when one team purchased a new and expensive mikoshi, the other teams were somewhat put out. Indeed the team in question tried in many ways to show off their mikoshi, even parading it uninvited through the streets of a neighbouring district (p. 246). Other research has shown how a particularly ornate mikoshi can serve to symbolize both the power and prosperity of a community (Ikeda, 1999; Ellefson, 2006).

The Kichijoji Autumn festival also has ways in which the teams can display their hierarchical position, or indeed try to affect this position, through their mikoshi and other material goods connected to the team within the festival. Each mikoshi is slightly different and great pride is taken in this fact. Therefore I will look at whether this has an effect on the position that the teams hold in relation to each other, and whether they try to use their unique points in order to change this position.

Within a mikoshi group the demonstration of hierarchy is a little more complicated. Often hierarchy is demonstrated in subtle ways that are only evident to insiders. From the point of view of outsiders, hierarchy can be most obviously observed at the team headquarters on festival days. Outside of each of the team headquarters are the names of contributors to the team written in calligraphy and pasted onto large boards. Sometimes these names are displayed in other ways as demonstrated by research conducted by Arne Kalland (1995), “A number of paper lanterns bearing the names of the festival leaders and generous donors are carried in the parade, informing all participants and onlookers about who have formed the ‘backbone’ for a successful festival.” (p. 174). In contrast to static displays of hierarchy, I wish to look at a more dynamic form of hierarchy, demonstrated in the events in the run up to the festival, as well as during the festival itself. I wish to look at the personal relationships between the team participants to see if their interactions display any of the subtle hierarchical differences between their statuses. This will involve observing the team members as they perform tasks such
as building the *mikoshi*, and their movements on the festival days. I am interested in what extent individual agency affects this and whether or not it ultimately affects their hierarchical position within the team.

**Summary**

Ritual events are a prime area to observe the formation and maintenance of hierarchical relationships within a community. Within Japan, in general, as well as more specifically in *mikoshi* teams, hierarchy is largely based on age, as has been demonstrated by other scholars. However I wish to look at what other factors could affect hierarchy and how these can be displayed to other team members, as well as to the wider community. Within the age-grade association of a *mikoshi* team there is a dynamic hierarchical situation, which may be affected by many factors including personal relationships and participant motivation. One way to investigate this further will be to research the training of new members; to observe how they are taught, and their interactions within their respective levels.

**Film**

**Using Film as Research Methodology**

Initially my choice to use film as a part of my methodology was based on the fact that I have a background in visual anthropology. Ever since my undergraduate degree, through to my Masters in Visual Anthropology and my choice of university for researching my PhD, I have engaged with visual anthropology and ethnographic films. I was very much interested in making an ethnographic film as a part of my thesis, however, it wasn’t until I started my initial research that I began to think about the
implications of this methodologically. When I started my research into hierarchy in a festival I hadn’t fully appreciated what the implications of using a camera as part of my research methodology would be. Henley (2000) has commented on how regrettably many doctoral students are encouraged not to film during their initial fieldwork, and that they are encouraged to only start filming once their initial fieldwork is done. Heider (2009) supports the idea that the anthropologist must have a profound understanding of the field before filming, “…whereas the thorough understanding of what is going on often emerges only at the end of the ethnographic process, it must precede the filmmaking.” (p. 9). However, Henley (2000) makes a compelling argument that challenges this idea. He states, “However, whilst this view has certain merits, it overlooks the role that the actual process of making ethnographic films can have in generating not just primary data but also analytical insights.” (Henley, 2000, p. 220). By using the camera as a research method I would be able to generate a different kind of data. It quickly became apparent during my initial fieldwork that the use of a camera would have a profound effect on my research and therefore the best way to approach this needed to be addressed. In this section I will look further at some of the background literature on using film as a research method.

**History of Ethnographic Film Methodology.** Almost from the start of the academic field, anthropologists were using film cameras in the field. This coincided with a general interest in the nineteenth and twentieth century in making documentary films (Shrum et, al., 2005). As Durington & Ruby (2011) state, “…Since the invention of a technology that records images, there has been a belief that such recordings make it possible for scholars to obtain researchable evidence that can be taken back to their labs for analysis and shared with other scholars who were not in the field with them…”
Insofar as the assumed goal of social science research was then to obtain “objective data”.” (p. 193). The very first films ever made by the Lumière brothers, documented various aspects of social life in France. A contemporary of the Lumière brothers, Felix Louis Regnault, is considered to have filmed the first ethnographic footage, in the form of a “Wolof woman making pots at the Exposition Ethnographique de l’Afrique Occidental” (De Brigard, 1995, p. 15). Expanding on this approach, the early anthropologists saw the film camera as a way of documenting their findings objectively (Henley, 2000). The early ethnographers brought film cameras with them to document the cultures that they encountered. As Henley (2000) states, “…the role that Haddon and his contemporaries envisaged for the camera fitted in well with the dominant ethos of anthropology of their time, with its emphasis on data-gathering, salvage ethnography and scientific procedure.” (p.211). Haddon and Spencer shot several pieces of footage during their research with Australian Aborigines, although their work was not extensive (De Brigard, 1995), and was not developed into an ‘ethnographic film’. However, as a research method, Haddon actively encouraged the use of a camera to his contemporaries, especially as a method of documentation (MacDougall, 1998).

Flaherty’s *Nanook of the North* (1922) is widely considered to be the first ethnographic film, in that it represents edited footage that tries to make an anthropologically based commentary. Marks (1995) points out how the methodology of Flaherty’s filming style coincided with the development of ethnographic methodology being developed by scholars such as Malinowski at the time. This involved long field exposure, learning the language and documenting everyday life in the field. However, caution must be taken when comparing ethnographic methods with the methodology of Flaherty’s filmmaking. As Marks (1995) states,
In its intent, its methodology, and its rhetorical conventions, Flaherty's film was a counterpart to Malinowski's principles. However, given the fact that Flaherty said of himself, "first I was an explorer, then I was an artist" (Barsam 1992:294)-in other words, that he was not an ethnographer of any variety—we should perhaps be cautious about applying the label "ethnographic" to Nanook or "ethnographer" to Flaherty. (p. 340)

As the field developed so too did the use of film as a form of research methodology. Margaret Mead saw the camera as an opportunity to open up another form of methodology in the field, beyond the mere use of a notebook (Shrum et al., 2005). Mead (1995) herself laments the lack of using a camera in the field as a form of methodology. She states, “Department after department and research project after research project fail to include filming and insist on continuing hopelessly inadequate note-taking of an earlier age, while the behaviour that film could have caught and preserved for centuries… disappears.” (p. 4). This suggests that the data useful to ethnographic exploration is far greater than can be captured using a notebook alone. Bateson and Mead extensively used the camera as a form of methodology in the research conducted in Bali, and Mead has suggested that a continuously running, 360 degrees camera would be best way to capture a culture objectively (Dicks et al, 2005). However, this style of methodology does not recognize the knowledge that can be gained from the active interaction between the filmmaker, the camera, and the participant.

As Mead was trying to objectively record data in Bali, other ethnographic filmmakers were exploring different methods of capturing and analysing anthropological information. Famously, Jean Rouch was developing a form cinema verite, related in part to the earlier work of Vertov, in his work in France and West Africa. The aim of Rouch, and his sometime collaborator Edgar Morin, was to attempt
‘cinematic truth’ in their exploration (Loizos, 1993, p. 6). A key feature of this methodology was the collaboration between the filmmakers and their subjects (Durington & Ruby, 2011). In this way Rouch was attempting to make his films as truthful as possible by allowing the subjects a ‘voice’, often literally through their narration of the scenes. In a way this was done in order to counter the claims made by anthropologists that ethnographic film had little to offer the field. The connection between commercial films on ethnographic subjects, and ethnographic film, was too readily made (Griffiths, 1996). The exoticism of commercial films led to a distrust of the medium as a whole. In addition, the complexity of the equipment led many anthropologists to hesitate using cameras in the field (Griffiths, 1996). However, in response to this, scholars such as Shrum et al (2005) have argued that ethnographic film offers the opportunity for more to be expressed than is available in words alone.

The Role of the Camera in Field Research. Research suggests that the camera has a unique role to play as a form of research methodology. In her research on land conflict in a small French village, Perle Möhl (2011) commented on how using a camera enabled her to conduct her research. At the time she had been trying to gain access to the subjects involved in the land dispute without success for a few years. However, when she informed the subjects that she wished to make a film on the matter, that all changed. Möhl (2011) states, “The film project became my entrance to the social field, an immediate and socially anchored reason for being there and getting to know things.” (p. 235) In this example we can see that by being a filmmaker, access to the field can be easier. In part this is because a filmmaker is an easily recognisable social role. Most people can understand what the filmmaker is doing; this may not be so easy to understand of a researcher without a camera.
The camera is also advantageous as it provides a function or job for the filmmaker. Scholars such as Marc Piault (Henley, 1989) and Marion (2010) have commented on how their research was made easier because the subjects saw them as working. Marion (2010) refers to this as a “passport” whereby the researcher is provided with a culturally known role and function and therefore can gain access to a field site without confronting suspicion as to what they are doing there (p. 25).

When looking at using filmmaking as part of methodology it is important to look at what effect the use of a camera will have on the research participants. Shrum et al. (2005) has suggested that the camera can play a role as an ‘actor’ during field research. They argue that the camera is seen independently, as well as connected to the researcher, imbuing them with an alternative identity. They state, “The camera can take on the identity of the researcher or that of the subject, and in the next instant be a third party observer, a meta-subject occupying the focus of the video-active context or meta-researcher hovering inconspicuously over the research scene.” (Shrum et al., 2005, p. 8). This suggests that the camera can play multiple roles, just as the researcher can, and must, in the field.

**Observational Filming.** Given that I intended to include filming as part of my methodology for collecting data, consideration had to be given to the way the camera would be used. Within visual anthropology several methods of filmmaking have been identified, including but not restricted to, observational, collaborative and documentary (Hastrup 1992, Pink 2007). Each has different merits and limitations depending on the research being conducted, however at this point I want to address one methodology in particular. The observational filmmaking method is one that has had an influential if not turbulent academic history. Made famous by the films of David MacDougall, most
notably *To Live with Herds* (1974), the observational filmmaking method is one in which a more passive visible interaction is employed with the research participants. Instead of actively engaging the participants with the research, as with collaborative methodology, the researcher/filmmaker takes a less involved approach with the observational method. That is not to say that the researcher is not involved in the scene being involved, but the influence they might have is reduced to a minimal level. As Young (2003 [1975]) states,

> In certain situations having a camera draws attention to the filmmaker; in others, or in the same ones after time has passed, the camera makes him invisible by giving him a justification for being there…In fact, the ideal was never to pretend that the camera was not there – the ideal was to try to photograph and record ‘normal’ behaviour. Clearly what finally has to be understood by this idea is that normal behaviour being filmed is the behaviour that is normal for the subjects under the circumstances, including, but not exclusively, the fact they are being filmed. (2003 [1975]: 101)

This connects to earlier points about the role that the camera can play in assisting field research. Grimshaw & Ravetz (2009) add that in the observational filmmaking method there is still participation by the subjects of the research. The researcher is not standing aloof, coldly documentary life as it unfolds before them, instead the filmmaker has informed knowledge and prior relationships to help guide them through their capturing of the scene. Some observational filmmakers have taken a more reserved approach, such as the work of Barbash & Castaing-Taylor with their film *Sweetgrass* (2009). In this film almost no interaction could be perceived between the participants and the filmmakers (Nakamura 2013). Instead the emphasis was on the relationships between the people and their animals, without the direct narrative contribution of interviews. For
my own research I wished to take a more participatory approach, but still harness the advantages that could be gained with observational methodology. To this aim I wished to avoid direct interviewing with the camera and instead concentrate on recording the scenes as they played with minimal interference from myself as researcher.

Filming Ritual

In 1987, a roundtable discussion was held on filming ritual at the ‘Regards sur les Societes Europeenes’ seminar in Budapest. This discussion, attended by prominent visual anthropologists such as David MacDougall, Colette and Marc Piault, and Paul Henley, served to highlight a number of key points when filming ritual. David MacDougall started the roundtable discussion by observing that one of the reasons why ritual is so popular to study and film is that it has clear boundaries in terms of time. Most rituals have an obvious start, middle and end, and therefore, are more predictable in their nature (Henley, 1989). This means that the filmmaker knows that when they arrive somewhere to film, there will be something happening, as these events have already been scheduled. In some respects this makes the filming process easier as the filmmaker knows that there is subject matter taking place at that time. However, as Morphy (1994) points out, filming ritual is not always so predictable. He states:

The filming of ritual provides a particularly difficult case for the film-maker. The script has in effect been ‘written’ by someone else, and most often there can be no rehearsals, either in the form of previewing similar events, or in the conventional sense of working through an interview in advance or setting a scene for a particular sequence of action. (p. 120)

So, whilst ritual does allow for an initial filming timeframe to be established, it can be problematic as many of the filmmaking conventions available in other situations are not
accessible. These include being able to re-film certain sequences, or discussing with the participants how to film a certain situation. In festivals and rituals, the order and composition of events are rarely controlled by the filmmaker, and therefore they must be able to adjust according to the direction of the event. In fact this a methodology advocated by the filmmaker Jean Rouch, who supported preparing prior to the ritual taking place, but also having the flexibility to adapt once the event started, to follow its often unpredictable nature of rituals (Henley 2010). Morphy (1994) suggests that it is up to the filmmaker to know enough about the event prior to its occurrence, in order to predict the direction in which it will go. In this way the filmmaker should be able to follow the ritual without missing any content. Morphy (1994) also advocates filming as much as possible in order to avoid ‘editing’ too much whilst filming is taking place.

In terms of my own research this is an issue that needed careful consideration. Whilst I was provided with a timetable of events, I was not always sure exactly what would be happening, and more importantly, where I should be filming from in order to get the best shot. It is a challenge to be in the right place at the right time in order to not to miss out on either filming or research opportunities.

**The Sensory Experience of Festivals**

Film can be a useful means of investigating ritual due to the sensory nature of the events. Literature about festivals often fails to capture the drama of what is happening in the way that film can. Catalán Eraso (2006) points out how film is a good medium for capturing the sensory experience of an event such as a festival or ritual:

Representations of rituals … where music, rhythm and sensual expressions are pivotal in the overall experience can really benefit from use of audiovisual media. The representations developed through images and sound can be far
more evocative, immediate and in-depth than anything one would register through writing alone. (para. 7)

In the case of the *mikoshi* festival, film is certainly an ideal medium to display the emotional vibrancy of the chanting and bouncing of the *mikoshi*.

On the other hand, this sensory experience can sometimes be detrimental for the viewer. Adams (1979), notes how a weakness of film is that it contains so much information that it is difficult to know what should be watched. This problem is highlighted in the film *Bored in Heaven* (2010) by Kenneth Dean. This film captures the New Year celebrations that take place across an area of southeast China. It follows several festivals and the various events that take place in each. The film contains no narration or information about what is happening, instead it leaves the viewer to just experience the festival. According to Dean & Dean (2014) this was deliberately done in order to allow the viewer to experience the same sensations as those watching the festival in person. He argues that the festival audience members are not provided with any explanation as to what is happening, and therefore he is justified in doing the same. However, I believe that this is missing a key characteristic of most festival audiences. I believe that a large percentage of festival audiences are from the area in which the festival is performed (or at least the same country) and therefore have a good understanding of what is taking place. Ben-Ari (1991b), has written on the two kinds of audience at a Japanese festival; the ‘inside’ audience made up of villagers who weren’t taking part in the festival, and ‘outside’ audience members who were visiting area for the purpose of viewing the festival. In many ways the ‘inside’ audience contributed to the performance of the festival, as they were able to provide a response to the actions of the festival participants. As Ben-Ari (1991a) states, “The villagers rather than being passive spectators are active participants throughout the day. During the events there is
a constant shifting boundaries between participants and audiences.” (p. 139) In this way we can see that expecting the audience to have no prior knowledge of what is happening in the festival is most likely to be untrue.

In order for the film to serve an academic purpose, more is required than just an audio-visual recording of what happens in the festival, and therefore if film is just to provide a method of displaying the sensory experiences of the event it is not fulfilling an academic purpose. Ruby (2008) defines ethnographic film as, “…not documentaries about “anthropological” subjects, but films designed by anthropologists to communicate anthropological insights.” (p. 1) This implies that there should be some reference to anthropological theory in the film. Similarly the film acceptance guidelines for ethnographic film festivals encourage a similar policy. According to the Society for Visual Anthropology Film Festival guidelines, “Ethnographic film and video defined broadly as works created as the result of ethnographic fieldwork or those which use, are informed by, or illustrate the principles of anthropological theory or methods.” (withoutabox.com, n.d.). Therefore, in order to be of use to the academic community, it is important for a film to engage in academic argument. As Smith (2014) points out in reference to Bored in Heaven:

…in the view of this waihang (outsider), more is needed for the viewer to make sense of this rich visual feast. If the main objective is to convey a sense of the exuberance of Chinese ritual, then the film can stand on its own, and brilliantly. But if viewers, especially viewers unfamiliar with the fundamentals of Chinese popular religion, are to get the most out of the wealth of information packed into Bored in Heaven, then they will need a textual guide. (p. 78)
He then goes on to point out that he couldn’t really understand the film until he had read an accompanying essay written by the filmmaker. This leads us to think about how film can portray the abstract theories often argued in academic writing.

Some scholars, such as Catalán Eraso (2006), have demonstrated how film is ineffective at making arguments about abstract concepts. She states: “The ethnographic film in particular can be extraordinarily useful because of its ability to capture situations … Nonetheless, it is less successful in attempting to reproduce abstract concepts such as those handled in written texts.” (para 7) So whilst film is able to display social interactions, it may be less successful at making arguments and arguing theories based on these interactions. This is an area that I am interested in exploring further to see if, and how, abstract theory could be argued. This is especially important when looking at the social interactions between people of varying ranks and how these relationships are negotiated.

**Text vs. Film**

Continuing Smith’s (2014) idea that a text-based guide was needed to understand *Bored in Heaven*, an exploration of the use of ‘text’ in film is needed. During the 1987 roundtable discussion, MacDougall (Henley, 1989, p. 20) categorized ethnographic films into five categories with regard to their ability to make anthropological statements. I have summarized these categories below.

1. Film with an accompanying text (research footage)
2. Film with external narration (Voice of God commentary)
3. Film with connected observer’s narration (Commentary provided by expert such as the anthropologist)
4. Film with subject’s narration (Filmmaker uses the subject’s comments to provide insight)

5. Film with no spoken commentary

It is interesting that when discussing a film’s ability to communicate theory or anthropological conclusions, the argument of the involvement of text must be used. I am not saying that MacDougall is insisting here that a film must have text to communicate theory, as category number 5 has no text at all. However, it is interesting that the other four categories all involve some sort of text. What is even more interesting is the source of the text, and how films can be judged according to this source.

Even though ethnographic films may be edited by an anthropologist in order to demonstrate a point or theory, the amount of information contained in a single image, let alone a whole film, is vast. This wealth of information can be interpreted in many ways, and an audience member may find something in the frame more useful or interesting than the subject that the filmmaker is concentrating on. In the case of written information, the writer only gives as much information as they wish, and therefore, the information can be ‘manipulated’ or ‘censored’ to some extent to reduce the chance of the reader misinterpreting the information. MacDougall (1998) states,

In anthropological writing information is conveyed serially. Each item appears in isolation, already stripped, as it were, for anthropological action. There is little possibility of transmitting simultaneously a cluster of associated items. The effect of simultaneity ("the milking pot rests on the knee"; "the woman sings while the child plays") is a product of creative reconstruction. In ordering descriptive items, the writer draws upon a comprehensive mental image which is already organized conceptually. The choices made, however unintentionally, establish an emphasis ("the child plays while the woman sings") which is of a
different order from that imparted by the selective techniques of cinematography.

(p. 190)

Ethnographic film may not be able to separate the ‘thick’ description from the theory as easily as ethnographic writing, however, I would like to argue that this could be one of the positive ways in which ethnographic film can contribute to the academic field. Through careful editing an argument may be represented in the form of a film. In addition, the raw data is still largely available for reinterpretation and therefore allows for greater interaction within the academic community.

At the heart of the issue of whether a film can stand-alone without the need for text, is a film’s ability to communicate anthropological theory. As Durington & Ruby (2011) state, “Heider (1976/2006) and Asch (1972) have both argued that a film is an “incomplete utterance” and must be accompanied by written materials – preferably a study guide. This is, of course, an assumption about the nature of film, that it lacks the capacity to present complex ideas.” (p. 207) This statement, however, does not include the text that is already incorporated into a film through the use of narration and subtitles, in addition to structuring an argument through the editorial process all of which could provide equivalents to the support supplied by a study guide.

**Subtitles.** In many ways subtitling offers a way for ideas to be presented in a similar way to a written text. Not only can they be read as text, but they also offer a way for the filmmaker to present more abstract ideas. Zhang (2012) noted how one of his film’s subjects mentioned the key concept that he was trying to convey. In his films *Authentic Tea* (2010), and *Visiting Yiwu, Tasting History* (2010), Zhang wanted to convey certain ideas related to the tea industry. He did this using subtitles, although as he admits in his article, *The Interaction between Visual and Written Ethnography in Subtitling* (2012),
'interpretations’ were made in order to enable this process. Through the translation process, words were chosen that reflected both the meaning intended by the film’s subject, and the argument the filmmaker was trying to make. He refers to these as the ‘textual eyes’ of his film, and they offer a chance for abstract themes to be communicated to the viewer through subtitling (Zhang, 2012, p. 444). However, there is also the danger that words may be misinterpreted, or that meaning may be ‘massaged’ a little too much. The dual purpose that subtitles serve must be acknowledged; in one way they are the words spoken by the subject of the film, and in another they are being used by the filmmaker to communicate their own intentions (Asch & Connor, 1994). It is up to the integrity of the filmmaker to make sure that the subject’s meaning and intention is kept true, whilst still being able to be used by the filmmaker to enable understanding of abstract concepts.

Jean Rouch explored this further when discussing his lack of subtitles with Colette Piault. He argued that by simply translating the subject’s words into subtitles, much of the meaning could be lost as other forms of communication were not translated as well (Piault, 2007b). Here he was referring to the unspoken gestures that convey meaning, something that he has tried to convey in his narration of his films (Piault, 2007b). He went to further to suggest that subtitles could hinder a viewer’s ability to watch the film, as they have to spend time reading and may miss visual messages (Piault, 2007b). Rouch did acknowledge, however, that subtitles could be useful when explaining knowledge not readily available to all who watch it. This includes common cultural knowledge that native audiences might be able to understand, such as the feelings evoked by familiar songs, but which would have no meaning to a foreign audience (Piault, 2007b).
**Narration.** Instead of subtitles, filmmakers, such as Jean Rouch, have advocated the use of narration to convey meaning, however, he is one of the few ethnographic filmmakers to do so. Many visual anthropologists have difficulty accepting the use of narration in ethnographic film. As Asch & Connor (1994) have suggested:

> Many ethnographic films depend on some form of direct address, either through a narrator or through one or more subjects who speak directly to some unspecified point in space…Whether narration or “talking heads”, direct address tends to obscure the circumstances of its production: statements appear as “natural” or “truth” rather than representative of a given perspective. (p. 25)

There is a danger with narration that the speaker may be viewed as representing the culture, or speaking for the culture in an authoritarian way. This could lead to an accusation of an abuse of power. As Piault (2007a) suggested:

> From the moment it became possible to allow the Other to express himself with the use of subtitles that translate what he said, Rouch’s continuing resolve to speak in his place and on his behalf appeared an “abuse of power,” paternalistic, even neo-colonial. One could argue that the manner in which a filmmaker approaches and resolves the problem of the words of the Other is a reflection of his concept of his relationship to the Other, and, through that Other, to the rest of humanity. (p. 42)

Rouch has defended his stance on the use of narration by pointing out the communicative procedure between filmmaker and those filmed that occurs in his filmmaking process. Given the nature of his ‘ethno-fiction’ and his long working relationship with his film’s subjects, who also act as filmmaking assistants⁴, it can be argued that he is justified in his defense of narration, much of which is done by the

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⁴ Some of Rouch’s film’s subjects, such as Damouré and Moussa, have also worked as sound recordists, interpreters and research assistants for Rouch. Their long, collaborative working relationship has been the subject of much research and comment (Jørgensen, 2007)
film’s subjects themselves. However, not all ethnographic filmmakers are in the same position and it would be nearly impossible to replicate his motives behind the use of narration.

It is clear that the use of subtitles or narration produces a hierarchical relationship between the filmmaker and the subject of the film. The act of choosing what to translate and what to point out in the film through narration creates graded levels which can affect how the hierarchies between characters in the film are portrayed. Therefore it is important for the filmmaker to ensure that information is not misrepresented through the use of subtitles and narration.

Film and Hierarchy

A film on hierarchy must also look at the hierarchies involved in the filmmaking process and of the filmmaker themselves. At the most basic level we need to acknowledge the affect that the presence of a camera has on a field site. A camera is a much more understandable and obvious tool of recording than a notebook. It is clear to all, what the anthropologist is interested in when they point a camera in a particular direction, something which is not quite as obvious when the anthropologist is using a notebook (Møhl, 2011). In some ways this can be advantageous as the participants can choose whether or not they wish to be involved in the film project. As Møhl (2011) states:

But the essential thing is that the selection is constantly being communicated to the people whose lives are the object of analysis. The establishment of this tangible space gives the potential collaborators the possibility to move in relation to it, and thereby to determine whether they want to contribute to the
process of representation, and with what, in a kind of fluid process of constant negotiation and emergence. (p. 230)

This process allows film participants to choose how they will be involved in a film. It can, however, also result in a false representation of community hierarchy. Involvement in a film project or other research can falsely affect, or falsely portray, the hierarchies present in a community. In one example, *The House-Opening* (1980) by Judith MacDougall, one particular lady in the community was asked by Judith MacDougall to assist with the narration of the film. However, this led to tensions in the community, and many community members were ultimately not happy with the end result. It turns out that there were underlying political tensions in the community that were exacerbated by the lady’s involvement in the film. In a way she had been falsely privileged by her involvement in the filmmaking process (Henley, n.d. p.16)

It is logical to assume that any participant involved in the making of an ethnographic film is in danger of being privileged, nevertheless, this doesn’t need to be ‘false’. Belford (2006) argues that in order to provide entertaining and compelling viewing, a filmmaker will often edit the film to show the most interesting parts of a ritual, often featuring ritual specialists. This makes sense as film has a limited timeframe in which to convey its message, and that is often best tackled by focusing on certain events or characters. This means that the meaning conveyed in film, often doesn’t reflect how the majority of participants may feel about the event. Morphy (1994) states:

> Meaning was presented as it appeared to the most reflexive of the participants, those who were most involved in organizing the ritual sequences. In this respect the audience of the ‘film’ gets a privileged interpretation of the ritual from those participants who have an overview of the ritual as a whole. It is not the view of the majority of the participants. (p. 132)
It is clear that film has a large effect on the portrayal of hierarchy within a ritual or festival. This effect is most clearly pronounced through the choice of film subject. Naturally, a film can’t feature all of the participants in an event, and therefore choices must be made. It is up to the filmmaker to carefully consider these choices, drawing both on their own knowledge, and that of their participants.

**Summary**

There are many complex issues involved in using film to investigate and portray hierarchy within a festival. Using a camera can obviously have a positive impact on access to the field site, however, in line with my theme of hierarchy I wish to take it further and look at what impact my presence as a filmmaker can have on hierarchy in the festival. It is clear that careful consideration must be taken when editing a film to make sure that false hierarchies are not created. However, it must be acknowledged that, to a certain extent, these hierarchies will always be formed due to the fact that the filmmaker must choose to focus on just a few characters in order to avoid confusing the audience. In addition, there is the added aspect in an event such as a public festival, of a filmmaker’s hierarchical position with regard to other media representatives. Research has shown how being a media representative can help to gain access to a field, so I wish to look into this a little further and see the results of working within a visual media system.

I am also interested in using film to analyze and investigate hierarchy in a festival. It is clear that many scholars feel that film is not capable of relaying complex or abstract theory. I feel that this argument is not so black and white and that the degree to which it can be used to show abstract theory should be investigated.
Chapter 3
Introduction of the Kichijoji Autumn Festival

Much of the research conducted in festivals in Japan centers on the chonaikai (neighbourhood association) teams (Bestor, 1989; Schnell 1999; Robertson 1991). The chonaikai are usually formed of, or related, to other community groups such as the PTA, ‘men’s groups’ etc, which are based on age-grade associations (Hendry, 1995; Traphagan, 2000). The chonaikai are usually made up of a few hundred households within a wider city community and are responsible for the administration and organization of the community (Bestor, 1989; Schnell, 1999; Kawano, 2005; Porcu, 2012). As a result the mikoshi is carried around the boundaries of the neighbourhood that it represents. The Kichijoji Autumn festival, on the other hand, is formed almost entirely of teams representing the shotenkai (merchant’s associations) and therefore there are very different motivations to those held by chonaikai. According to Ashkenazi (1990), “Shotenkai are common interest associations with relatively simple goals: the promotion of business. Their membership is derived from individuals having business interests in the given community.” (p. 212). This has a profound effect on the motivations behind holding the Kichijoji Autumn festival, which is further emphasized by the presence of the additional kind of team, called Musashi, which represents the local shrine. The history and make up of the Kichijoji Autumn festival highlights some of the points I wish to make on hierarchy.
History of Kichijoji Autumn Festival

At the time that my research was conducted, the festival was being held for the 39th time, although, as will be outlined below, this figure does not fully reflect the entire history of the festival. The festival in Kichijoji has undergone many changes over the years. I will start my history of the festival with the Musashi team’s inception, based on testimony from interview subjects and brochures produced by the Musashi Team, such as the *Musashino Hachimangu Mikoshi Preservation Society 30th Anniversary Commemorative Book* (2006). I will also look briefly at the history of some of the other shotenkai teams, as they have also helped to shape the festival into the present form seen today.

The Original Festival

There has been a festival held in Musashino city for many years, however, the initial festival was somewhat different to the one held in Kichijoji today. Prior to the 1930s, before the Musashi team came into being, there was a festival held by the Itsukaichi-kaido neighbourhood team. In this festival, the Itsukaichi-kaido Shishi (Lion Dance) Festival, the Itsukaichi-kaido team used to parade a mikoshi. The team was made up of residents and merchants based along Itsukaichi-kaido, a main thoroughfare located to the north of what is Kichijoji station now (see figure 1.3). Before the railway was built at the turn of the century, most of the commercial aspects of Musashino city were based along Itsukaichi-kaido. This made the street, and its residents, very powerful, especially with matters concerning the community. Every year they held the Itsukaichi-kaido Shishi Festival, however, people from other areas of Kichijoji, including the main
shopping area that had developed north of the station, were not allowed to join in and carry the *mikoshi*. The exclusion of non-Itsukaichi-kaido residents continued until the early 1930s; a key time in the development of Kichijoji. The railway station at Kichijoji was built in 1899, and the development of the tract of land between Kichijoji station and Itsukaichi-kaido began soon after. Kichijoji was starting to develop as a secondary commercial hub to Itsukaichi-kaido (Allinson, 1979), and therefore by the 1930s the bias towards Itsukaichi-kaido could no longer be sustained. The area north of the station was rapidly developing and the merchants and residents of Kichijoji wished to have their own *mikoshi*, and parade it in the festival, so the idea for the Musashi team was born.

In 1933, local shopkeepers and residents joined together with the local firefighters union\(^1\) in a room above a kimono shop, and planned how to raise enough money to buy their own *mikoshi*. They met so often that according to legend, the tatami mats of the Omino Kyozomi shop became worn down, (Musashino Hachimangu *Mikoshi* Preservation Society, 2006, p. 1), a sentiment that is often proudly repeated by members of the Musashi team. They requested donations from all of the members, who each donated 10 Yen\(^2\). In addition, the head priest from the local Buddhist temple announced that he would make up the difference required. In the end, more than enough money was raised; enough in fact to buy both an adult and children’s *mikoshi*, and to give each donating family a bottle of sake each.

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\(^1\) *Mikoshi* teams and fire-fighting groups have had a long history of sharing membership. As Schnell (1999) points out this may have more to do with strength and youth of the firefighters than anything else. Schnell also refers to firefighters being influential in village life prior to the Meiji era, a role that has continued through to today.

\(^2\) this represented a fairly large amount of money as at the time a bowl of noodles cost just 8 sen (1 yen = 100 sen) ("Musashino Hachimangu *Mikoshi* Preservation Society", 2006, p. 1)
The announcement from the Buddhist priest of the Gesouji Temple speaks to the feeling in Kichijoji at the time; a mikoshi festival is a Shinto-based festival and yet the local Buddhist priest was willing to support it financially. At the time the priest in question owned much of the land in Kichijoji, including the land that Kichijoji station currently occupies. It has been suggested by current members of the Musashi team that the priest was financially motivated in promoting a festival to take place in the Kichijoji area as opposed to the Itsukaichi-kaido area. Being a large land-owner in Kichijoji, he had a vested interest in increasing customers to the area. Therefore, an additional secular motivation can be seen, other than purely religious, for starting and holding the festival in Kichijoji. This sentiment, which is repeated through to today, will be demonstrated in the motivations of the shotenkai teams.

The creation of the Musashi mikoshi group, and the support of the community in general speaks to the changes occurring in Kichijoji at the time, which the residents felt should be reflected in a community event. Festivals in Japan have long been seen within academia as a form of community creation and maintenance. The enactment of traditions, even those that are recently invented, is seen as way of creating and solidifying community identity (Ambros 2009, Ikeda 1999, Onjo 2006). Reader (1991) states, “To carry or draw the mikoshi along requires that men pull together and in harmony, and is thus also a symbolic reminder to all the community of the necessity to co-operate and work together for the communal good,” (p. 67) In the case of pre-1930s Musashino city, the community was not able to work together as the Itsukaichi-kaido festival group would not allow other residents to join. Therefore a new team was created, partly in order to create a feeling of community amongst the fairly new residents of
Kichioji, and also to consolidate a new sense of identity centered on being residents and workers of Kichijoji.

The End of the Festival

For the next few years the *mikoshi* were paraded around the streets of Kichijoji by the local merchants, but, according to the Musashi teams members, by 1945 there was not enough money available to hold the festival due to the actions of the Second World War. Many festivals across Japan were stopped during this time when money was tight and many residents felt there was little to celebrate. There was also an added problem with the Occupying Forces, who governed Japan following World War Two, bringing in a mandate that separated Shinto and the government (Morioka, 1975; Reader, 1991; Schnell 1999). This meant that where previously festivals were organized by groups attached to their local shrine, following the war they were separated and the neighbourhood associations had to take the full financial responsibility, as well as the time and effort needed, of organizing and holding the *mikoshi* festivals. It wasn’t until a few years after the war that many *mikoshi* festivals across Japan started to be held, organized by the neighbourhood or merchant’s associations.

During the Second World War the areas around key stations were cleared as they posed a fire risk to vital transportation hubs. This large cleared area in Kichijoji meant that it was easy to erect the tightly packed warren of small shops and businesses that came to occupy the area to the north of the station (Allison, 1979, p. 104). With the end of the war came a lean period when goods were difficult to come by, allowing black-market areas to thrive across Tokyo. Some of these still remain today, notably the
Ameyoko-cho area near Ueno station, which is particularly popular with tourists, and the Harmonica-cho area in Kichijoji\(^3\). The Harminica-cho area is popular today with many small bars opening up in what were once old family-owned shop premises. It is now a vibrant nightlife area and the location of many of the nomiyas frequented by members of the mikoshi teams.

As can be seen with many other festivals across Japan today, many of the festival participants in Kichioji in the post-war period were members of gangs that controlled many of the businesses in Kichijoji. In 1948, the Kichijoji festival experienced gang related tensions that resulted in tragic consequences. In this case, the problem was with a pachinko\(^4\) parlour located on Sun Road, one of the main shopping arcades leading from the station. The pachinko parlour in question refused to pay protection money to the local yakuza group. The situation between the pachinko parlour and the local yakuza group slowly escalated until finally tensions broke out at the festival. During the procession the mikoshi was smashed into the pachinko shop front and the consequent violence lead to extensive damage and the death of one person. As a result of this, the police stepped in and shut down the festival permanently.

The tensions seen in the Kichijoji festival are not so unusual. Firstly the involvement of the yakuza in mikoshi festivals is one that is not only common but is to a certain extent expected. Arguably one of the most famous festivals in Japan, the Sanja Matsuri, held at Asakusa shrine every second year\(^5\), famously has yakuza teams who openly flaunt their gang membership. Their affiliation is particularly evident through their open

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\(^3\) Harmonico-cho is so named because the many narrow doorways are reminiscent of a harmonica.

\(^4\) an arcade game used for gambling

\(^5\) Sanja festival and Kanda festival are two of the biggest festivals held in Tokyo. In order to reduce pressure on the participants and audience members the festivals take turns in holding a ‘big’ and ‘small’ festival, so that in alternating years a large festival is held at Kanda, and Asakusa holds a smaller festival, and vice versa.
display of tattoos (see figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1. Tattooed Sanja festival participants wearing traditional *fundoshi*
Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JiYd_ZjwncU

The violence observed in the Kichijoji festival is not so unusual either. As demonstrated by research conducted by Schnell (1997), *mikoshi* festivals can be used to voice discontent or grievances against the authorities or individuals. In his research conducted on the festival in Furukawa, Gifu Prefecture, Schnell (1997), talks of two instances when the *mikoshi* festival was used to demonstrate public feelings in a violent manner. In these instances, the local police station and police residences were attacked by the festival participants in retribution for the strict or harsh actions of the police prior to the festival (p. 239). In these instances the ritual object\(^6\) takes the blame for the actions of the participants, as it is thought that the *kami* is responsible for the object’s actions, not the bearers (p. 236).

Other factors are also key, such as the formation and upkeep of community identity and a sense of group membership. Whilst the reason given for the violence is attributed to the god inside the *mikoshi*, this may not be the whole story. Sonoda (1988) noted on a religious event in which audience members compete to get a small branch of the sacred *sasaki* tree to display on their family altar at home. He notes, “Each time I came to the

\(^6\) In Schnell’s case study this object was a ritual drum but in other festivals the ritual object is usually a *mikoshi*.
festival and watched this spectacle, I came to feel more and more that the people were not contesting for *sasaki* branches on the basis of their religious longing, but rather that they were fighting with *that fighting itself* as their aim. “(para. 28).

Bestor (1992) also comments on an occasion during the Tokyo–based festival he was researching, when the local leaders had to protect a local man’s shop following an altercation between the shop owner and the *mikoshi* bearers. He states:

> The workmen were allowed to carry it [the *mikoshi*], but they were surrounded by the burliest men the respectable leadership could muster; and when the procession passed the shopfront of the festival leader who had been beaten to the ground, a phalanx of “respectable” leaders formed a conspicuous but passive human shield in front of the shop’s plate glass windows to guard against the sudden lurch of the heavy mikoshi. (Bestor 1992, p. 42-3) [my brackets]

As these examples demonstrate, the *mikoshi* festival has long been used as a means of venting public opinion, often in quite violent ways. The excuse being that it was the god within the *mikoshi* who responsible for the violence, leaving the bearers of the *mikoshi* blameless. This has also been the experience of the Kichijoji Autumn festival, as can be seen during the incident that occurred in 1948.

Even today the violence of the 1948 Kichijoji festival is looked on with embarrassment, and the influence of this incident can still be felt in the festival. Kichijoji has the rare honour of being one of the few festivals to completely ban yakuza involvement. This is demonstrated by the rule that those with tattoos are banned from participating, although in practice some people may have tattoos and merely cover them up. Tattoos are a common indication of yakuza involvement and therefore those with
tattoos face the stigma of this despite the fact that they may not be in a yakuza gang.

Following the cancellation of the festival it was to another five years before the mikoshi was carried again. From 1953 the members of the Young Men’s Association carried the mikoshi for a couple of years. Even then it was done without much enthusiasm and after a couple of years the festival participants gave up. At the time the city was expanding rapidly and the place where the mikoshi was stored was being converted to other uses. The mikoshi was placed into storage behind Musashi Hachimangu Shrine, and eventually forgotten about.

The Rebirth of the Kichijoji Autumn Festival

In 1973 two of Kichijoji’s shotenkai, decided to start holding a mikoshi festival again. The 1970s represented an era of economic stability across Japan, and the wealthy middle class was steadily growing. Ashida (1994) argues that this had a profound effect on the mikoshi festivals at the time. “The fact that festivals experienced a resurgence throughout Japan around the end of the period of high-rate economic growth likely resulted from the fact that people began to feel their lives demanded something other than money and “things”, namely the emotional human element of “heart”.” (para. 34).

The Musashi mikoshi still lay forgotten and instead Sun Road shotenkai bought a children’s mikoshi, and Heiwa Dori shotenkai rented a mikoshi. The next year Daiya Gai shotenkai joined the festival with a rental mikoshi. At this time, the festival was called the Musashi Hachimangu Reitaisai (reitaisai meaning festival). This made direct reference to the association with the Musashi Hachimangu Shrine.

As enthusiasm grew, the team members wished to carry their own mikoshi instead
of renting one. It was at this time that it was remembered that there was a *mikoshi* in storage at the Musashi Hachimangu shrine. The Young Men’s Association, with help from the Teishajougumi Old Boys, sought permission from the Musashino Hachimangu shrine to repair the original *mikoshi* and carry it in the next festival. The Teishajougumi Old Boys represent the highest level hierarchically within the *mikoshi* group made up of those too old to actively participate in the festival, but still respectfully acknowledged through being part of the Old Boys tier. The *mikoshi* was moved to the 3rd branch of the firefighter’s office in Kichioji where they researched how to repair the *mikoshi*. The children’s *mikoshi* was deemed irreparable and ritually burnt in an *otakiage* ceremony.

In 1976, the four *shotenkai* located north of the station got together to form the Kichijoji Mikoshi Dokokai (club), later changed to the Musashino Hachimangu Mikoshi Hozonkai (Preservation Society) Kichioji. The intention of this club was to allow the free socialization of members in order to get to know each other, and to preserve the *mikoshi* and festival. As stated in the Musashino Hachimangu *Mikoshi* Preservation Society 30th anniversary Commemorative book (2006), the Kichijoji Musashino Dokakai (association) was formed on October 18th 1976, to preserve the *mikoshi* and unify young people (p. 1) At this time there were fifty-three members, including the *Kumito* (leader) of this year’s festival, Ogura-san. At the time that this research took place, Ogura-san was the last remaining serving member of the original 53 members who gathered to form the festival. He was due to retire and join the Old Boys group after the festival in 2011.

By 1976, the original group had had the Musashi *mikoshi* refurbished by a company in Asakusa. Once the *mikoshi* had been refurbished by the Asakusa Okadaya shop, a
special ceremony, *nyukonshiki*, was held in which the *kami* (god) was placed inside the *mikoshi*. Over the next decade, the Musashi team, and their *mikoshi*, took part in many prestigious events including representing Kichijoji town in the 100th anniversary celebrations for Musashino city. The recent history of the Kichijoji festival, and more especially, the Musashi team, follows the popularity of festivals in general in Japan, with a lull in the popularity of festivals following the Second World War being replaced with enthusiasm in the 1970s and 80s.

With the increased interest in festivals, more and more teams joined the Kichijoji Autumn Festival as it became known in later years. In 2011, the year in which this research took place, 11 teams took part in the festival, one of which joined for the first time that year with a rented *mikoshi*. With the exception of the newest team, all of the *shotenkai* teams have their own *mikoshi* and take great pride in making their team unique within the festival. Often this is as simple as having a different chant to other teams, whilst some are more outgoing in their expression of individuality with complex songs and additional ornaments displayed during the festival.

**Recent History and Hierarchy**

There are many interesting points raised in the more recent history of the festival in Kichijoji. Firstly the fact that the ‘new’ group of festival members, along with the ‘former’ festival group’s Old Boys sought permission from the shrine to have the *mikoshi* repaired is important. The two groups, representing both the past and future of the Musashi team, working together shows how the feeling of community making, which is evoked in festivals, was still strong among the Musashi members. The festival
in Kichijoji has essentially been created twice – once in 1933 when the people of Kichijoji wished to show their unity by holding their own festival in opposition to the Itsukaichi-kaido team, and once in 1976 when they re-formed the festival using the original mikoshi. In both cases one of the main reasons given for creating the festival was to create a community in Kichijoji and to foster new friendships between the residents.

However, it can be seen that in both the reincarnations of the Musashi team, community building wasn’t the only reason for holding the festival. The connection to the shrine was still strong and an important factor for the team members. By seeking permission from the shrine to restart the festival, they are acknowledging that the mikoshi is seen as belonging to the shrine, despite the fact that it actually belongs (in terms of history) to the original group who sought to start their own festival. This is significant when compared to the history of the shotenkai mikoshi teams. The shotenkai team’s mikoshi represents the shotenkai, whereas the Musashi mikoshi represents the Musashino Hachimangu Shrine.

Secondly, the fact that the Musashi group used a company in Asakusa to refurbish the mikoshi is significant. To this day great pride is taken in the fact that the mikoshi was refurbished by a company based in Asakusa. This is because the Sanja matsuri, is considered the trend-setter for many Tokyo based festivals. Many look to that festival for guidance in their own affairs. A notable example of this occurred in 2011 following the Great East Japan earthquake on March 11th. The Sanja matsuri is usually held in May, however that year it was decided that it should be cancelled as it was inappropriate for large displays of enthusiasm and happiness to take place so soon after a national
tragedy. Not only did 20'000 people lose their lives in the earthquake and subsequent tsunami, but the nuclear meltdown of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear power plant was still unresolved, which had a continuing profound effect on people lives across Tokyo. As a result of the Sanja matsuri cancellation, many other festivals in Tokyo were cancelled. Mikoshi festivals, being essentially a harvest-based festival, are usually held in either spring or autumn. Some festivals decided to carry on but they were transformed into more sombre affairs without the presence of mikoshi. Mikoshi usually bring a lot of cheer to a festival with the raucous chanting and consumption of alcohol by the team members. By removing the mikoshi aspect from the festival a lot of the liveliness was also removed, and the resulting festivals were very sober. At this time a great deal of discussion took place over whether to cancel the Kichijoji festival in September, however it was eventually decided that enough time had passed, and therefore it was not disrespectful. The fact that the organisers of the Kichioji Autumn festival were discussing whether to hold the festival or not based on the actions of the Sanja festival four months previously shows the power that Sanja festival holds over Tokyo festivals in general. This suggests that a hierarchy exists between the festivals themselves, and that lower-level festivals look to the higher ones for legitimacy.

The Kichijoji Autumn Festival Teams

The history of the Musashi team has obviously had a great influence on the festival as a whole as well as the individual shotenkai teams and their histories. The Musashi team essentially created the festival in Kichijoji, and it was only when the popularity of the Musashi team took off that the other teams came into being. It is this dichotomy
between the Musashi team and the shotenkai teams that makes the Kichijoji Autumn Festival so unique, and helps to demonstrate hierarchy in the festival. I will now look briefly at the other teams and their relation to the Musashi team, with particular consideration to the organization of the festival.

Hierarchical Organization

The presence of the two distinct kinds of mikoshi teams; the shrine affiliated Musashi team, and the teams that represent the shotenkai offers a way to investigate the relationships that exist between festival teams. The festival started when some of the shotenkai got together to form the Musashi team. At this stage there were no shotenkai teams, instead individual members of the different shotenkai grouped together to make one team. As the festival grew in popularity, and enthusiasm for carrying mikoshi increased, some of the shotenkai decided to also form their own mikoshi team. This meant that some members would be part of both the shotenkai and Musashi team, and some would only be a member of the shotenkai team. During the 1980s, there were four main shotenkai teams taking part in the festival with their own mikoshi; Sun Road, Heiwa Dori, Daiya Gai and Jounan. Over the next decade or so, more teams joined, so that by the time this research was done, there were 10 shotenkai teams, as well as the Musashi team. These teams are placed hierarchically in regard to each other, depending on the age of the team.

As seen in figure 3.2, there are three distinct tiers. At the top is the Musashi team, however this may be slightly misleading, as the Musashi team does not hold rank above the other teams in terms of organisational matters. The Musashi team is hierarchically
Figure 3.2. The hierarchy of the Kichijoji Autumn Festival teams placed above the other teams in some respects but not in others. In actual fact the Musashi team has little to do with the actual organisation of the festival. However, as the Musashi team sets the basic rules by which the festival is held they can be placed at the top. The most obvious way in which the Musashi team sets the rules is through fixing the route that its mikoshi will take, and subsequently the route that the shotenkai mikoshi take. This is one example of how the Musashi team can be seen as hierarchically above all the other teams.

However, in terms of the nuts and bolts of organising the festival, it is one of the four teams in the second tier that does the organising. The four teams take turns to organise the festival on a yearly basis according to the arrow in the diagram. At the time that this research took place, the Heiwa Dori team was in charge of the festival and the following year the Daiya Gai team would organise it. Beneath these four teams are all of the other shotenkai teams, organized in no particular order. These teams have very little say in the organisation of the festival and have to follow the orders set by the organisational teams. In terms of hierarchy the teams in the bottom tier have no precedence over each other,
however the Taisho Saire team may be the exception to this rule. In the research conducted in 2011, the members of this team were very active in the festival, and especially within the Musashi team. In fact the members of this team appeared to be more enthusiastic, in terms of carrying energy and chanting, than the members in the four organising teams, and therefore it may be posited that this team is vying for a change in the current hierarchy.

The reason behind the above organisational structure can be seen in the history of the festival. The Kichijoji Autumn Festival was started by members of Musashino team, however as these members were also members of the various shotenkai this led to the formation of two kinds of team. Once the Musashi team was established the shotenkai members wanted their own teams and therefore the four shotenkai teams that currently organise the festival came into being. As the other shotenkai teams joined the festival much later (the latest team, Nakamichi Dori only joined in 2011) they occupy a space below that of the original Musashi team and the subsequent four shotenkai teams.

The hierarchical structure outlined above helps to highlight some of the underlying tensions that exist in the festival. As can be seen in the diagram the Musashi team is in many respects hierarchically above the shotenkai teams, however in the actual running of the festival this is not so. This has resulted, to a certain extent, in tensions between the Musashi team and the shotenkai teams. In the next few chapters I will go through the main events both before and during the festival. These events help to highlight the hierarchical tensions that come about due to the dichotomy between the Musashi and shotenkai teams.
Team Entry Requirements

In terms of festival organisation, influence and the roles of its participants, the Kichijoji Autumn festival can be divided according to the kind of team that a person joins. How members are recruited also sheds light on the hierarchical nature of the two kinds of teams within the Kichijoji Autumn festival. In order to highlight this difference I will look at the difference in entry requirements, specifically between the Sun Road shotenkai team and the Musashi team.

Sun Road shotenkai team. The Sun Road team is run by the Sun Road shotenkai, which represents that main pedestrianised shopping street that runs from the station to Itsukaichi-kaido. The majority of its members are connected in some way to the shotenkai itself. In the case of Sun Road, many of the members are people engaged in working at one of the shops or restaurants that are found on Sun Road. The way in which the participants are recruited sheds light on their connection to the shotenkai.

In August of each year a pamphlet is sent to each of the businesses on Sun Road. The main purpose of this pamphlet is to invite people working in the Sun Road area to join the team for the festival. Sun Road is home to various shops, many of which are chain stores and restaurants. This means that they employ a casual workforce of students and other part-time workers. As a result many of the Sun Road workers may not have the same long-standing relationship with the local shotenkai, and by extension the festival team, as found in other, more traditional neighbourhoods of Tokyo. This means that in order to find enough people to take part in the festival, the shotenkai teams must advertise. There are, however, guidelines about the kind of person that can be accepted.
On the front page of the pamphlet it states that applicants are usually a storeowner, family member, or employee of a business on Sun Road. If a person cannot meet one of those qualifications then they must receive a reference from a person who meets one of the above qualifications. Usually each shop’s manager will act as a referee for each of their staff members who wish to join the team.

As long as a person has a connection to the shotenkai it is a relatively easy process to join the team. There is an application form in the pamphlet in which new members can write their name, **happi size**

7, and store to which they are connected. Usually each store will submit one application for all of their employees who wish to take part directly to the Sun Road shotenkai. There are cases where the participants are not directly connected to the shotenkai. In the case of Sun Road, there are a few members of a local judo team who participate. These people were friends with one of the team participants and therefore they were allowed to join. Of course, as the team leader pointed out, it helped that they were all physically fit people.

Whilst it may seem relatively easy to join the shotenkai team on paper, in reality it is not always the case. Ohata-san, the *Jikkōinchō* (Chairman of the Executive Committee) of the Sun Road team, pointed out that whilst many of new shops receive the pamphlet, they don’t necessarily get involved. He commented that it takes a while for relationships between the new shops and the local community to be formed and therefore it also takes a while for the new shop staff to become involved in the festival. With established shops it is easy, even for new staff members, as the longstanding staff members can help to introduce them to the team. For new shops, with new managers, it is a little more difficult as they have not yet built up the personal relationships with the shotenkai to be

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7 All *mikoshi* bearers must wear a jacket called a *happi* in the team colours.
able to approach the team freely. From the point of view of the festival, every year there are more than enough able bodied people willing to join in the festival, and therefore, the shotenkai doesn’t make a special effort to recruit new people, other than sending out the pamphlet to each shop. Ultimately, however, should a new shop’s staff wish to join they are welcome to do so, and as demonstrated in the next section, will help to further a person’s position in the festival.

Musashi team. The way in which the shotenkai teams advertises for, and recruits, new members is very much different to that of the Musashi team. Whilst the list of criteria to enter one of the shotenkai teams is relatively short, a lot more is needed for the Musashi team. As all of the members of the Musashi team are concurrently members of one of the shotenkai teams, the main criteria needed to join the Musashi team is to be an existing team member of one of the shotenkai teams. In fact, a person wishing to join the Musashi team must have been taking part in one of the shotenkai teams for at least five years before they are allowed to move up.

In addition to existing team membership, the candidate must prove that they are of upstanding moral character. Whilst this criterion is not easily defined, in the case of the Musashi team this requires a criminal record check. The final condition is that the candidate must get the permission and a hanko (signature stamp) from each of the leaders of the shotenkai teams before membership can be approved. This requires, that the leaders of the shotenkai know the candidate, which is in part achieved through their actions in the run-up to, and during, the festival. This includes doing things like participating enthusiastically in the building of the mikoshi and serving drinks at the
team party. These activities will be discussed further in later chapters.

Hierarchy and Team Entry Criteria

The most basic qualification for those wishing to join a mikoshi team in a festival in Japan is usually residence in a mikoshi team’s neighbourhood, or at the very least being invited by someone living in the area (Roemer 2007, Bestor 1989). In this sense the shotenkai teams follow the lead of many mikoshi festivals in their recruitment process. For those who wish to have a position of authority within the team there are even stricter criteria. In his research conducted on the Kamimachi neighbourhood team in the Chichibu festival, Akaike (1976) found the following:

The following eight criteria are often used for judging candidates’ and officials’ qualifications as well as for weighing general prestige within the community: length of residence, age, family background, property, career record, character, occupation, and skills. (p. 141)

Schnell (1999) too has noted how positions of prestige within the festival require certain criteria, such as being a native of the village. The fact that there are strict criteria needed to enter positions of prestige highlights the hierarchical difference between the shotenkai and Musashi team in the Kichijoji Autumn festival.

It is interesting to note that with the Kichijoji Autumn festival the criteria needed just to initially enter the Musashi team follow those that are usually needed to enter a leadership position within a mikoshi team in other festivals. In a sense, the Musashi team can be said to be hierarchically above the other teams by the supplemental qualifications needed just to enter the team. Just as candidates for positions of authority
within a regular *mikoshi* team must pass certain conditions, so too must all members of the Musashi team. This also means that extra effort and commitment is expected of the Musashi team members that is not required of regular members of the shotenkai teams. The extra commitment required by the Musashi team members starts with their ability to be noticed enough in their efforts in the shotenkai team in order to be allowed to join the team. There is a real sense of starting out with the shotenkai team and being ‘promoted’ through hard work and effort to membership of the Musashi team.

**Recruitment pamphlets**

As we can see the difference in recruitment for the shotenkai and Musashi teams are quite marked, this is particularly evident in the recruitment pamphlets. Partly because all of the Musashi team members are members of shotenkai teams, and partly because of their existing knowledge, a specific pamphlet recruiting team members for the festival is not produced by the Musashi team. As well serving as a means to let local people know about the festival and invite them to join in, the shotenkai pamphlet also highlights the rules and regulations of the festival. Some of these rules highlight some of the unique points of the Kichijoji Autumn festival and are therefore worthy of some discussion.

On the front page rules on the appearance of festival participants are included. What is of particular interest is the fact that anyone who wishes to join the Kichijoji festival is not allowed to have a tattoo, or to wear a *fundoshi*, which is a traditional costume worn during festivals that looks like a loincloth (see figure 3.1). Due to the Kichijoji Autumn festival having some problems with gang involvement, a special effort is made to ensure that there is no gang involvement in the future. At a basic level this is done by banning
In addition to banning people with tattoos, the leaders of the mikoshi groups also keep a watchful eye on the behaviour of their members. Special mention is made in the pamphlets asking for the cooperation of anyone who wishes to take part, to ensure a smooth running of the festival. The banning of fundoshi is slightly different. Whilst it is true that many gang members who also take part in festivals often wear fundoshi, the reason for banning them may have more of a commercial nature.

On the second page of the pamphlet is a series of rules and regulations for the festival participants to follow. One of the points, specifically highlighted, is as follows: In order to not cause discomfort to customers please be careful outside of shop entrances and large stores, as well as near the mikisho. (Sun Road shotenkai recruitment pamphlet, 2011, p. 2). The pamphlet then goes on to list specific areas in which the mikoshi bearers must act respectfully towards shoppers visiting the area. They are also expected to act respectfully and not to bother shoppers in any way. This includes not throwing rubbish, smoking or drinking whilst wearing the team happi.

These rules, which the mikoshi bearers are expected to follow, highlight the fact the shotenkai teams see the festival as a commercial venture. It is important for the audience members to remain safe and happy so that they will not be disturbed in their shopping. These sentiments were repeated during the shotenkai festival meeting, which will be discussed in the next chapter. However, it is important to point out at this stage that the shotenkai teams are very much concerned with the feelings of the audience members. At no point in the pamphlet for the shotenkai teams is any mention given of the religious side of the festival, or instructions given on how to carry the mikoshi.
Conclusion

The history, advertising and recruitment pamphlets highlight some of the key differences between the *shotenkai* and Musashi teams. The festival was created in response to the changing needs of the community. As the commercial centre of the town shifted towards the station, a new festival was created to serve the needs of those living and working in the area. Over time the festival went through many changes, from being cancelled, to reinstated, and then expanded as new teams were added. These new teams represented the *shotenkai* and came with different requirements regarding entry to the teams. This signifies one of the ways in which the teams differ within the festival, and also starts to explain some of the hierarchical differences. The basic entry requirements for the Musashi team are far stricter than those for the *shotenkai* teams, and can be considered at a similar level as the entry requirements for a *shotenkai* executive committee position. This can be seen as evidence of the higher status of the Musashi team, as they require such strict conditions. This is further emphasised by the fact that they draw their membership from within the *shotenkai* teams. Originally the reasoning behind this was historically based, however, it still continues through to today. History therefore can be seen as a key factor in the creation and maintenance of hierarchy between the various festival teams. The oldest teams hold positions of power within the festival, as can be seen by the history and positions held by the four organising teams. However, the festival is a dynamic event and is changing year on year. In the next few chapters I will discuss how the hierarchies between the teams are continuing to be negotiated as new teams join and individual needs adapt.
Chapter 4
Pre-Festival Events and Hierarchy

Like many festivals in Japan, and indeed across the globe, the festival itself takes up a fraction of many of the participants’ time when compared to the planning stages. Whilst the Kichijoji Autumn Festival actually takes place over two days on the second weekend of September, the participants are involved in many more events than just the festival itself. The Musashi and shoïenkai teams have slightly different jobs to perform in the run-up to the festival. In this chapter each event will be introduced and analysed chronologically with a focus on identifying occasions where identity and hierarchy is either formed or demonstrated. First, I will introduce the main meeting held in the run-up to the festival, which was attended by representatives from the festival teams as well as local infrastructure representatives. I will then move on to look at the final meeting held by the Musashi team as it offers an interesting contrast to the main meeting. I will also look at smaller events that were held to advertise the festival and how hierarchy was displayed within these. I will finally look at the party held by the Musashi team just prior to the festival. The party serves to illustrate how social relations are formed and maintained within the team.

39th Kichijoji Autumn Festival Overall Briefing

Each year the organisation of the festival is led by one of the four main shoïenkai teams; Sun Road, Heiwa Dori, Daiya Gai, and Jouan in rotation. In 2011, the team in charge was Heiwa Dori lead by Maeda-san, the rijicho (president) of Heiwa Dori.
shotenkai and Tanekoshi-san, the jikkōincho (Chairman of the team’s executive committee), the head organizer of the festival. This team is in charge of organizing the mikoshi routes, liaising with city infrastructure representatives and organizing the advertising for the festival. In the month prior to the festival a large meeting is held to go over the main organizational points of the festival. The meeting was attended by representatives from each of the shotenkai, including both the jikkōincho (leader of the Executive Committee), and the sekininsha (leader of the mikoshi bearers). It should be noted that there were far more shotenkai represented at the meeting than festival teams. This is because not all of the shotenkai in Kichijoji have a mikoshi team, or some of them have grouped together to form a team. There were also representatives from the various city departments and private groups that may be affected by the festival. These groups included the police and fire departments, as well as the local bus companies, who would have to change their bus routes in order to accommodate the mikoshi teams passing along the streets. Recording the event were local media representatives, including a film crew from a local cable network TV station, JCN, who were filming the meeting for the first time.

Meeting Contents

The meeting started with opening comments from both the President and Chairman of Heiwa-dori team. This was followed by an introduction of the meeting guests, as well as representatives from each of the mikoshi teams, who each stood to be identified and welcomed. This included the introduction of a new team, Nakamichi-dori, which was joining the festival from this year. The team’s leader, Yoshinuma-san, stood
up and made the following brief speech:

I’m from the Nakamichi Shotenkai. We are new this year so please teach us anything that we don’t know.

This short speech was intended to demonstrate their position within the festival and to acknowledge the status of the other teams and their own position within the festival teams’ hierarchy.

After this each of the organizational groups gave a short summary of what they had been doing in the run-up to the festival. These organizational groups included the following:

- **Shinkōbukai**: mikoshi group
- **Dōzasai**: religious opening and closing ceremony group
- **Keibibukai**: festival security
- **Kohōbukai**: public relations
- **Miyamikoshi**: representatives from the Musashi team
- **Kodomo Mikoshi**: children’s mikoshi group
- **Kaike**: accounts

Many of these groups reiterated the need for safety in the festival, especially with regard to audience members. There was a concern that visitors to Kichijoji may be disturbed in their shopping, or may be endangered by rowdy teams, and therefore measures were put in place to ensure everyone’s safety. Most of the announcements were kept short, with each representative making just one comment on what they had been doing, instead of going through everything they had been working on in the run-up to the festival.

In addition, a document outlining the routes of each of the mikoshi teams, along with the scheduled stops was distributed among the participants. Most of the information was already known to the leaders of the mikoshi teams, however, there were
a few changes that were highlighted by Senza-san, who was in charge of *mikoshi* organization.

One of the longest speeches came from the Public Relations representative, Sakurai-san, who listed some of the events and materials available for advertising the festival. This included giving each of the *shotenkai* a bag of posters and pamphlets, as well as informing everyone of a photography exhibition of past festivals to be held in the Coppice department store. The advertising posters and other events will be detailed later in this chapter. In addition to matters related to the festival, the presence of the JCN camera crew at the back of the room was pointed out and the festival participants were asked to cooperate with the making of the TV program on the Kichijoji festival, which was advertised on the back of the festival brochure.

Following the messages by the festival divisions, the various city representatives at the meeting gave their messages. Again these were centered on guaranteeing the safety of both the festival participants and the visitors to the area. In addition, the bus company representatives were especially concerned that the *mikoshi* teams keep to a tight schedule. The main reason for this is that there is a main *mikoshi* procession at 2pm on each day situated on Heiwa-dori, which is also the location of many of the city’s bus stops. This means that for a period of two or three hours the buses have to be rerouted to other roads. The buses may also be delayed if they are caught behind a *mikoshi* on one of the main roads as they move very slowly. Apparently this request is one that is made every year, however, from the looks on the faces of the festival organizers it was clear that it was seldom prioritized.

The meeting closed with the introduction of next year’s festival organizing teams.
Unusually, the next festival in 2012 was to be organized by two teams sharing the responsibility. Ordinarily just the Daiya Street team would be in charge, however, in the next year, the Taisho Saire team would be assisting them in the organization. Both the leaders from the Daiya Gai team and the Taisho Saire team gave a short speech before the meeting was declared closed. In total the meeting took less than 30 minutes, a sign of the role that the meeting played. It was not a meeting in which new points could be raised or organizational decisions made. Instead, it served to introduce the leaders to everyone, distribute the organizational literature and to demonstrate that the festival was well prepared. Following the meeting, a separate, smaller organizational meeting was held by a few select members of the shotenkai teams which will be outlined later in the this chapter.

**Displays of hierarchy**

From a research point of view this meeting served to highlight the hierarchical nature of the festival and some of the tensions that exist within the logistics of the festival, as well as between the team themselves. Firstly, the spatial layout of the meeting served to visualize the hierarchical positions within the festival.

As can be seen in diagram 4.1, the seating arrangement reflected the position of each person or group within the overall hierarchical structure of the festival organization. On the top table sat all of the members of the festival executive committee, including the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, and the people in charge of the various festival committees such as the Ceremony Committee and Public Relations. Directly in front of this table sat various people who were connected to the shrine or the shrine’s team,
Figure 4.1. Seating arrangements at the Overall Briefing

Musashi. To the left-hand side sat representatives of the businesses from which the festival required support and understanding, such as the Fire Department and local transport companies. To the right-hand side were the leaders of the various shotenkai, including those without mikoshi teams, and finally in the middle sat lower executive committee members of the shotenkai mikoshi teams.

The layout of the room, to a certain extent, suggests and reflects the roles of those who are in charge of the running of the festival. The top table is made-up of people who have done the actual organizing. The representatives associated with the shrine, and its team, were placed near the top table, to signify their position (albeit a symbolic one) of seniority. In meetings or parties in Japan the seating arrangements often reflect a strict hierarchical pattern. It is usual for those in a senior position to be seated at the table furthest from the door, with everyone else seating themselves according to their
hierarchical position leading away from the main table (Bestor 1989; Traphagan 2000; Roemer 2007).

The sides of the room reflect those from whom cooperation is required, and therefore respectfully acknowledged, but who may not actually be involved in the organization itself. I have included the shotenkai team leaders in this group, as they often don’t have a lot to do with the actual organizing. These leaders go by various terms, such as Rijichō (Chairman of the Board), Kaichō (President) or Iinchō (President), however, they all fulfill a similar role of leading their respective organizations. In the central part of the rooms sat the Mikoshi Sekininsha (Person in Charge of the Mikoshi) of the various teams, who are hierarchically below the various team leaders. It is interesting to note that instead of each team’s representatives sitting together, they were in fact separated into two groups according to their position within each team. However, whilst they may occupy a hierarchically lower position within the team, they are, in fact, in charge of much of the festival organization. This was demonstrated by the second, smaller organizational meeting that was held shortly after the main meeting.

Organizational Meeting

Directly after the 39th Kichijoji Autumn Festival Overall Briefing, a second organizational meeting was held, attended only by the Mikoshi Sekininsha and the head of the entire festival, Maeda-san. The presence of just these participants demonstrates how those who do the organizing are not necessarily publically acknowledged. The fact that the Mikoshi Sekininsha carried out a second meeting, which involved discussing the
particulars of festival organization, shows that they are key to the organization and mobilization of the festival. However, in the main meeting of the day these people were not identified and occupied a space in the room that is seen as hierarchically lower. This demonstrates an important aspect of the Overall Briefing; the meeting serves more as a demonstration of position within the festival as opposed to organizational abilities. The fact that only the mikoshi sekininsha took part in the organizational meeting suggests that the shotenkai leaders act more as figureheads, delegating the real festival work to committee members beneath them. Their main role is to monitor what goes on and to be the symbol of their team in meetings such as the Overall Briefing.

The purpose of the organizational meeting was primarily to sort out some last minute scheduling issues, which were sensitive due to the tensions running between the shotenkai and Musashi teams regarding one particular aspect of the festival. On the second day of the festival there is an event called the miyairi, which is of particular significance to the members of the Musashi team. This event involves representatives from each of the shotenkai mikoshi teams carrying one pole each of the Musashi team’s mikoshi (Miyamikoshi) at the same time. They then collectively carry the Miyamikoshi from outside of the Coppice department store in the centre of Kichioji, up Sun Road and finally back to the shrine itself. This event is of symbolic importance to the members of the Musashi team as it represents all of the teams coming together to transport the kami (god) back to the shrine. However, many members of the shotenkai teams felt that this event interfered with their own team’s events and wished to move the miyairi to September 15th, which was the official end of the festival, and the day on which the Musashi team had a special event to remove the kami from the Miyamikoshi.
The topic of this meeting highlights the tensions felt between the different kinds of team. On the one hand the Musashi team wishes to bring the town of Kichioji together to escort the *kami* back to the shrine. On the other hand, the *shotenkai* teams view the festival as a chance to have fun within their own group, and begrudge the inconvenience of having to leave their team in order to take part in the *miyairi*. This shows a great divide in the motivations for taking part in the festival. These are easily identified in the team that an individual chooses to join. The Musashi team wants to promote the events that bring the city of Kichijoji together. It can therefore be said that those wishing to join the Musashi team may be more inclined to actively promote community building. This relates to what Goodman (2008) describes as “a sense of “natural” unity” (p.70), whereby a community performing a ritual collectively promotes overall togetherness. On the other hand, the *shotenkai* complaints against an event which clearly demonstrates the unity of the city, suggests that community building may not be so important to them. Instead the activities of their own particular team take priority.

The meeting can be seen to demonstrate a further aspect of the relationship between the Musashi and *shotenkai* teams. Whilst the grievances felt by the *shotenkai* teams may have been strong enough to justify holding a separate meeting, it is apparent that they were not strong enough to air in a more public setting. On the one hand this shows that the Overall Briefing is purely ceremonial, and that no real issues are discussed within the meeting. On the other it shows that the Musashi team hold a position of power within the festival, which the *shotenkai* teams feel reluctant to publicly challenge. The grievances may be discussed between members of the *shotenkai*
teams, however in terms of actually communicating these to the Musashi team, very little was actually done. They put in a request to the Musashi team to change the date of the Miyairi, but this was quickly turned down. Ultimately, whilst the Musashi team may not have a direct hand in organizing the festival (this is done by the top four shotenkai teams) they still have the final say in important matters such as the timing of the Miyairi. This signifies the importance of their position within the festival.

Musashi Executive Committee Meeting

For the Musashi team the first big event in the run-up to the festival is the Musashi Executive Committee Meeting. This meeting was held on August 29th in the meeting room of the Sun Road Shopping Street Promotion Association. It was attended by all 25 Executive Officers, whose role it is to organise the team, and the events that the team takes part in, with regard to the festival. The Executive Committee is headed by the Kumito, Ogura-san, who also led the meeting. Many of the other members were leaders of smaller, organisational departments within the Musashi team, such as accounting, security and route scheduling.

Meeting Contents

The meeting started with opening remarks by Ogura-san, who drew attention to the fact that many of Tokyo’s mikoshi festivals had been cancelled that year due to the Great East Japan Earthquake which struck on March 11th and the ensuing nuclear disaster at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant. As the Sanja matsuri had been cancelled that year there was debate over whether to hold the festival or not, however, it
was decided that enough time had passed since the disaster to hold the festival without causing offence. Ogura-san noted that the neighbouring Mitaka city festival had not been held that year, and therefore asked that the members watch carefully to ensure that the festival was held safely in Kichijoji\(^1\). He then went on to say that this was his last year as the Kumito of the team. He wished to thank the other Executive Officers for helping to keep the Musashi team as the number one mikoshi team in the Kichijoji Autumn Festival.

Next to speak was Koike-san, who was the Representative Speaker of the Old Boys (OB) group. This was the group that Ogura-san was to join on retirement from his current role as Kumito. Koike-san’s speech mainly concerned the position of the Musashi team within the festival. He reiterated Ogura-san’s point that the Musashi team was central to the festival, and went to further to point out that despite the shotenkai team leaders saying otherwise they were still important to the festival.

Following the greetings from Ogura-san and Koike-san the new members of both the Executive Committee and the Musashi team were introduced. The newcomers to the Executive Committee included two new deputy leaders of the mikoshi bearers group (kakikō kōsatō), Yuria Ogura (Ogura-san’s niece) and Kumagaya-san, both of whom came from the Daiya Gai team. In addition, there was to be a new leader of the Miyamikoshi bearers group (kakikō), Jun Suzuki, from the Ekimae team, whose role it is to ensure the smooth passage of the Miyamikoshi around the town and to make sure the bearers are under control. In addition to these younger members, some new, more senior members were also announced, such as the new Kumito, Higashiyama-san, who would

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\(^1\) There was concern from both the Musashi team and shotenkai teams that people who had not been able to take part in the Mitaka city festival would feel frustrated and therefore try to join in the Kichijoji Autumn festival. There was a fear that should this happen the teams and their mikoshi would get out of control and potentially injure passersby, or that frustration at not being able to join in a team would lead to problems.
be taking over from Ogura-san and various other senior position holders such as the team accountant, Takahashi-san. There were also three new members of the Musashi team who were to join that year. They included Ogura-san’s nephew, Masayori Ogura, who was joining from the Sun Road team with Akira Kikuchi, and from the Daiya Gai team Ayumi Yanagiba. These three people represented new team members, but were not, however, members of the Executive Committee, and therefore were not present to introduce themselves.

Once the new members were introduced and various other announcements were made, the meeting moved towards discussing more practical matters related to the team and the movement of the *Miyamikoshi*. The first topic covered was the security of the *Miyamikoshi* and the list of people who were responsible for its safety. As the *Miyamikoshi* passed through each of the *shotenkai* areas one or more Musashi executive officers was responsible for the safety and security of not only the *mikoshi* itself but that of the people carrying it and the passersby viewing the proceedings. Each of the security representatives came from the area through which the *Miyamikoshi* was passing. For example, when the *Miyamikoshi* traveled between the Musashi team *mikisho* and the Nakamichi Dori *mikisho* it passed along the Daiya Gai East Zone and therefore the five members of the Executive Committee who were from the Daiya Gai team, were responsible for the *mikoshi’s* safety at that time. This way every member of the Executive Committee was involved in ensuring the smooth passage of the *Miyamikoshi* through their area. The Musashi team actively encourages its members to acknowledge and keep ties with the their original *shotenkai* team, whilst performing their duties for the Musashi team.
At this stage Ogura-san once again appealed to his fellow Executive Committee members to ensure that the festival passed smoothly and without incident. He drew on the fact that the Kichijoji Autumn festival has banned many things that are often seen in, or associated with, *mikoshi* festivals, such as tattoos and the wearing of *fundoshi* (loin cloth). The Kichijoji Autumn festival has made a conscious effort to move away from the usual *mikoshi* association with yakuza groups, in order to not have a repetition of the issues that the festival suffered in 1948. Ogura-san stated that *mikoshi* festivals can be very appealing to people, and therefore, to ensure that people did not get out of control and try to spontaneously join the festival, only those wearing the correct festival clothing and team *happi* would be allowed to join in.

There then followed a lively discussion on the route that the *Miyamikoshi* would be taking and the timings involved. One of the major points raised was who was allowed to carry the *Miyamikoshi* at what stage. The festival starts with the *Miyamikoshi* being carried from the shrine and Ogura-san wanted to make it clear that only the members of the Musashi team would be allowed to carry the *mikoshi* within the shrine grounds. This included making sure that shrine personnel, including the priest, did not carry the *mikoshi*. It is seen as a privilege of being a member of the Musashi team to carry the *Miyamikoshi* within the shrine grounds, especially under the *torii* (shrine gate). This was of particular significance to the Musashi team as they had actually paid for it.

According to the *Musashino Hachimangu Mikoshi Presevation Society 30th Foundation Anniversary Comemorative Book* (2006), the *torii* was completed in 2001 at a cost of over 9 million yen to the Musashi team.
Hierarchy and the Musashi Team Meeting

From a hierarchical point of view the Musashi team meeting offers some interesting points. Firstly, as a meeting of the Executive Committee, the meeting already represents the strong hierarchy present within the team as only the higher members were allowed to be present. The meeting also referred to the hierarchical nature of the team, with new members being acknowledged. The new members of the executive committee were respectful in their introductions and carried out small jobs, such as supplying the meeting with refreshments; a role expected of those lower down on a hierarchical scale (Traphagan 2000). In addition, the younger, newer members did not contribute as much to the discussions as the older members. This was partly because they did not hold a position of authority within the team. Generally anything that needed to be discussed would be done between the people in charge of the relevant departments. As the younger members were not in charge of anything they didn’t take part in the discussion.

In comparison to the Festival Overall Briefing, however, the meeting was far more relaxed and didn't adhere so strongly to some of the demonstrations of hierarchy seen in the other meeting. The seating arrangements of the Musashi meeting were not quite so strictly adhered to, with members moving around the room freely and changing places with one another when they wanted to discuss something. Overall the meeting was freer and represented a group of people who had known each other a long time and who were, therefore, comfortable with their respective positions.

The Musashi meeting contents also demonstrated their position with regard to the other teams. Both Ogura-san, and the leader of the Old Boys made reference to how important the team was to the festival and their position within the festival. The fact that
both of these people made a reference to this suggests the tensions that exist between the Musashi and shotenkai teams. As suggested by the contents of the second organizational meeting, there are some who begrudge the presence or position of the Musashi team. These tensions are particularly note-worthy in this situation, as the Musashi team members are concurrently members of the shotenkai. The comments made by Ogura-san and Koike-san show that they wish to reiterate the importance of the Musashi team within the festival. There is obviously a clear divide within the shotenkai teams between those who want to move on to join the Musashi team, and those who wish to stay with the shotenkai team.

Public Announcements/Advertising

Some of the key features in the run-up to the festival are the various events that take place to advertise the festival. These include the publishing of material advertising the festival, including posters, pamphlets and articles in the local media, as well as more physical adverts, such as the display of the mikoshi in highly visible areas. In this section I will look at some of this material to look at how the differences between the shotenkai and Musashi teams in terms of identity and hierarchy.

Festival Pamphlet

During the Festival Overall Briefing held by the shotenkai teams, the official posters and pamphlets were handed out. In addition to the posters, a small brochure explaining the highlights of the festival is produced. This brochure introduces, and gives a short history, of each of the teams, as well as a photo of the mikoshi and the team’s
happi, a short jacket that is colored according to each team with a logo on the back. The brochure doesn’t, however, draw attention to the different colours of happi worn within each team. Within the mikoshi teams, the Old Boys wear a different coloured happi (usually white) to denote their rank. In addition to the individual happi colours, each mikoshi has a different coloured rope decoration. The pictures enable the audience to easily pick out each team as they pass by during the festival. The brochure also includes a map highlighting the route of the Musashi team mikoshi, the Miyamikoshi, as shown in figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2. Centre page from the 39th Kichijoji Autumn festival brochure showing the Miyamikoshi route

The front cover of the brochure highlights the fact that the Saturday events are classed as being Musashi team orientated, whilst the Sunday events are shotenkai team orientated. It also points out the main parade that takes place at 3pm each day.

From a hierarchical perspective, the brochure demonstrates a slight bias towards
the Musashi team. The brochure introduces the route and approximate timings of the
Musashi team’s *mikoshi*, however, it does not do the same for the other teams. The
result of choosing to include only the Musashi team’s route means that any visitor
wishing to follow the festival would naturally go towards the route specified for the
Musashi team. However, the reason for only one route being included may be merely
due to a lack of space in the brochure.

In addition, whilst the map shows the route of the *Miyamikoshi* it is not necessarily
the Musashi team that is actually carrying the *mikoshi*. As the *Miyamikoshi* passes
through the territory of each of the *shotenkai* teams, the members of that *shotenkai* team
carry it. So whilst the map, at first glance appears to favor the Musashi team, it is also
representing all the teams as the *Miyamikoshi* passes through their area. However this
analysis only paints part of the picture, as this fact is not made clear in the brochure, and
therefore only those in the know are aware of this fact.Whilst the brochure does include
the times at which the *Miyamikoshi* will be at each of the *shotenkai*’s headquarters it
does not point out the dynamics or meaning of this. Casual visitors to the area would not
realize the involvement of all the teams in this matter.

As far as the rest of the brochure is concerned there is no apparent bias towards
any of the teams. Each year the order and position of the team’s information is changed.
Each of the teams has the same amount of print space and the same information about
each team. The year in which this research took place saw the entry of a new team to the
festival and this team was added to the brochure with same amount of print space as
older, more established teams. Therefore, from an outsider’s perspective there is little
hierarchical difference between the teams.
Local Media

As well as posters and brochures, announcements for the festival are also made in the local media. The local advertising newspaper, the Kichijoji Ecco, did a special edition in August highlighting the festival and introducing each team’s characteristics. Each team has had a very different history and seems to be proud of the individual aspects that define their team. This includes features such as the kind of chant they use, or the weight of their mikoshi. Each team also had one member who was interviewed about their connection and feelings towards the festival. In each case the interviewee was a female member of the team, due to the theme of this edition which was ‘women and mikoshi festivals’ as demonstrated in the by-line of the edition title: ‘Dashing women are smart when they ‘Wasshoi’!’

Of particular note in the newspaper is the interview for the Daiya Gai team, which features a lady, called Shion Ogura. It makes reference to that fact that her sister, Yuria, was interviewed last year and that the whole family is interested in the festival. Shion and Yuria are the nieces of my primary research contact, Masafumi Ogura, who is the kumito (leader) of the Musashi team. It can be seen as evidence that interest in the festival is somewhat of a legacy, as so many members of the Ogura family are involved. In the case of the Ogura family, Shion, Yuria, and their mother Aimi, are members of the Daiya Gai shotenkai team, as well as being members of the Musashi team.

Masafumi Ogura is somewhat different in that he is a member of the Sun Road

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2 ‘Wasshoi’ refers to one of the chants that mikoshi bearers shout as they carry the mikoshi. It is also synonymous with the act of taking part in a mikoshi festival.

3 Yuria Ogura actually had a one-page article written on her and her involvement in the town of Kichijoji. It was included in the section, which highlights one citizen of Kichijoji per month, and their connection to the town.
shotenkai team, but this is because his restaurant is within the boundaries of the Sun Road shotenkai. In addition, his nephew Masayori Ogura, who works as a waiter at his restaurant, is also a member of the Sun Road team and joined the Musashi team that year.

The reason for only women being featured in the newspaper article reflects the purpose of the paper, as well as the festival itself. As the Kichijoji Ecco newspaper is more of a commercial tool aimed at female customers than a newspaper in the strictest sense, the article about the festival is geared more towards women. Usually the paper contains details about the shops and restaurants within Kichijoji, and their products, which change according to the seasons. The products advertised are usually aimed at women and include such things as make-up products, beauty salons, accessories and restaurants that specialize in ‘ladies lunch’\(^4\). All the participants interviewed for the August edition of the paper were female members of the teams, and in addition to interviews, there was a section on what items could be bought in Kichijoji to accessorize the festival (see figure 4.3). These items included festival-themed false nails and special hairstyles for the festival. This edition of the Kichijoji Ecco highlights the commercial nature of the Kichioji Autumn festival, especially when compared to some of the more historical and traditional festivals held elsewhere in Tokyo.

It is not unusual for a festival to be focused on commercial gain, as opposed to spiritual or community gain. Littleton (1986) noted how the festivals organized by the shotenkai were more focused on economic gain than on spiritual matters. Many festivals can be seen as actively focused on increasing tourism to the area. Schnell’s (1997)

\(^4\) ‘Ladies lunches’ are set meals offered at restaurants, especially on weekdays. They are usually a light meal and in many restaurants a woman has to present in the group to order it.
research in Furukawa, Gifu Prefecture, demonstrates how the local festival,

which is renowned for having violent tendencies, changed to garner tourist opinions.
The festival has long been seen by the people of Furukawa as an opportunity to vent their feelings against members of the community who have acted inappropriately.
However owing to some injuries the festival had to curb its behaviour somewhat.
Schnell (1997) states, “Though it is still characterized by drunkenness and occasional fighting, the rowdy behaviour has been subdued so as not to frighten the tourists.” (para. 40). Following similar motives, the organizers of the Kichijoji Autumn festival focus on aspects that will be attractive to tourists and shoppers visiting the area.

**Displaying the Mikoshi**

In addition to the posters and local media advertising the festival, some of the shotenkai display their mikoshi to the public as a further form of advertising. A week before the festival several of the shotenkai teams place their mikoshi at various key
points around the town. There are several large department stores in Kichijoji, and some of the department stores display the mikoshi from the shotengai area they are located in. For example, the large department store, Parco, is located on the Heiwa Dori shotengai, so that team’s mikoshi is displayed at the shopping center. The mikoshi are presented without the full accoutrements, instead they are fashioned to display some of their more interesting points. For example, it is not possible to have the full length poles attached to the mikoshi whilst it is being displayed due to space constraints. Instead shorter more ornate poles are affixed to the mikoshi, and the decorative ropes are displayed in a pleasing manner at the front of the mikoshi so that they can be easily seen. Next to the mikoshi are posters advertising the festival to any shoppers who pass by.

As the shotenkai are primarily merchant’s associations there is a strong commercial feeling to the team’s dealings. By displaying the mikoshi in the entranceway to the department store, the shotenkai can advertise the festival and therefore bring more visitors to the area.

However, only the shotenkai teams display their mikoshi in the run up to the festival; the Musashi mikoshi is permanently displayed within the grounds of the Musashino Hachimangu shrine in a special building called a mikoshisha. It is only removed from this building on the day before the festival. The Musashi team is not the only one to display their mikoshi throughout the year. However, in order to do this, there needs to be the right facilities, such as a mikoshisha, available. Of all the shotenkai teams, only the Itsukaichikaido team is able to display their mikoshi throughout the year. This is largely due to the fact that the shotenkai have relatively little space available to them. Most mikoshi festivals in Japan are run by neighbourhood associations, and
therefore there is more potential space for the storage and display of a mikoshi. As the shotenkai only represent one or two shopping streets, the storage of a mikoshi on the street is difficult. Therefore most of the Kichijoji shotenkai store their mikoshi elsewhere and only display it in the days leading up to the festival.

**Annual Musashi team party**

The two meetings mentioned at the beginning of this chapter are only for those who hold positions of responsibility within the festival, and therefore, the first event at which all the members of the Musashi team can be present is the annual party. The party was held at the Richoen Yakiniku\(^5\) restaurant in central Kichijoji on Friday, September 1\(^{st}\), 2011. This restaurant is quite an old-fashioned\(^6\), well-established venue, and has been used for the annual party for many years.

**Seating Arrangements**

Within the private party room, the members were roughly divided according to the shotenkai that they belonged to. The Old Boys and other organizers sat at the long table at the head of the room. Throughout the party and secondary speeches most of the members freely moved between tables, chatting and drinking. However some hierarchical lines were kept, for example, generally the Old Boys and Senior Executive Committee members stayed at the top table, and everyone else came to ‘visit’ them.

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\(^5\) Yakiniku is Korean barbecued meat, which you cook yourself on small barbecues in the centre of the table. It is a popular form of restaurant with families in Japan.

\(^6\) Often yakiniku restaurants in the Tokyo area are part of a national chain and come with standard barbecue tables with the fires located within the table itself. In the case of Richoen the fires were brought in small barbecue pots and placed on top of the tables. Whilst this may at first seem hazardous, especially given the drunken nature of the party, by the time the drinking took place the fires had died down a lot and no injuries ensued.
As can be seen in figure 4.4, the seating arrangement emphasized the fact that each of the Musashi members belonged to a different shotenkai team as well as belonging to the Musashi team. In fact the only table that represented solely the Musashi team was the top table of Old Boys. In this way it could be said that it is only on retirement from the festival that the members of the Musashi team truly become members. Each of the teams’ tables seemed to have a different atmosphere, which reflects what Maeda-san, the leader of the organizing Heiwa Dori team had mentioned earlier. When I was introduced to him following the Overall Briefing, he was pleased that I was researching more than just the Musashi team, as the teams had such different characters. For example, the Taisho Saire team is known for being more traditional, the Daiya Gai team is very popular with everyone, and the Heiwa Dori team was powerful as well as being fun.

Another aspect demonstrated by the seating arrangements is the number of members contributed by each shotenkai to the Musashi team. According to the accounts produced at the Musashi meeting, the Musashi team is made up of the following people:

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7 It should be noted that Maeda-san is the leader of the Heiwa Dori team so this comment may be a bit biased.
There were not this many people in attendance at the party, and in fact the number coming from each shotenkai team illustrates changes occurring within the Musashi team. Both the Sun Road and Daiya Gai team had only one table even though they both contribute the highest number of members to the Musashi team. On the other hand, the Taisho Saire team occupied two tables at the party and therefore the majority of their members came. To a certain extent this reflects the changing dynamic of the Musashi team. As demonstrated by their promotion to festival organizers in the following year, the Taisho Saire team is actively seeking to promote themselves within the festival. In part this is being achieved through contributing more members to the Musashi team. However, this does not show the whole picture. In this table the Executive Officers are grouped together with no team differentiation made. In actual fact the majority of the Executive Committee members come from the Daiya Gai and Sun Road teams, so the data in this table is not entirely clear.

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8 This team represents the very small geographical area of Harmonica-cho just north of the station. This group doesn’t have an adult mikoshi and instead organizes events for toddlers and small children to carry homemade mikoshi. The adults in this area tend to join the Daiya Gai team, which borders the Harmonica-cho area.
Party Contents and Expectations

The party started with more formal speeches, as demonstrated by the fact that Ogura-san was wearing a suit for this section of the party. Later in the evening he relaxed and the general atmosphere became more jovial. The speeches welcomed the members to the party, which represented the start to the festival for the Musashi team members.

At the end of the speeches the first ‘kampai’, meaning ‘cheers’ was given. After the kampai everyone started eating, drinking and pouring drinks for each other. Whilst this was happening the new members of the Musashi team started to do a round of the room. At each table they would introduce themselves. They would then have their glasses filled, and to vigorous chanting, consume the entire glass in one go. In the case of the men this was a chu-joki sized glass (about 1/2 pint), in the case of the women it was a smaller glass. Whilst downing the drinks everyone surrounding them would clap and chant ‘ussa ussa’\(^9\), which are the words chanted whilst carrying the mikoshi. The drinking, chanting and clapping added even more to the party atmosphere.

Once everyone had eaten their fill the second round of speeches started. This was the time in which the new members were formally introduced and welcomed to the group as a whole. As each new member was introduced they were presented with a new happi and a kifuda\(^10\) by the team leader of their shotenkai group. They were then expected to drink another vessel of alcohol to a chorus of more clapping and chanting.

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\(^9\) Mikoshi teams across Japan have a variety of words that they chant, including ‘ussa’, ‘wasshoi’ and ‘sora’. The choice of chant indicates the individual identity of the team. In this case the members of the Musashi team chant ‘ussa’.

\(^10\) A wooden nametag commonly worn around the neck by mikoshi bearers during a festival.
Aspects Relating to Hierarchy

There are several features of the party that require further analysis as they demonstrate aspects that can affect hierarchy in a group. These include the consumption of alcohol, gender within the festival, and family ties.

Alcohol Consumption. It is evident from the above outline that alcohol played a key part in the events at the party; the way that it was consumed reflects wider aspects of Japanese society. The first *kampai*\(^{11}\) is a common factor of work, club and other group parties in Japan. It represents the start of the more relaxed time in a group party. First, there are the formal speeches, and then the members can relax and get drunk. In fact it is expected of group members to become drunk at these events. Members who fail to get into the spirit of the event are noticed, and this may affect the way they are considered afterwards. In fact not drinking can be seen as detrimental to one’s career (Valentine, 1990). Alcohol has long been considered in Japan as an “indispensable tool for the establishment and maintenance of social relations” (Partanen, 2006, p.178). The ability to drink can also be seen as a factor in the choosing of both members and leaders. As Akaike (1976) commented:

> “Character” is prone to subjective judgment and therefore difficult to conceptualise, but it is commonly thought that a leader “must be able to drink and also be aware of his limits.” Drinking is an effective means of integrating oneself into a group. Those who cannot drink, or who do not make an effort to, are considered unable to cooperate with the group. At the same time, one who knows his limits in drinking and does not exceed them is judged to be of

\(^{11}\) *cheers*
responsible and disciplined character. (p. 142).

Using drinking as a means of ingratiating oneself into a group was demonstrated many times throughout the Musashi party. There were many instances in which the ‘downing’ of drinks was seen as a way to introduce oneself or welcome others to a group. A reason for this may lie in research conducted by Partanen (2006) on drinking in Japan. As demonstrated in the party structure of the Musashi gathering, the ‘kampai’ represents a change from formal to informal. After a time of eating and drinking there were more speeches, however the style of these speeches was more informal, and in fact some of the speeches and introductions included drinking. The atmosphere became one of camaraderie and social barriers began to break down. Partanen (2006) comments on this in relation to work parties. Life in Japan is a strictly adhered to set of social rules, however at work parties the participants are able to cast off the shackles of daily life and express their true feelings. As Partanen (2006) states, “There is a recurrent need to relieve tensions produced by the strictly regulated work life, to free oneself from the exigencies of pervasive social hierarchy and etiquette, to “unwrap” one’s hone (real intention) without fear of consequences.” (p.194). Drinking also allows people to separate themselves from everyday reality as they are not considered responsible for their own actions whilst drunk (Schnell, 1999). It is in this way the members of the Musashi party could relax and re-get-to-know each other before the main festival started.

**The Role of Women.** Generally the Kichijoji Autumn festival and its teams are very open to the presence of women. Many festivals in Japan do not allow women to join
mikoshi teams. Traditionally women were seen as polluting and were therefore not allowed to take part in the essentially Shinto-based festival (Ikeda, 1999). The traditional role for women during the festival was to provide food for the men and to prepare and clean the costumes (Roemer, 2007). In fact Ikeda (1999) has commented on how some women even saw leaving their hometown as an advantage as it meant that they wouldn’t have to work at the festival (p. 134). Women are freely welcomed in the Kichijoji Autumn Festival, as can be seen by the large presence of women in the various teams, and the way their membership is highlighted, for example, through the feature in the newspaper on women in the teams. However, there are some situations in which women still fulfil traditional roles within the festival.

During the party most people sat at the various team tables, sometimes moving to other team tables to chat with friends. However there was one group of people who did not join the team members at their tables. In the middle of the room was a group of 6-7 young women sitting on the floor with bottles of whiskey and other sprits (see figure 4.4). These women were serving drinks to the members sitting at the team tables. When asked about what they were doing, they commented that they were hoping to get noticed. By doing a good job, working hard and enthusiastically serving the existing members, they were hoping that their efforts would be noticed, and therefore become full members of the team. It was also commented that serving drinks was considered to be a woman’s role. This is a sentiment backed up by other research conducted on festivals. Generally, the work of a festival is divided along public/domestic gender roles. Women are generally expected to provide food, prepare costumes and clean, whilst men perform more public festival duties (Roemer, 2007; Schnell, 1999). However this was one of the
few instances witnessed where there was a clear segregation between the sexes. Only women were performing this role of serving drinks to the other members.

Family. In addition to their enthusiasm for the festival there was also another element in play – that of family. All of the young women I spoke to who were vying to join the Musashi team, were daughters of current Musashi members. Whilst this wasn’t given as a reason why they wanted to join the Musashi team, it must certainly be seen as a factor. Having grown up with the Musashi team being an integral part of their lives, it is easy to see why they would want to join this team as opposed to staying in one of the shotenkai teams, where membership and commitment are decidedly less involved.

When viewed as a group it was clear that a sizeable proportion of the Musashi team were made up of family groups. This is a theme that was repeated throughout my observations, and one that contributed to their social dynamics.

Concluding Comments on Pre-Festival Events and Hierarchy

Overall, the events in the run-up to the festival allow for the creation and demonstration of hierarchy to be seen by the assorted people connected to the festival. The festival Overall Briefing offers a chance for the festival members to not only be informed about the organization of the festival, but also to clearly see the position of everyone within the festival. The spatial layout of the meeting played a big part in this expression. This spatial hierarchy could also be seen in other events, including the Musashi party. However, in the Musashi team events, even though the room was divided according to traditional hierarchical spatial arrangements, they did not stay this way.

12 The ladies questioned stated that they liked the festival and therefore wished to join the Musashi team.
way for long. As is befitting a team whose members have known each other for a long
time, the lines were often blurred, and people moved freely between the various areas.
The only boundary that tended to be kept was the age-based seniority of the Old Boys,
which may have been more a reflection of the different generations than adhering to
strict hierarchal rules.

There were also some other interesting points raised in the events prior to the
festival. The organizational meeting held after the Overall Briefing served to
demonstrate the tensions that exist between the Musashi and shotenkai teams. Many of
the shotenkai leaders wish for there to be more separation from the Musashi team,
especially as they must also participate in some of the Musashi team festival events. The
Musashi team is aware of this tension, and is seeking to reassure its team members by
repeated insistence on their high position within the festival, as made by the Musashi
Old Boys leader, and the Kumito, Ogura-san. This continued high position within the
festival is supported by the actions of the Taisho Saire team. As can be seen by their
membership numbers in the Musashi team, and their promotion to co-festival organizers
in the next year’s festival, the Taisho Saire team is actively utilizing the Musashi team
to further their own interests within the festival. So, whilst some of the shotenkai are
seeking to distance themselves from the Musashi team, others are trying to get closer,
resulting in the tensions we can see in the festival today.

Finally, the pre-festival events demonstrate another aspect of the festival, that of
motivation, both on a team and personal level. From a team level there is a distinct
difference between the motivations behind the Musashi and shotenkai teams. The
shotenkai team is actively trying to use the festival to promote the commercial interests
of their organizations, whereas the Musashi team is still very much interested in the community building aspect. This can be seen in the way that the festival is promoted in newspapers and special events, as well as in the repeated warnings to ensure the safety and comfort of the shoppers. From the perspective of the members it can be seen that membership in the Musashi team often takes a more personal view. Many of the newer or aspiring Musashi team members have family members who are already members. Many of these, like the Ogura family hold positions of authority in the team. This ties in with the motivations of the Musashi team, in that they wish to promote social relations in the community.
Chapter 5
Hierarchies of a Festival: A Film

In this chapter, I will look at the events portrayed in the film in more details, these events occurred in the run up to the festival and include: making the mikisho (team headquarters), making the mikoshi, and putting the god into the mikoshi. The purpose of the film was to show hierarchy formation and maintenance within the Musashi team. The reasons why these particular scenes were chosen will be discussed in more detail in the chapter 7. In this chapter I will provide some background information on the events and the roles that the various ‘characters’ performed in the events. I will also provide information regarding the shotenkai team events. The film focuses on the Musashi team, and whilst many of the activities conducted by both kinds of team are very similar, there are some differences that serve to highlight hierarchical differences between them. These will be investigated in the same order as they appear in the film.

Making the Mikisho (Team headquarters tent)

The first big event in the run-up to the festival for each of the mikoshi teams is the building of the mikisho, or the tent that houses the headquarters of the team during the festival. The mikisho represents a special area to the teams, as it is a space uniquely for them. Each team has a headquarters located within the boundaries of their district. On the outside of the tent is a list of the donors to the mikoshi group, which is displayed so that everyone in the area can see who made a donation; an important part of the hierarchical process (Akaike 1976, Bestor 1989, Schnell 1999). Depending on the
festival, the amount donated may also be displayed on the outside of the mikisho, which in itself can cause contention between donators on a hierarchical level, as research conducted by Bestor (1989) demonstrates:

These banners are carefully posted on the wooden slats that cover the front of the chokai hall and are just as carefully studied by leaders and ordinary residents alike throughout the festival. People compare their own donations with those of their neighbors and spice their comments with mildly disparaging remarks about leaders who contribute too little or too much for their position. (p. 237)

In the case of the Kichijoji mikisho, the amounts contributed by each person are not displayed on the boards, just the name of the contributor to each team. This means that contributors cannot be ordered hierarchically on the basis of their financial contributions. These ‘contributor boards’ display only the donations made to the specific teams. The donations made to the festival in general are displayed in the brochures handed out at the festival. These donations are generally made by local companies, such as local transportation, banks and other prominent local companies.

Inside the mikisho tent is a small shrine set up for that particular team. On the altar are many items of religious significance including the salt and sake used for ritual purification. The rest of the space inside the mikisho is taken up with a long table and chairs. Older members of the teams, or ‘Old Boys’ spend much of the festival at these tables eating, drinking and chatting. In this way they are on hand to offer advice and catch up with old friends from the neighbourhood and festival, without actually having to carry the mikoshi. They are also visibly still taking part in the festival, and through their different coloured happi their status within the team can be acknowledged.
The Sun Road Mikisho and Mikoshi

The Sun Road shotenkai team mikisho occupies a highly visible situation in a large space in front of the Seiyu Department store on Sun Road. It consists of a large marquee, which is constructed by senior members of the Sun Road team. About twenty of the team members, including Ohata-san, the Kumito (leader) of the team, and Suda-san, the sekininsha (leader of the mikoshi bearers), were present for the event. In addition, many of the members present at the occasion were also members of the Musashi team. This goes towards demonstrating some of the motivations behind their dual membership. As stated in chapter 3, the Musashi team is made up of members who are enthusiastic contributors to the festival, and indeed one of the stipulations for gaining membership into the Musashi team is to show enthusiasm within a shotenkai team. One of the ways in which this can be done is to help out at the events preceding the festival, including setting up the mikisho.

Various other important members of the community also came to witness the setting up of the Sun Road shotenkai, including Ogura-san, the Kumito of the Musashi team, who was a former Kumito of the Sun Road team, and the head of the Kichijoji chamber of commerce. This is interesting as the shop that the chamber of commerce leader owns is actually on a different street to Sun Road, and therefore comes under another shotenkai’s headquarters\(^1\). This can be seen as an indicator of the hierarchies that exist between the various shotenkai teams. The presence of senior city officials at the Sun Road event indicates the higher status occupied the team in comparison to some

\(^1\) The shop he owned was actually located on Nakamichi Dori, which is the location of the newest shotenkai team to join the festival.
of the other shotenkai teams.

In addition to setting up the altar inside the mikisho, the Sun Road team also constructed their mikoshi at the same time. Generally the more senior, older members of the team set up the altar, while the members of the mikoshi bearers group contributed to constructing the mikoshi. Only the central part of the mikoshi is stored in one piece, the long poles used to carry the portable shrine are attached to the central section using thick ropes just prior to the festival. Throughout the rest of the year only two shorter display poles are attached to the mikoshi. In addition to the poles, other more decorative items, such as the brocade rope and various bells and tassels, need to be attached to the mikoshi.

The Sun Road shotenkai construction of their mikisho and mikoshi were quite low key and relatively few people were involved in the process. Everyone had pre-existing roles to carry out and little conferring or discussion was had on what to do. There was also no training of younger or new members taking place. This is in direct contrast to the same events conducted by the Musashi team, which will be discussed next.

Making the Musashi Mikisho

On the morning of Friday September 9th, 2011, the members of the Musashi team arrived at the mikisho, which is in a central location, outside of the Mitsubishi UFJ Bank in front of the station. It is quite an important location because the members of the Musashi team have to be able to easily access their respective shotenkai team’s headquarters and mikoshi routes, whilst still being able to take part in the Musashi affairs. The Musashi mikisho is in-between most of the shotenkai mikisho so it is easy
for Musashi members to access their original team’s headquarters.

Due to the small space, the *mikisho* itself was only large enough to hold the shrine and a few people standing, so the table and chairs were placed outside of the *mikisho* on the pavement. This afforded everyone seated at the tables a greater view of the passers-by, with many old friends and acquaintances being able to easily chat.

About 15-20 core members of the Musashi team were present for the opening of the Musashi *mikisho*. They were mainly members of the executive committee, although there were some younger people present as well. Many of the younger members present were sons and daughters of older members, who were also in attendance. There was no official requirement for them to attend the event, however their help in carrying and constructing was appreciated, and possibly helped to raise their profile for the future. As observed in the Musashi drinking party, the hard work of young members helps them to be noticed and therefore helps their progression through the ranks of the team. This is one of the ways the hierarchy is formed and demonstrated within the festival team.

The setting up of the *mikisho*, and the altar within, offered an opportunity to observe how the levels of hierarchy between the Musashi committee members were enacted, as there were few non-executive committee members, other than a few young people accompanying their relatives at the event. The participants represented several levels of gradation within the committee itself.

Representing the official top of the hierarchy was Ogura-san, the leader of the team, followed by several senior members of the committee. This group had been in the Musashi team a long time\(^2\) and therefore were knowledgeable about the way that things should be set up. This didn’t mean, however, that things happened automatically. There

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\(^2\) Ogura-san has actually been a member of the Musashi team since its modern creation in 1973
was a lot of discussion over the construction and set up of the altar, especially over the placement of certain objects. In fact, as can be seen in figure 5.1 a photo of a previous year’s altar was referred to in the arrangement of the objects on the altar.

Figure 5.1. Musashi team members consulting a photo of the previous year’s altar

Photographic images are an integral part of contemporary Japanese culture and are used in many different ways in the production of the festival. I have commented before on the use of visual material in the form of pamphlets and newspapers. In those cases the visual material was used for advertising purposes. Visual material also serves as a record of what has happened before, as a chronicle of how the festival was conducted in previous years. The use of forms of documentation is not uncommon in festivals in Japan in which records in the form of illustrated scrolls have long been an adjunct to memory. An extreme example of this is the very special mikoshi festival performed in the villages of Higashi Kanasa and Nishi Kanasa in Ibaraki prefecture, to the north of Tokyo. The festival involves a large procession of people dressed as lords and samurai, horses and mikoshi who travel by foot in a procession to the sea. Once
there the *mikoshi* is dipped into the ocean, and then the procession returns to the village.

The whole event takes about a week to complete, as all of the people, horses and *mikoshi* must walk to the sea and back. However, the most notable point about this festival is not its size\(^3\) or length, it is that it is conducted only once every 72 years. This results in the problematic situation of there being few, if any, people alive who remember the previous festival. In fact in the thousand-year history of the festival it has only been held 17 times (bunkashisan.ne.jp, n.d.). The organizers of this festival rely on a scroll, which is used to base the details of the procession on. The Musashi team in Kichijoji has the advantage of not only drawing on a photographic reference, but also living memory as well.

This photo was often referred to in addition to discussions held on how the *mikisho* was arranged in previous years. In the following conversation we can see an example of one such discussion. It begins with the arrangement of the vegetables on the shrine.

Namba: Isn’t it the other way round, Kitamura-san?

Kitamura: We can do it like this.

Namba: Ok.

[refers to the picture]

Namba: It’s different here. The paper is different. It’s different.

Kitamura: We didn’t have it.

Ogura: Everything is doubled, isn’t it? It wasn’t before.

...\(^4\)

Inagaki: Shouldn’t we keep it [the vegetables] nice for the *shinkosai* ceremony?

Namba: The priest has already prepared them for the *shinkosai* ceremony. It was different before.

Namba: Has the sake been put in? The sake we bought needs to be put in.

Yuria: It’s ok. It’s ok isn’t it?


[Namba-san arranges the donation envelopes\(^4\) on the altar]

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\(^3\) In 2003, over 500 people took part in the procession and over a million people came to watch, one of whom was this author. (bunkashisan.ne.jp, n.d.).

\(^4\) Each donation received by the Musashi team is put into a special envelope bearing the donors name and placed before the altar.
Inagaki: The writing should be shown to the god…
Namba: Inagaki-san, the dried squid should be placed … [inaudible joke]

[Younger women laugh]
Namba: So which side should the writing face?
Inagaki: What?
Namba: Like this is ok.
Inagaki: It’s good from here. You don’t have to worry about the little things.

[my brackets]

As can be seen in the dialogue, the way some things should be done is up to debate and changes from year to year. It is clear that there is no strictly set way of organising the altar; instead those with the appropriate experience try to recreate it to the best of their knowledge. The team relies on the knowledge of the more senior members to make sure it is done in the right way. However, the use of the photograph suggests that their memory is not the only source of knowledge. As an event that takes place only once a year it is difficult for everything to remembered year after year. Instead the team relies on the collective power of both memory and photographs. Whilst the memory of the senior team members is certainly a key resource in the operation of the festival, photographs are also useful. However, when memory and photograph differ, there is a certain amount of debate over how things should be done. Nevertheless, as we can see in the final comment, replication of past forms is only relative.

Whilst the conversations between senior members of the Executive Committee may take the form of a discussion, the same is not true for everyone there. When it comes to the newer members, there is a clear demonstration of hierarchy. The following example clearly shows the levels present within the executive committee. Yuria Ogura (pictured in figure 5.2) was newly promoted to the executive committee that year, and was taking part in activities, such as making the mikisho, for the first time as a senior member. I have known Yuria for many years and ordinarily she is a strong, opinionated
woman who rarely defers to others and is confident of her position socially. However, when assisting in setting up the altar, she clearly makes an effort to show deference to those around her. At one point she is asked to pour sake into the jars that will sit on the altar and be used by the priest during the altar blessing. She asks for advice several times, even though it is a relatively simple task, which probably doesn’t need that level of supervision. In comparison to how she normally acts, even when talking to people hierarchically above her, this shows a marked change. It is clear that a special effort was being made to acknowledge her new position within the executive committee. This is especially marked when we compare this to her actions in the making of the mikoshi, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

**Oharai - Sanctifying the Altar**

Once the mikisho and altar have been set up the priest has to sanctify it. For the shotenkai teams this is a relatively quick process, as the priest has to visit all of the mikisho individually on the day before the festival to perform the ceremony. For the
Musashi team, however, a more elaborate ceremony is held, which is attended by all of the senior members of the Musashi team, including the Old Boys, committee members and senior *mikoshi* bearers.

The ceremony was presided over by the priest of the Musashino Hachimangu shrine and his assistant. The priest started by checking the layout of the shrine and making last minute adjustments. He then started the ceremony, which involved chanting and cleansing the area with a branch from the sacred *sakaki* tree. At one point the senior Musashi team members presented a small branch of the *sakaki* tree to the altar with a bow and clapping of hands\(^5\). The whole ceremony took approximately 30 minutes and ended with everyone taking part in a *kampai* with sake.

**Displays of Hierarchy.** Due to the small space within the *mikisho* only the Old Boys and a few senior members such as Ogura-san could be inside. Most were wearing their *happi*, which identified their position with the team. The members of the Old Boys group were conspicuous in their white *happi*. Everyone else gathered on the street nearby where the difference in status through location and behaviour was evident. Whilst the senior members inside the tent acted humbly and with respect, the participants outside behaved in a very different manner. There was a notable gradation in dress and behaviour the further away from the altar the person was standing. Those inside the *mikisho* were dressed in their senior members *happi* and acted solemnly once the ritual had started. Those just outside the door of the *mikisho* were also dressed in their official *happi*, however, they were more jovial and chatted with each other. At the

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\(^5\) When coming before a Shinto shrine the standard practice is to bow twice, clap your hands twice and then bow once more. (Hendry, 1995)
very back stood the younger committee members and relatives of senior committee members who were wearing casual clothes or perhaps, more appropriately, the festival themed t-shirts. This group paid the least amount of attention to the ritual (possibly because they couldn’t see or hear anything) and freely chatted with each other. They did, however, assist me moving the tent walls during the ceremony so that I could be in a better position to film. I was one of many people filming and photographing the ceremony so they wanted to ensure that I was in a good location.

**Shotenkai Team Oharai**

After the *oharai* ceremony for the Musashi team altar, the priest quickly left in order to make his way to the other team’s *mikisho* to perform a smaller ceremony at their shrines. The ceremony for the *shotenkai* teams was similar, however much quicker, and therefore reflected the hierarchies between the groups. There were fewer team members present at the *shotenkai* team *oharai* and it was conducted in a more business-like way. It was more like a necessary thing that had to happen before the festival rather than an integral part of the festival experience.

The way in which the *oharai* takes place for the Musashi and *shotenkai* teams demonstrates key difference between the two kinds of teams. The Musashi team has a strong connection to the local shrine, being the main representative *mikoshi* for the shrine. Many members of the Musashi team openly profess their belief that they are actually carrying the *kami* within the *mikoshi* during the festival. On the other hand the *shotenkai* team members are generally much less inclined to do so. For them the festival is not so much about the *kami*, and more about the fun of holding a festival. In fact it
was only recently that the shotenkai teams started to perform the oharai ceremony. Prior to this the shotenkai teams carried the mikoshi without a kami in it. It is an interesting fact the shotenkai teams still do not have an especially strong affiliation with the shrine. Instead it can be seen that having a kami in the mikoshi and the priest blessing the altar is a kind of ‘authentication’ for a mikoshi team. This has been noted in other studies on mikoshi festivals. Robertson (1991) noted how local people in Kodaira city didn’t consider the mikoshi carried by newcomers to the city as real as it didn’t have a kami in it. In a similar way the Kichijoji shotenkai teams are trying to raise their legitimacy by engaging with established mikoshi matsuri rituals, despite the fact that it has little other apparent meaning to the team members. As a symbol of hierarchy however, the ritual has a strong significance and therefore, the shotenkai teams wish to partake in the oharai ritual to secure their position within the festival.

**Summary**

As can be seen from the making of the mikisho and the oharai ceremony, there is a clear difference between the Musashi team and the shotenkai teams with respect to the training given and religious rituals performed. The setting up of the Sun Road mikisho, as well as the subsequent rituals, were business like in their performance. Everyone present knew exactly what their role was, and little time was spent in discussion or training. This is in direct contrast to the Musashi team, which spent a lot more time discussing various points. Sometimes this was done to genuinely find out the best way to perform the task. At other times it was to allow for the formation and maintenance of hierarchical tiers within the executive committee, in particular by allowing newer
members, such as Yuria, a chance to demonstrate and acknowledge their lower position. Finally, a key difference between the Musashi and shotenkai teams can be observed in their expression of religious sentiments. For the shotenkai teams, the religious ceremony is a way of legitimizing their position in the festival, whereas for the Musashi team it was largely a religious ritual.

Making the Miyamikoshi

Following the oharai purification ceremony, the next big event for the Musashi team is making the mikoshi. The Musashi mikoshi, or ‘miyamikoshi’ as it is known by the team members, is stored and displayed throughout the year in the grounds of the shrine in the mikoshisha. As a consequence the Miyamikoshi must be cleaned and reconstructed in preparation for the festival. Since the mikoshi are stored with short display poles, the long poles used for carrying the mikoshi must be attached for the festival. Many of the attachments like the ootorii (the brass phoenix that sits atop the mikoshi) or the youraku (a brass decoration somewhat similar to chain mail that hangs down on the sides of the central shrine structure) are designed to move in time with the rhythm of the mikoshi. This adds to the visual sensation of the mikoshi as it is bounced on the shoulders of the bearers. For this effect to be maximised it is important that metal is shiny in order to reflect light. The youraku also makes a pleasant sound that contributes to the general background ambience of the festival. All of these effects are important for maximising the festive atmosphere of the event.

Many of the younger members of the team attended the making of the Miyamikoshi and anyone who had joined the team within the last three years was
obliged to participate. In addition to the younger members, many of the core committee members were also there. The making the mikisho had mainly involved the committee members and it had enabled me to observe the hierarchy of relationships within that group. In contrast, the making of the Miyamikoshi provided an opportunity for me to observe the hierarchical relationships between the younger team members and the committee members, and also to see how these relationships were formed through training and instruction.

From the start two main characters established themselves as being in charge. One of these people was Yuria Ogura, who as a new member of the executive committee had acted deferentially towards the other committee members at the previous event. The other was her mother, Aimi Ogura, who had been somewhat vocal at the making of the mikisho but really started to take the lead during the making of the Miyamikoshi. In addition to these two, several other committee members were on hand to give specific instruction, and the leader, Ogura-san, was on hand to provide general organisation and instruction. I will comment further on their roles later in this section.

The young, new members of the Musashi team could roughly be separated into two groups, and this somewhat followed their respective jobs in the event. There were two main areas in which work on the mikoshi was being carried out. To the left-hand side a tarp was laid on the ground and all of the mikoshi ornaments and decorations were placed here to be cleaned and polished. To the right-hand side was the Miyamikoshi itself. The younger people divided into two groups; those who were cleaning, and those who were constructing the Miyamikoshi. The cleaning was exclusively done by the female members, however, those engaged in the construction of
the *mikoshi* were a mix of both men and women. Indeed a lot of the construction was

done by the younger women who were being trained in how to assemble the *mikoshi*.

Although in some respects the Musashi team adheres to traditional roles for women
(serving drinks and cleaning the festival accoutrements), most of the time the team
makes no distinction between roles for men and women. When I questioned people
about the liberal attitude towards women within the team nobody seemed to find it
strange that women were included so extensively in the festival. It was said that women
have been fully accepted within the festival for many years, which can be seen in the
roles that older women, such as Aimi Ogura, hold within the Musashi team committee.

The first items to be attached to the *mikoshi* are the long ornamental ropes, called
*kazarihimo*, that are wound around the central shrine section. There are two gold
coloured ropes attached to the *Miyamikoshi*. Each team’s *mikoshi* has different coloured
*kazarihimo*, which help to identify the particular *mikoshi*. As mentioned in Chapter 3,
each year the Kichijoji Autumn Festival brochure contains pictures of each team’s
*mikoshi*, which shows their individual colour scheme including the colour of *happi* or
festival jackets. These pictures, showing the visual differences between the teams, and
help the audience members to differentiate between them. The two ropes are intertwined
at the top of the *mikoshi* around the golden phoenix. The ropes are then hooked around
each of the shrine’s four gables before twisting to the base, around the supporting poles,
and back up to the gables. This must be done carefully to ensure that the ropes fit
correctly as they are only just long enough to complete the task (see figure 5.3). Large
tassels are then attached to ends of the decorative ropes and bells are tied along the
length of them.
In addition to the decorative aspects, the supporting poles that the bearers use to carry the *mikoshi* have to be fixed to the central shrine section. The *mikoshi* is carried by up to 40 people at a time, all of who bounce the *mikoshi* on their shoulders. The *mikoshi* weighs an average of 1 ton, and therefore it is important that the poles are attached correctly to avoid accidents or damaging the *mikoshi*. This is the kind of knowledge that is kept and passed on by the committee members of the team. In total there are 6 poles;

![Diagram of the correct rope position on a *mikoshi*](image)

*Figure 5.3. Diagram of the correct rope position on a *mikoshi* Source: Miyamoto Unosuke Store Catalogue (1989)*

the longer poles are inserted underneath the *mikoshi*, two slightly shorter poles are placed parallel to the outside of these poles. The final two poles are then placed perpendicular and connect the four main poles together tied with a strong knot at each position where the poles meet.
Training

The method of tying the knot, as well as other tasks in the construction of the *mikoshi*, is important, and one of the reasons why the younger members are obliged to be at the event is so they can learn how to do the specialised activities. The Musashi team is very supportive of the younger (and newer) members, as the main purpose of the event, besides constructing the *mikoshi*, is to train new members in the procedure. The same was not observed during the construction of the *shotenkai mikoshi*, which were constructed by just a few of the more senior members who already knew what they were doing. For the *shotenkai* teams, there is no formal learning system, instead the teams rely on senior members to carry out jobs that require specialist knowledge. These members also tend to be those who are members of the Musashi team. Therefore, to a certain extent, the Musashi team offers training to all of the Kichijoji festivals’ teams, however this must not be considered as weighty as it first appears. The Musashi team is not exclusively the trainer for all the teams. In some cases, some people do not wish to join the Musashi team, and therefore they learn within their *shotenkai* how to do certain things. This is not, however, open to all and only the most enthusiastic members will be included in the process. The Musashi team actively tries to teach and help all its new members to be involved and to learn about the correct methods of holding the festival.

The way in which the Musashi team actively educates its members is slightly different to how training is usually conducted in Japan. Often training focuses on observation, and in actual fact many instructors of the arts do not actively teach anything. Instead the students are expected to repeatedly observe, over a long period of time, how the practitioner conducts the activity (Hendry, 1995). This is the common
form of training in the traditional arts, such as tea ceremony, martial arts or calligraphy. Practitioners are expected to ‘copy’ the movements and speech patterns of their teachers in order to train their ‘selves’ in the correct method. Through repeated observation and copying of their teachers, students can learn the correct way to do something. Cox (2013) comments in relation to the motivations behind this form of learning, “In terms of the religio-aesthetic orthodoxy, this is the ‘way’ (dō) to cultivate and transform the self. According to another discourse, it is also the way that the structure of training mirrors and perpetuates the structure of Japanese social relations.” (p.71)

We can relate the way that the Musashi team trains its new members with other research conducted on communities of practice, and learning. By teaching their younger members insider knowledge the Musashi team is creating a community, which the members can identify with. As Singleton (1998) states, “Education is treated as an identity… and community-creating process with specific communities of practitioners.” (p. 4). The possession of certain knowledge differentiates team members from non-team members, and within the Kichijoji festival, even differentiates between teams. This is because the majority of shotenkai team members are not taught how to do many things, such as constructing the mikoshi. So the Musashi team can differentiate itself by the level of knowledge that the majority of its members are allowed. Similarly, Okabe (2012) investigating the way that cosplayers in Japan learn their craft states, “Members express their identity by drawing on community-specific knowledge in a context-dependent manner. Each group rejects the other, but they are co-constructed and maintained through these kind of hostile interactions.” (p. 231). As stated in chapter 2, group identity can be defined in contrast to others. We can see that by controlling who
learns what, identity in contrast to others can be also be formed and controlled.

Displays of Hierarchy

As an event in which the training of new members is a key aim, the making of the *Miyamikoshi* provided a rich source of examples of how hierarchy was formed maintained, in both a real and perceived sense. There were several occasions when a genuine hierarchical relationship could be seen, and others when a hierarchical relationship was being displayed outwardly, but inwardly other relationships were evident. The film focused on particular people within the team to highlight these occasions. These people include the leader Ogura-san, his sister-in-law Aimi, her daughter Yuria, and Makoto, the daughter of another executive committee member.

**Ogura.** As leader of the Musashi team, Ogura-san is a natural candidate for being at the top hierarchically, but realistically others appeared to have more practical knowledge of individual areas and therefore tended to be in charge of those items. This is not to say that he didn't know how to construct the *mikoshi*. In actual fact, at certain times he gave

![Figure 5.4. Ogura-san organising the rope tying](image)
advice to the younger members, as will be discussed later in this chapter. However, within the top tier of committee members, certain people take on certain responsibilities according to their knowledge specialization. When this happened, Ogura-san acted more as a figurehead, mobilising the younger members and listening to the other committee members, making sure everyone was working. An example of this can be seen in the following discussion over ropes used to tie the poles to the mikoshi, a job for which Aimi had more knowledge.

Ogura: Make the ropes the same length.
Aimi: The yellow ones are long, or maybe short.
The yellow ones go in the middle.
Ogura: This is longer.
Aimi: The longer ones go on the outside.
Ogura: [to people standing around] Don’t just do one job.
People who are watching…
Young women: Yes
Ogura: … untie and stretch out the ropes.
Young women: Yes
Ogura: Don’t just stand there watching.
Young women: Yes

On the one hand we can see that when it comes to practical knowledge about the construction of the mikoshi, Aimi is probably the most knowledgeable and is therefore most able to organise everyone. However, there is debate about the finer details. As with the creation of the altar, the participants try to remember how things were done previously. Even the most experienced people, such as Ogura-san, have only done the festival a total of 40 times, and many have probably done the festival only 10-15 times. Therefore each time the festival is held, everyone has to remember back to how it was done before, as can be seen in the discussion on the setting up of the altar and mikoshi.

In addition, they have not been in their current position for their entire
involvement with the festival. Like all of the festival team members they had to start at the bottom with relatively little knowledge. In the case of Ogura-san, this knowledge would have been virtually nothing as his joining was the inaugural year of the team and festival’s formation. Therefore members of his generation would have had to negotiate their knowledge and responsibilities. This would result in some people having more knowledge than others. Furthermore, as people progress up the ranks of an organization they spend less time actually doing many of the activities, such as the construction of the *mikoshi*. It is important for the progression through the team hierarchy to enthusiastically participate in many activities, therefore at some point Ogura-san would have participated in everything. However, on achieving leadership of the team, these jobs would have been delegated to less senior members, and therefore knowledge would have been somewhat forgotten over time.

There is also another explanation for the delegation of certain activities. As leader of the team it is also Ogura-san’s job to ensure that younger members are available to take the place of older members. As the older members retire to the Old Boy’s committee, it is important that their knowledge is passed onto the next generation, and therefore they need to hold positions of authority as they progress through the team levels. By being in charge of certain activities, such as constructing the *mikoshi*, committee members can experience what it is to teach the younger members. This is something that will be explored further in the section featuring Yuria below.

The dialogue above serves to show Ogura-san’s main role in making the *mikoshi*, that of mobilising everyone to join in various jobs. Often he was not giving actual instruction, but instead was there to make sure that everyone was contributing in some
way. And as can be seen in the dialogue, everyone respected his position and immediately did as they were asked.

Aimi. The main instructor throughout the making of the Miyamikoshi was Aimi. She demonstrated the greatest knowledge and was able to instruct everyone on how to do just about everything, from how to lift the Miyamikoshi, to the tying of the poles and the way the decorations should be added. Within the executive committee, Aimi is in charge of the children’s mikoshi⁶ and therefore may be seen as holding a slightly lower position within the committee as many of the others have grander titles such as in charge of accounts or security. However, in terms of practical understanding, Aimi demonstrated that her knowledge was the greatest.

![Aimi Ogura](image)

Figure 5.5. Aimi Ogura

Despite the fact that Aimi’s knowledge was the greatest, she often acted deferentially in front of those who could be considered hierarchically above her. In conversations with Ogura-san she would make a joke if he made a mistake, and try to

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⁶ The Musashi team doesn’t have a children’s mikoshi and therefore her main role is to liaise with the teams that do have one.
downplay her own knowledge, as can be seen in the following conversation:

Ogura: Wrap the ropes at the same time.
Team member: From the outside?
Ogura: Is it right?
...
Aimi: It’s a little different.
Ogura: Ah, I made a mistake. I’m sorry. It’s because of my age. [laughs]
Aimi: [laughs] Sometimes we’re not sure if it’s the right way or not.

In this conversation, Ogura-san is instructing a younger team member on how to tie the decorative ropes around the mikoshi. However, he mistakenly instructs the person to tie the ropes in the style used for storing the mikoshi. When Aimi comes near he can see from the expression on her face that it is not correct, however she doesn't openly point this out. Instead she uses the term “choto chigau” (it’s a little different), which has a more deferential tone. “Choto”, which means “a little”, is often used to soften a sentence, and therefore we can see it is being used here as a demonstration of hierarchy acknowledgement between the speakers. She then goes on to excuse his mistake further by pointing out it’s easy to make a mistake.

During the construction of the mikoshi there were many occasions in which Aimi had greater knowledge and yet spoke deferentially due to her position within the team. Ogura-san holds a higher position and yet her knowledge of the process was greater. This linguistic negotiation shows the difficulties faced when knowledge and hierarchy contradict.

Yuria. Throughout the event of making the Miyamikoshi, Yuria was actively engaged in organisation and numerous times gave instruction on where to move the various
paraphernalia and how to do certain things. Yuria had a high level of knowledge due to her length of service and family connections, and therefore was able to give instructions to others. However, as a recently promoted member it was sometimes difficult for her and her instruction was given tenuously. Several times she gave orders to people such as Jun, who was also a recently promoted member and therefore occupied the same level as her. In fact, as sekininsha, Jun could arguably be seen as occupying a slightly higher level than her. On a few occasions Yuria caught herself giving instructions to Jun and then had to try and make a joke of it.

The making of the Miyamikoshi represented an opportunity for Yuria to not only demonstrate her knowledge, but also her new status within the team. There were many occasions in which she could legitimately instruct younger, new members on how to do certain things, however, she was obviously inexperienced in how to deal with the social pitfalls of hierarchy when dealing with higher-level members. Where her mother, Aimi, deftly negotiated these problems through the use of deferential terminology, Yuria struggled more. There were also occasions when she was shown to not be quite as knowledgeable as her mother, as demonstrated in the conversation below with Makoto.

**Ogura, Yuria and Makoto.** When it came to the tying of the poles together, Ogura-san was much more on hand to offer advice. This can be seen in the film in her interaction with Makoto. Makoto had only recently joined the team. However, as her father is in the executive committee, Makoto has had a long connection with the Musashi team.

On this occasion Makoto was being trained in how to tie the ropes. This involves wrapping the rope around the pole and pulling it tight with the aid of a mallet handle. It
is quite strenuous work and requires that the ropes be pulled as tight as possible, so that
the poles actually creak under the pressure. In order to do this there are several
techniques employed. Originally, Makoto was shown by Yuria how to tighten the rope
by wrapping it around the mallet handle in a ‘v’ formation. This tends to be done under
the main poles, and therefore the mallet is pulled upwards towards the body. However,
Ogura-san pointed out that it is easier to wrap the rope from the top and use your body
weight to push down on the mallet.

Ogura: You can’t stretch it if you are using the mallet underneath. You can’t
do it from underneath.
Makoto: What do you mean?
Ken: You should let her do it, I feel sad for her.
Ogura: No I’m just saying it’s easier from the top. It’s easier to stretch.
Aimi: Right, we’ll do it from the top.
Makoto: I’m sorry, I’m the one who asked how to do it.
Ogura: It’s easier to stretch from the top.
Aimi: It’s ok, it’s not something to argue about. We just need to tie it.
Ogura: It much easier to stretch from the top.
Aimi: Yes, it’s easier for women to use their weight from the top.

... After you tie it you can easily stretch it. Use your weight. Like that.
Do you understand?

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7 A translation of this phrase is discussed in more detail in Chapter 8.
Makoto: Like this?
Aimi: Yes, you’re right
...
Makoto: [to Ken] I’m always getting complained at, and now I’m stressed because I’m not mentally strong. Still I can do it.

This conversation demonstrates both the pre-existing relationship between Ogura and Makoto, and the role that Aimi plays in negotiating these tensions. The last statement that Makoto makes suggests that she and Ogura have a somewhat strained relationship. Throughout the festival Ogura would make comments towards Makoto, instructing her, but also berating her slightly. In these situations Makoto would try to act deferentially to Ogura’s position as both the leader of the team, and an elder⁸, however it was clear that the confrontations affected her. Other team members would often ask her if she was all right, although she never openly complained about Ogura-san. Aimi can be seen to be working to diffuse the situation by acquiescing to Ogura-san’s suggestions. However a little later, Ogura then criticises her way of stretching the rope. He points out that Aimi was using the mallet on the wooden poles, which might result in damage. In this scene we can see how people are trying to assert their knowledge, whilst still acknowledging their respective positions.

**Summary**

The making of the *mikoshi* serves several functions. On a basic level the aim of the event is to train the newer members of the team about how to make the *mikoshi*. All new members of the Musashi team are obliged to attend the training for the first three years that they are in the team. In contrast, the *shotenkai* teams have no such event, and therefore it is up to the individual to take the time to learn. This indicates the level of

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⁸ Both Ogura-san and Makoto’s father are of a similar age.
commitment on both the side of the team and its members. The Musashi team requires a greater commitment, and as a result offers more concrete training. The training can also be considered to contribute to the identity formation of the team. By taking part fully in the pre-festival events, the new members can feel like they are part of the team. It is more difficult for the shotenkai members to identify with the team when they have little contact with their team members, other than on the actual day of the festival.

However, the training highlights more than just the difference between the two kinds of team. It also serves to demonstrate the intricate relationships and hierarchies among the Musashi team members. As can be seen from the conversations outlined above there are a range of levels present at the event, with varying expertise. It is up to the individual to deal with these levels and make sure that boundaries are not overstepped. In the case of Aimi, this is done by acknowledging the position of those above her, whilst still being able to instruct everyone on how to do everything. Other team members, however, find it a little more difficult and struggle to find the balance.

**Enshrining the God**

On the evening before the festival a final ritual was held to enshrine the kami within the Miyamikoshi. This ritual is only for the members of the Musashi team, as the shotenkai teams had this ritual performed earlier in the day when the priest was sanctifying the mikisho altars. The event represents one of the few times when the members of the Musashi team come together to carry the Miyamikoshi alone, and therefore carries great significance for the team. It is also a unique ritual within the festival, as the shotenkai teams are not involved, and therefore, highlights some
hierarchical differences between the teams, as well as interesting relationships between the Musashi members.

**Traveling to the shrine**

By 7:45pm on the Friday (the night before the festival) the *Miyamikoshi* had been moved to the end of Sun Road just outside the station, at the crossroads of several key shopping areas. It is a central spot with easy access to the Musashi *mikisho*, which was just around the corner, and provided a route to the shrine with relatively little traffic as most of the way is pedestrianized. All the members of the Musashi team gathered wearing their *happi* and other festival clothing, such as *tabi* shoes and hair ornaments. The ceremony to insert the god into the *mikoshi* represents the first festival event at which all of the members are present in their festival outfits. The mood was jovial with the anticipation of the start of the festival helped in part by the cooler box of beers and *chuhai*\(^9\), which everyone was encouraged to join in with. As the time for setting off drew nearer the mood heightened and more alcohol was consumed.

It is important to note that alcohol was drunk at this event, even though it was discouraged during the festival. In the rules attached to the recruitment pamphlets of the *shotenkai* teams, it clearly states as point 1 of the rules of the course: alcohol cannot be consumed by people carrying the *mikoshi* or at the break times (Sun Road Recruitment Pamphlet, 2011). Whilst it may sometimes happen, the Kichijoji Autumn festival is conspicuous by the lack of alcohol consumed by the *mikoshi* bearers. Elsewhere alcohol consumption is often seen as an integral part of the *mikoshi* festival (Robertson, 1991).

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\(^9\) A cocktail made from a clear spirit called *shochu*, mixed with fruit juice. This is a popular, cheap, canned alcoholic drink.
Therefore, this represents another key difference between the Musashi team and the shotenkai teams. The Musashi team often adheres to more standard mikoshi practices, whereas the shotenkai teams tend to be more laidback when it comes to traditions. This may be a reflection of the history of the respective teams, or of the motivations behind taking part. The shotenkai see commercial gain as a priority over tradition, and therefore, wish to ensure the safety of shoppers and visitors. In order to ensure the safety of customers alcohol consumption is discouraged. The Musashi team, on the other hand, prides itself on adhering to the traditional festival conventions seen in older festivals, such as the Sanja matsuri, which also includes practices such as alcohol consumption.

At approximately 8pm the Miyamikoshi was hoisted onto the team members shoulders with an initial round of ceremonial clapping called teuchishiki\(^\text{10}\). Every time a mikoshi is lifted from the wooden horses it rests upon there is short ceremony. This involves the leader of the team clapping two wooden blocks, called hyoushigi, together in a certain rhythm whilst all of the members of the team clap to the same rhythm. This is repeated whenever the mikoshi is put down too. The mikoshi was then carried down the length of Sun Road to the Sun Road team headquarters. Whilst being carried, the mikoshi was vigorously bounced on the shoulders of the bearers to loud chanting: “ussa, ussa, ussa”. The bearers were very excited and loud, and there was a great festive atmosphere as the mikoshi passed down the main road.

About half way along Sun Road Yuria’s baby daughter, who was only about 6 months old, was placed on top of the Miyamikoshi. She was held on the top of the main poles by the bearers under her and bounced with the mikoshi. It is actually not unusual

\(^{10}\) This rhythmic group clapping is a common feature of many meetings in Japan, whether or not it's a festival. Often work parties will end with group clapping to signify the end of the event, and by extension the obligation of the person to be there.
for children to ride on top of the mikoshi as it is moving, however this is usually done when they are little older and therefore are able to stand by themselves and not fall as the mikoshi bounces. This can be quite dangerous as the mikoshi moves quite wildly at times and therefore many mikoshi festivals have banned this practice\(^\text{11}\). In this case, Yuria and her family are key members of the Musashi team and it is expected that her family will continue to carry mikoshi for many generations.

I noticed several occasions in which Yuria and some members of her family were given special leniency or maybe a presumption that they knew more and therefore were allowed to do more. This is an example of the hierarchical differences between certain festival members. Throughout the Kichijoji Autumn festival, there were several occasions when children rode on the mikoshi. However, the children involved were all the offspring of senior members of the Musashi team, despite the fact that at the time, the mikoshi was being carried by members of the shotenkai teams. Whilst this may lead to the conclusion that only senior members children are allowed to ride the mikoshi, it may be more to do with the fact that those involved in the Musashi team tend to have generational connections, whereas those in the shotenkai teams are more likely to be one-off members. This relates to the idea that Japanese society is made up of groups and that inclusion in a group is of paramount importance (Nakane, 1970). In this case, the Musashi team members are committed members of the group. On the other hand, the shotenkai teams are made up of many people with much looser connections, and some may not be considered part of the group at all\(^\text{12}\), due to their loose connection and

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\(^{11}\) In 2015 two yakuza members were arrested for riding on the mikoshi at the Sanja festival wearing only a loincloth to show off their numerous body tattoos. Standing on the mikoshi has been banned since 2007 (newsonjapan.com)

\(^{12}\) This is only in terms of the festival. The individuals in question may well be part of another group in Japanese society, and in actual fact it may be the connection and commitment to these other groups, such
commitment. Therefore they are less likely to be given privileges such as allowing their children to ride the mikoshi.

Once the mikoshi reached the Sun Road mikisho (headquarters), they put the mikoshi down with another round of clapping. They then took a break and had some refreshments. Following the break the mikoshi was wheeled to the shrine in preparation for the final ritual before the festival.

The Ritual

The ceremony itself is a sacred event and everyone was sombre, as befitting the event. We were all made to stand a good distance away from the mikoshi. Then out of the darkness of the shrine the priest and his assistant arrived. The ceremony involves taking a piece of paper with the kami’s name written on it, called a taima, and inserting it into the mikoshi. Whilst this is taking place, the priest and his assistant chant sacred prayers. The whole event is quite short. Afterwards the priest shares the sake that was brought by the Kumito, Ogura-san. Everyone present is given a small plastic cup with a sip’s worth of sake in it, which everyone drinks together. Myself and my translator, who was also filming the event from a different angle, were included in the drinking of sake. This marks the end of the ceremony. This is the last event before the festival starts the following morning and the team members quickly dispersed and went home. The Miyamikoshi was left within the grounds of the shrine to wait for the opening event of the festival.
Filming the Ritual

For the last seven years the ceremony has been held in complete darkness, a change from previously, when there was lighting. Seven years ago a new priest joined the Musashino Hachimangu Shrine. The new priest is strictly conventional and prefers to hold on to the traditional way that ceremonies are conducted. This was made clear when I first met the priest to ask permission to film within the shrine grounds. The priest acquiesced, however there were some stipulations made. The main one being that the ceremony be conducted in pitch dark. He also requested that extra lighting or the night-vision function on the camera not be used. The priest was adamant that the ceremony was sacred and that no one should witness the secret rituals. From conversations with the members of the Musashi team it became clear that this attitude was not unusual for him.

The priest’s traditional interpretation on the yearly calendar of shrine events was somewhat a matter of contention with members of his parish. Despite the fact that he had been the shrine priest for the last seven years he was still considered an outsider and was referred to as the ‘new guy’. Throughout the shrine-based events connected with the festival, the priest was treated very much differently to everyone else, whether they were involved with the festival or not. Whilst there was a clear divide between mikoshi bearers and other people (such as audience members), it was obvious many of the audience members were well known to the participants and there was a certain amount of communication and joking between them. However the priest was rarely spoken to and seemed to occupy a space apart from everyone else. When the priest was out of his residential building he was mainly conducting ceremonies, and outside of these events
no one made conversation with him or the shrine maidens.\textsuperscript{13}

Ogura-San made a specific point in the Musashi Executive Committee meeting that the priest should not be allowed to carry the \textit{Miyamikoshi}. This comment is interesting as it is almost unheard of for a priest to carry a \textit{mikoshi} in a festival in Japan. In fact there is a clear divide between the rituals performed by the priests and the events in which the lay people of the parish take part. Even though many of the rituals and events are performed for the same festival or rite, there is always a division of labour. Often the laypeople will take part in a ritual presided over by the priest, such as the purification rituals held at the start of a \textit{mikoshi} festival, however, these still contain aspects that laypeople are not allowed to be included in. This is, in part, explained by the fact that Shinto and the community was forcibly separated following the Second World War. Bestor (1989) talks of the lack of integration between the priest and the local community in the area of his research. He states, in reference to the local priest, Mr. Kuroda,

Mr. Kuroda and his family are little involved in the day-to-day social life of Miyamoto-cho, perhaps because their ritual position sets them apart from the other residents, perhaps because the post-war segregation of religion from community institutions prevents their taking more active roles, or perhaps simply because of personal preference. (Bestor, 1989, p. 230).

It is surprising then that Ogura-san chose to make a specific comment separating the priest and the festival. This is especially interesting as the Musashi team has very strong ties to the shrine, both due to the history of the festival, and the fact that the Musashi

\textsuperscript{13} Shrine maidens traditionally act as assistants in the shrine, “selling amulets, cleaning the grounds and performing ritual dances for the deities” (Covell, 2009, p.159)
team represents the shrine as opposed to a residential or commercial district. When taken in conjunction with the fact that only the Musashi team members are allowed to carry the Miyamikoshi within the shrine grounds, we can see that the team is using this to bolster their position. The Musashi team’s connection to the shrine is being used to accentuate their difference from the shotenkai teams, however, this doesn’t extend to include the priest of the shrine. Therefore, we can see that whilst the team is using the religious connection to show their position within the festival, it doesn’t extend all the way. Instead the team is very much about the community, and as the priest is seen as being separate from the community, he is not included in the community team. Despite the general exclusion of priests from mikoshi matsuri across Japan, a specific point was made by the Musashi team when they stated the priest wasn’t allowed to carry the Miyamikoshi. This indicates that there is more going on than merely following convention.

Despite the priest’s initial reticence in regard to my filming the ritual, when we arrived at the shrine grounds, some of the lamps lighting the main path to the shrine were left on. There wasn’t a lot of light but there was enough to be able to make out where everyone was in relation to the Miyamikoshi and to get a vague impression of what was taking place. People were surprised at this and the general impression was that the concession was made to allow me to be able to film. I will expand upon this point in the next chapter, as there are other interactions with the priest, which demonstrate how his attitude towards the camera changed over the course of the festival.
Summary

The events outlined in this chapter were primarily chosen to be included in the film as they offered clear examples of the hierarchies that are being demonstrated in the Kichijoji Autumn festival. The events can be roughly divided according to the hierarchical levels of the Musashi team that are involved and therefore offer an opportunity to see the interactions that occur within and between these various levels. This isn’t to say that they are not important to the festival, but of all of the events throughout the festival, these offered the best opportunities in terms of the film that I was making. I will provide a more detailed exploration of the choices in chapter 7.

The first event, the making of the mikisho, centrally involves the Executive Committee, and therefore demonstrates the hierarchies within this tier. This is best demonstrated by difference between the way senior and lower members approach different tasks. The senior members discuss together the correct way of setting up the tent and altar, in a negotiation of the correct way. Whereas, the new committee members, despite having been in the team for a long time, still defer to the senior members on seemingly simple matters, such as how to pour sake into a jar.

The second event, the making of the mikoshi serves to demonstrate the hierarchical differences between the executive committee members and the younger, newer members of the Musashi team. As this is a training event it is clear that the new members are there to learn from their seniors. However, the event does more than just reveal status difference between the committee members and the ordinary members of the team. We can see from the examples given, that the interactions reflect, in turn, the developing relationships within the executive committee, reflecting its changing
composition. New members are being recruited each year to the committee and the performance of new members reveals the subtle and dynamic nature of the hierarchy through the process of their integration.

The place of ritual in the overall festival, shows the difference between the Musashi and shotenkai teams. Whilst the rituals are of particular importance to the Musashi team, the same cannot be said of the shotenkai teams. The shotenkai teams proudly state that they engage in the same rituals, however, they are not performed in the same way. Both the oharai, and the enshrining of the god are performed together, and with very little ceremony. In addition, the fact that so few team members attend these events demonstrates the different motivations behind the teams. As stated in previous chapters, the shotenkai teams are mainly interested in the entertainment value of the festival, both for the team members and audience members, whereas the Musashi team has deeper considerations. For the Musashi team there is a religious connection, which must be acknowledged, that plays a key part in the hierarchies of the festival.
Chapter 6
Kichijoji Autumn Festival

The Kichijoji Autumn Festival is essentially held over two days on the third weekend of September. As with many festivals there are special events to mark the opening of the festival. The events on the Saturday and the Sunday differ quite significantly and reflect the different statuses of the mikoshi teams involved in the festival; Saturday focuses primarily on the Musashi team, whereas Sunday focuses on the shotenkai teams.

In addition to the mikoshi parading around the town, there are several other activities available. Various stalls are set up within the grounds of the shrine. These stalls include many kinds of snacks, for example takoyaki\(^1\), fried noodles and chocolate-covered bananas. As well as the food stalls, there are a number of entertainment stalls aimed at attracting children. Traditional activities, such as scooping goldfish\(^2\), are set up alongside stalls selling plastic masks, guns and other toys. The stalls are very much the same as ones that are seen at almost every festival across the country. This is largely because they are the same – the stall owners are independent from the city in which they gather. Instead the stall owners travel to each of the festivals and set up as required. Some festivals, such as the Torigoe festival in Tokyo, are famous for having a lot of stalls. About 200 stalls line the streets surrounding the Torigoe festival, and the visitors go there as much for the stalls as they do to witness the festival. The number of stalls within the grounds of the Musashino Hachimangu shrine is moderate as the space is limited and they are confined to the grounds of the shrine. The stalls provide extra

\(^1\) A fried ball of dough stuffed with a piece of octopus.
\(^2\) This is a common game at festivals and fireworks displays. It involves using a small net to scoop goldfish from a large bath, the challenge being that the net easily tears, and therefore, the chance of actually getting a goldfish is relatively slim.
entertainment for audience members visiting the festival. A large number of families gather at the shrine to take part in the delights on offer, and to pray at the shrine. There are also many lucky talismans on sale at the shrine. The general atmosphere is festive throughout the days of the festival, with many excited children running around.

In addition to the stalls that line the temple grounds, there are also several musical groups that perform around the town. Following similar routes to the mikoshi is another kind of float – the Musashi Bayashi. The float and its particular music are considered an intangible national treasure and provide musical entertainment as it navigates its way around Kichijoji. Musicians and people wearing masks play and dance on the float. In addition to this, there is another form of musical entertainment – the taiko drummers.

For most of the time the taiko drummers are set up in front of the north exit of the station, although they do sometimes make their way to different spots around the city. However, due to the nature of the large drums, they are not able to move easily and therefore tend to only go to a few places.

All of the above events provide extra entertainment, in addition to the festival itself, for the audience members as well as increasing the cheerful atmosphere of the mikoshi festival. In this chapter I will look specifically at the mikoshi-related events that take place during the festival in chronological order, highlighting events that display, create or otherwise highlight hierarchy both within and between the mikoshi teams.

Kichijoji Autumn Festival – Saturday 10th September, 2011

Opening Ceremony

On the Saturday morning only the Miyamikoshi was at the shrine for the opening ceremony, the other mikoshi were not present at this event, however, they were paraded

3 The float’s music is based on Edo style festival music. This group was formed in 1951 and was classified as an intangible national treasure by the city of Musashino in 1971 (musasi.net)
around the town later in the day. The members of the Musashi team, as well as members of the shotenkai teams that were taking part in the festival that day, gathered at the Musashino Hachimangu shrine in the morning at around 9:30am.

The first event was the opening ceremony, which took place in the shrine itself. This was only open to the most senior members of the festival who were seated inside of the Musashino Hachimangu Shrine. These senior members included the heads of the shotenkai teams, and the Old Boys and senior committee members of the Musashi team. At the base of the stairs to the shrine, stood the leader of the Miyamikoshi bearers, in addition to other senior bearers, whose role throughout the festival was to ensure the smooth passage of the mikoshi. These members were all distinguishable by a distinctive sash worn over their happi. Lower members of the Musashi team stood further back around the Miyamikoshi. It can be seen that the spatial arrangement of the Musashi team members reflected both their hierarchical position within the team, and their respective roles. Those within the shrine were the most senior, but most had little to do with the carrying or organisation of the festival. Those who were lowest on the hierarchical scale stood furthest from the shrine, they were however, to do the most work as they would do a lot of the carrying throughout the day.

The priest of the shrine conducted a special ceremony, which involved blessing the festival and its participants. At the end of the ceremony all of the members drank a small cup of sake, a common part of ritual purification in Japan (Schnell, 1999; Bestor, 1989). This included both the senior members inside the shrine, and the mikoshi carriers standing outside. Following the ceremony, photos were taken with all of the senior members standing in front of the shrine. Whilst the photos were being taken, the lower members of the Musashi team assumed their carrying positions around Miyamikoshi in preparation the start. Hierarchical levels were clearly being displayed during the opening ceremony, not only in spatial relations, but also in the way that the ceremony
was recorded. Official, posed photos focused mainly on the senior members of the festival, whereas lower level members took photos of each other with their own cameras and cell phones.

**Procession Structure**

In addition to the *Miyamikoshi*, there are also other sacred objects and performers who all take part in the opening ceremony. These were organised spatially as shown in figure 6.1.

![Procession order on day 1 of the festival](image)

**Musashino Hachimangu Shrine**

1. Kiyari (firefighters chanting group)
2. Tekomai (dance group)
3. Musashino Bayashi (musical cart)
4. *Miyamikoshi*

Nearest to the Musashino Hachimangu Shrine is the *Miyamikoshi* itself. This *mikoshi* represents the shrine and therefore special ceremonies are held in relation to this *mikoshi* – more so than the other *mikoshi*. Next in line is the Musashino Bayashi, which provides musical accompaniment to the *mikoshi* as they are paraded around the town. Next is a group of dancers dressed in traditional costume, the Tekomai, and nearest to
the exit are a group of men who chant called the Kiyari. This final group represents the traditional fire fighting groups. They are signified by the matoi⁴, a stick covered with white paper streamers, which was twirled to draw attention to a nearby fire during the Edo period. In the context of this festival they walk in front of the Miyamikoshi and chant whilst twirling the matoi. Both the musicians (bayashi) and the Kiyari group are common features of festivals throughout Tokyo (Sonoda, 1975). Another party, which is not listed on the above diagram, is the Goshinba. The Goshinba is a horse ridden by the shrine priest, which is supposed to have been sent by the kami. The priest riding the horse leads the whole procession until the first rest stop at Sun Road.

Before the start of the opening ceremony, members of the Musashi team and the shotenkai teams mingle with the aforementioned performing groups and various food stalls that line the path to the shrine. What is notable, at first glance, is the different happi (festival jackets) worn by all of the members. On the Saturday, the Miyamikoshi is carried by the shotenkai teams as it crosses their particular area in town. When it crosses into another area, the bearers are changed however, in reality this doesn’t happen at the borders, as this would be impractical. Instead the Miyamikoshi is carried to the next team’s headquarters or rest spot. There it is lowered onto the supporting ‘horses’ whilst the bearers have a break and a drink. It is then lifted by the new team and carried to the next area. This is a symbolic process that signifies the fact the Miyamikoshi represents the Musashino Hachimangu shrine, which in turn represents the whole of Kichijoji. It can be seen that the Miyamikoshi acts as a way to bring the whole community of Kichijoji together, through the common act of all carrying the Miyamikoshi.

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⁴ These days the matoi is a common sight at mikoshi festivals, a throwback to the long history between mikoshi festivals and firefighters
The Start of the Festival

By 11am the festival has started and the procession of the above items takes place following the assigned route to the first rest stop on Sun Road. The first to leave is the Goshinba ridden by the priest, followed by the other performers. The pace is slow to allow for the Kiyari members and dancers to stop and perform at various points. Of particular note is when all the participants pass under the torii. The torii is the large gate, which is located at the entrance to all Shinto shrine grounds. They are often wood painted red, however the one at Musashino Hachimangu shrine is made of concrete. It was contributed by the members of the Musashi team in 2001, and represents something they are very proud of. It is mentioned in their group pamphlet, and many members refer to it in passing as something that they have contributed to the shrine. Most of the groups acknowledged leaving the grounds of the shrine in some way, the most notable being the Miyamikoshi itself. When the mikoshi passed under the torii the bearers doubled their chants and enthusiasm and made quite a spectacle for the watching public. The mikoshi was raised up high onto the bearers outstretched arms and bounced enthusiastically under the torii.

At any one time 40 or so people can carry the mikoshi, so while a mikoshi is being carried, the other team members follow behind making a procession. At various points, when someone gets tired, they will duck out from under the mikoshi and someone else will move in to take their place. For the start of the festival, whilst the Miyamikoshi was still on the shrine grounds, only members of the Musashi team were allowed to carry the mikoshi. It should be noted that those members of the Musashi team who carried the mikoshi as it was leaving the shrine were the most enthusiastic and vocal members of the Musashi team. Hierarchically, it can be seen that there are certain moments when

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5 For example, the dancers would pause and do an extra dance, or the Kiyari paused and twirled the matoi under the torii
carrying, that are viewed as being more important than others. As one member of the Musashi team commented, the front of the mikoshi is the best place to stand as you can be easily seen. It isn’t surprising that he was at the front of the Miyamikoshi, chanting with arms raised, as it passed under the torii. Enthusiasm carrying the mikoshi is seen as key feature of the festival. As commented on by a senior member of the Musashi Executive Committee,

At the top is a rice bunch. It means that we celebrate the autumn festival, we celebrate the harvest. We are glad to have a good harvest. Japan is a rice country, so we celebrate the harvest. We put rice in the phoenix’s mouth to wish for a good harvest next year. The mikoshi looks so beautiful because when everyone carries it the wings of the phoenix move. One more thing is the tassels. The tassels move and hit the people’s shoulders. It looks so beautiful. When everyone carries enthusiastically all the tassels move together. Right, left, right. We can see from afar that the people carry the mikoshi well by watching the movement of the tassels. We can see that it’s great.

As enthusiasm is so readily apparent to all those watching it is important for people who wish to advance within the mikoshi teams to carry as enthusiastically as possible.

At this stage members of the shotenkai teams who were not also dual members of the Musashi team were expected to be present but were not required to do any carrying. Instead they followed behind the mikoshi and made the procession even longer. This continued until the first break, which was at the Sun Road headquarters at 11:20am having travelled a distance of less than 250 meters. The distance may appear short, but as this was the first leg of the festival the bearers made more of a spectacle of certain points. These include the aforementioned passing under the torii, and making a turn at each of the street junctions. This is quite a complex move in most mikoshi festivals, as the mikoshi is quite unwieldy and no one person has complete control over the direction
it takes. Some festivals even make it a feature of it in their parade. A notable example of this is the festival at Gion, which while not involving *mikoshi*, involves equally unwieldy festival vehicles. There are several points during the festival in which turns must be made, and the crowds gathered at these junctions are even greater than on the rest of the course. Seats can actually be purchased at these points to watch the spectacle of the turn.

**Continuation of the Festival**

The break lasted about 5 minutes, during which refreshments were served and people chatted with each other. At this stage the *Miyamikoshi* was going to be passed to the members of the Sun Road team who would carry it on a route down Sun Road and across to the neighbouring area of the Inari-machi team. Because the *Miyamikoshi*

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*Figure 6.2. Route of the Miyamikoshi of the first day of the festival*

*Source: 39th Kichijoji Autumn Festival Course Travel Documents*
would spend so little time actually passing through the Inari-machi team’s streets, the Sun Road team and Inari-machi team shared the carrying of the *Miyamikoshi* for the next few legs. This continued as the *Miyamikoshi* made its way through the streets of Kichijoji on the route outlined in figure 6.2.

The senior, active members of the Musashi team supervised the whole process and ensured that schedules were kept to, and that the members carried the *Miyamikoshi* correctly. At this stage the *Miyamikoshi* was being carried by members of the *shotenkai* teams who were not necessarily also members of the Musashi team. These members could not be wholly vouched for with regard to carrying experience and etiquette, as many may have been new to the festival. There is no formal training for the carrying of a *mikoshi*, instead new bearers are required to pick it up as they go along. One of the advantages of requiring so many people to carry such a large object is that if someone makes a mistake it is unlikely to make much of a difference, as there are so many other people around. Also due to the packed nature of the carrying situation, it is difficult to do anything other than follow what everyone else is doing. From personal experience of

![Carrying the mikoshi](image)

Figure 6.3. Carrying the *mikoshi*
carrying the *mikoshi*, it is easier to get into the same rhythm as everyone else, and in actual fact almost impossible to do anything different.

As a *mikoshi* is carried around and within the borders of a neighbourhood it often has to be carried down busy roads. The bearers are not really able to move quickly or get out of the way of traffic, so instead the traffic must wait for them. They do adhere to traffic signals, and often you will see a *mikoshi* being bounced on the shoulders of a team waiting at a pedestrian crossing for the lights to change. In addition to the forty or so people carrying the *mikoshi* at any one time, there are also another one to two hundred team members milling around the *mikoshi*. All of these people need to be shepherded along the road in-between the traffic. On a large road such as Itsukaichi-kaido the traffic can go around the *mikoshi*, which takes up about as wide a space as a car. In areas with smaller roads the traffic must wait behind the *mikoshi*. This has lead to conflict between city managers and the festival organisers. It is also one of the reasons for *mikoshi* festival being held on weekends so that business traffic is less affected.

![Location of the guide ropes](image)

*Figure 6.4 Location of the guide ropes*

*Source: 39th Kichijoji Autumn Festival Course Travel Documents*
The shepherding of the *mikoshi* is done by certain team members, who are given the task of holding long ropes to coral the *mikoshi* bearers (see figure 6.4). These members usually have a slightly higher standing within the team and often don’t actively carry so much anymore. They wear a sash to indicate their status and are expected to be obeyed, especially when it comes to traffic safety. This is another way in which dress indicates the hierarchical status of the team members. Whilst everyone who is carrying the *mikoshi* makes up a lower group hierarchically within the team, the presence of a sash indicates slightly higher status within this group. It is also readily understandable to outside audience members as well, who are used to officials wearing either a sash or an armband to indicate their status within an event.

Throughout the carrying of the *Miyamikoshi*, the senior members of the Musashi team bearers were on hand to control the unwieldy shrine, which sometimes veered out of control through the narrow streets of Kichijoji. This involved pushing the long poles in the right direction when the *mikoshi* veered too much, or re-starting the rhythm of the bearers with the use of a whistle.

As can be seen in figure 6.2, there is a time when the *Miyamikoshi* is not being used. At 1:30pm the *Miyamikoshi* arrived at the break point of the Jounan *mikisho* outside of the Marui department store. It was then not due to be carried again until 4:30pm. This was due to the fact the *shotenkai mikoshi* parade was due to take place at 3pm. During this time the Musashi team moved the *mikoshi* on a wheeled cart to the next location outside of the Musashi team headquarters. For the next few hours the Musashi team dispersed to join their own teams.

**The Saturday Parade**

While the carrying of the *Miyamikoshi* was on a break the Musashi team bearers could concentrate on their own *shotenkai* team’s *mikoshi*. Due to a limited number of
team members, most of the shotenkai choose to stop carrying their own mikoshi whilst the Miyamikoshi is in their area, and then resume again once the Miyamikoshi has been passed to another team. However, all of the teams stop carrying the Miyamikoshi during the parade, due to their own team’s commitments. This demonstrates the role of the festival in confirming community identity. Each area has their own mikoshi and identity. In addition, there is the overarching identity of Kichijoji and the mikoshi that represents the whole community.

Most of the shotenkai teams started carrying their mikoshi on individual routes from about lunchtime. This meant that they could carry their mikoshi from their headquarters to a street (Heiwa Dori) on the north side of the station in time for the main parade at 3pm. Due to the fact that the festival on Saturday concentrated on the Miyamikoshi, the parade involved less shotenkai teams on the Saturday than the Sunday. It was not, however, that noticeable to passing crowds and the atmosphere was almost the same as the parade on Sunday. There were 6 mikoshi teams which took part in the parade on Saturday; Daiya Gai, Jounan, Heiwa Dori, Inari-machi, Sun Road and Taisho Saire. It should be noted that this line-up reflects not only the fact that these were the team areas that the Miyamikoshi had passed through earlier, but also that most of these teams occupied a higher position within the hierarchy of the festival. All of the four festival organising shotenkai teams were present for the parade, in addition to the Taisho Saire team, which can be seen as vying for a higher position within the festival. It can be said that enthusiasm, not only at an individual level, but also at a team level, affects hierarchical position.

The teams took a while to get into position, but by 3pm all of the teams were in their assigned position on the street in front of the station. This street is Heiwa Dori, however this doesn’t have anything to do with the fact that Heiwa Dori was organising the festival – the parade is always held on this street due to space and location. As the
mikoshi were getting into position a truck with a portable stage on the back was arranged at the end of the street in front of the station. The heads of the teams, the priest and other city officials were gathered on this stage. The parade started with opening announcements by the officials.

The main event of the parade is when all of the mikoshi move to a position in front of the stage. The area directly in front of the stage is lined with each team’s lanterns. The idea is that each mikoshi travels down the ‘tunnel’ of lanterns and is presented to the team leader standing on the stage. This is a grand spectacle, which involves a lot of noise; chanting, cheering and drums, as well as a great photographic spectacle. I will discuss the parade in greater detail in the next section on the Sunday of the festival, as this was the greater event.

The Festival Continues

Following the parade, each of the shotenkai mikoshi continue on their own routes around the city. Each of the shotenkai’s routes tend to focus more on their area, however due to the size of each teams area, it is not possible to stick just to their own area. Much research done on mikoshi festivals emphasise the fact that mikoshi travel around the border of their neighbourhoods (Bestor, 1989; Ashkenazi, 1988; Schnell 1997). Generally this research is conducted on chonatkai teams, which represent larger housing districts, as opposed to shotenkai teams, which represent shopping areas. By their nature shotenkai are very much smaller than residential areas, often representing just one street. It would be very constricting and somewhat pointless for a mikoshi to only travel in the shopping district it represented. Instead, the festival at Kichijoji involves the mikoshi travelling around many neighbouring shopping districts. At each area the mikoshi stops and receives refreshment from the host shotenkai. This can be
seen as representative of the cooperation required in the running of a city by the various city groups, and as a sign of good faith between the groups.

The events on the Saturday finished relatively early for the Musashi team. The Miyamikoshi was carried from 4:30pm, after the main parade, until about 5:15pm where it ended up outside the Tokyu department store. There it was stored overnight to be used the following day. The shotenkai teams continued until later, with the latest team finishing at 8pm. Following the end of the day’s carrying many of the shotenkai teams held a drinking party for those who had carried the mikoshi that day. With the shotenkai teams often the people who carry on one day are not necessarily those who carry on the next. Carrying the mikoshi requires a whole day’s commitment and many people cannot sacrifice both days for the festival. Therefore, a party is held at the end of both festival days to thank those present for their hard work.

Kichijoji Autumn Festival – Sunday 11th September, 2011

In contrast to Saturday, the Sunday is more focused on the shotenkai teams; therefore the opening ceremony involved only these teams and their mikoshi, not the Miyamikoshi. Of the ten shotenkai teams, seven took part in the opening ceremony at the Musashino Hachimangu shrine. The Miyamikoshi did not take part in this event, and in fact was not due to be carried until the afternoon. The practical reason for this is that the members of the Musashi team are also members of the shotenkai team. For them to carry the Miyamikoshi they would have had to miss out on carrying their own team’s mikoshi. In addition, there are not enough Musashi team members to carry the Miyamikoshi for long, and therefore they rely on the shotenkai teams to carry it. The other two shotenkai teams started later in the day, in time for the big parade in the

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6 Itsukaichi-kaido team was due to take part, however because of the recent death of the team leader the team did not take part in the festival that year.
afternoon. For one of the teams, Nakamichi-dori, it was because the team was new that year and kept largely to their own area, and the other team had a children’s *mikoshi* to run in the morning and therefore carried the adult’s *mikoshi* following the afternoon parade.

**Opening Ceremony**

The seven *shotenkai mikoshi* lined up along the path to the shrine. They were all within the grounds and therefore symbolically behind the *torii* gate. The opening ceremony was shorter than the day before. It was also different from the previous day, in that it featured the leaders of the *shotenkai* teams. Both the team and *mikoshi* bearer leaders lined up on the steps leading to the shrine. Whilst they bowed where appropriate at the end of the ceremony, there was no sake, as was seen the day before. This may have been due to the practicality of providing sake for all of the team members in the crowded confines of the shrine, or could have been due to the less religious nature of the *shotenkai* teams.

**The Start of the Festival**

The path to the shrine is relatively small and at the time of the festival it was lined with food stalls, as well as the seven *mikoshi* and all of the team’s bearers. This made the area very crowded and noisy, which all added to the festive atmosphere. As noted before, there were relatively few tourists, however, there was a large group of people near the entrance to the shrine grounds. Few, if any, audience members could come within the grounds of the shrine as it was so packed with festival participants, therefore most chose to stand just outside of the shrine grounds. Most of the people watching seemed to know members of the teams and were chatting freely. There were also some photography enthusiasts picking good spots by the entrance to the grounds from which
to watch the procession go by, but other than these people, there were relatively few other audience members. This would intimate that there are two kinds of audience members; insider and outsider. The opening ceremony was very much an event for the team members and the insider audience who knew that it was going to take place. The advertising brochure makes no mention of the opening ceremony, merely stating the *mikoshi* leave from the Musashino Hachimangu shrine at 11am. Events later in the day, such as the main parade, are advertised and therefore can be seen as attracting all levels of audience members.

By 11am all of the teams were making their way on routes around the city. Most of the teams headed to Sun Road and the Sun Road team *mikisho* (team headquarters) for their first break. This in itself made quite a spectacle as the six *mikoshi* made their way down the street surrounded by their team members in a long procession. Following their break at the Sun Road *mikisho* the teams took separate routes, which centred on their own areas, but took in many other *shotenkai* streets as well.

The *Miyamikoshi* was not carried until 1pm when it was dealt with mainly by the Taisho Saire team. This team carried the *Miyamikoshi* with the help of the Naka-michi Dori team for most of the afternoon around their streets. On the Saturday the route of the *Miyamikoshi* had mainly centred on the central and southern areas of the town, whereas on the Sunday the route concentrated on the western parts. At the same time the Taisho Saire team carried their own *mikoshi* down a similar route to the *Miyamikoshi*. This is one example of how the Taisho Saire team made visible efforts to raise their standing. It may be suggested that by visibly pairing their *mikoshi* with the *Miyamikoshi* they were trying to raise their profile within the festival. In addition, Taisho Saire is one of the only teams with enough members to carry two *mikoshi* at the same time, and therefore they may be showing their force within the festival.

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7 One of the team’s routes took them in the opposite direction from the entrance of the shrine.
The Sunday Parade

The parade on Sunday was by far the greater event and involved many more mikoshi. A total of nine mikoshi took part in the event as well as the two music groups. They started getting ready for this at 2pm when the street was closed to buses and other traffic. Barriers were put into position along the road for the audience members to stand behind, and the truck with the portable stage was put into position. In addition to this, several chairs were set up perpendicular to the stage in front of the area where the mikoshi pass for presentation. These chairs were for the more senior members of the festival as well as local and national dignitaries.

Figure 6.5. Position of mikoshi teams during parade
Source: 39th Kichijoji Autumn Festival Course Travel Documents

The position of the teams can be seen in figure 6.5 with the relative layout of the stage and VIP seating. The station is positioned in the bottom right corner. The Musashi Bayashi musicians were located on the left-hand side at the end of the street, and the taiko drummers were located next to the VIP seating in front of the station. The drummers played almost continuously from 2pm until the end of the procession. This not only alerted audience members to the up-coming event, but provided extra entertainment whilst the mikoshi were getting into position. It takes about an hour and
half for all of the *mikoshi* to assemble (a fact that somewhat perturbs the local bus company) and many audience members wanted to save their position along the barrier. Whilst this was happening regular announcement were made on the city tannoy system by the festival MC to inform the public of when the ceremony would start.

The event started with speeches given by various city officials and leaders of the festival. Following the speeches the main parade could begin. This was very similar to the event that took part on the Saturday, except for the fact it was on a much larger scale. The teams approached the stage in the order shown in the diagram above. As the *mikoshi* got nearer to the stage they got much more boisterous and the chanting became even louder. As two teams passed each other they would make a show of ramming each other\(^8\). They didn’t actually make contact, but the crush of people was quite notable and contributed to the spectacle of the parade.

Once they made it to the front of the stage some teams raised their *mikoshi* on their outstretched arms, whilst other teams vigorously bounced it. This once again indicates the individual nature of the various teams, and their pride in their unique points. Whilst some teams pride themselves on individual chants or songs, others pride themselves on how they display their *mikoshi* at the parade. All this was done whilst the *mikoshi* bearer’s leader stood on the stage and guided them in. Each team had to have several attempts of getting into position, which just added to the drama and spectacle. Once the leader was satisfied they held their position whilst the team leader acknowledged them. They then turned around and made way for the next team. This was a grand spectacle that attracted a lot of attention from the audience most of whom were filming or taking pictures of the participants. In comparison to the parade on Saturday, the Sunday parade was much louder and more enthusiastic. Partly, this was because there were three extra

\(^8\) Some festivals, such as the *Kenka Matsuri* (Fighting Festival) of Himeji City make a great spectacle of ramming each other in a “vigorous showing off of power, energy and beauty” (Ikeda, 1999: 119)
The Musashi mikoshi teams present on that day, but it cannot be ignored that the Sunday is seen as belonging more to the shotenkai teams. The shotenkai teams seem to carry much more enthusiastically on the Sunday and the general atmosphere is much more charged. There are also many more people signing up to take part in the Sunday festival than on Saturday.

It should be noted that during the ceremony on both the Saturday and the Sunday the senior members of the Musashi team were not present. The Musashi mikisho is located right next to the parade area, outside of the MUFJ bank. During the parade many of the senior members active members of the Musashi team, including the leader Ogura-san, were sitting in the mikisho socialising and chatting. The younger members were involved with carrying their own shotenkai team’s mikoshi in the parade. However, the senior members do not actively carry anymore and were instead sitting the event out. It should be noted that the leaders of the shotenkai teams were involved in the parade as they had duties on the stage. This is further evidence of the clear divide between the Musashi and shotenkai teams – there is no role for the Musashi team in the parade. It can be seen that the festival is divided into events that focus on the Musashi team and events that focus on the shotenkai teams. The importance of each event depends on the perspective of the viewer. For the Musashi team, their events take precedence, whereas the reverse is true for the shotenkai teams. From the perspective of the audience, these differences are not evident, instead the festival is seen as a whole.

The Miyairi

Whilst the main events of Sunday centre on the shotenkai teams, there is one event that is the highlight of the day for the Musashi team. This event is the ‘miyairi’, which means returning the portable shrine to its home. This event is of particular significance to the Musashi team, however, as shown through the discussions at the small
organisational meeting held following the Overall Briefing, it does not hold the same fascination for some of the other teams. The event is unique in that it symbolically (and literally) brings all of the city’s teams together.

The *miyairi* involves members of all of the *shotenkai* teams working together to carry the *Miyamikoshi*. Unlike earlier in festival, when each *shotenkai* team got a chance to carry the *Miyamikoshi* across their territory, in the *miyairi* all of the teams carry at the same time. Each of the teams chooses particular members to do the carrying during the *miyairi* and they are assigned a sash to wear. Along the way, members of the Musashi team act as guards, to make sure that any person not wearing a sash doesn’t try to carry the *Miyamikoshi*. This means that not just anyone can join in at this time; they must be trusted members of the *shotenkai* team, and by extension more senior, or experienced members of the team. Therefore, participation in this event can also be seen as a precursor to membership in Musashi team.

Each of the *shotenkai* is responsible for carrying one pole on the *Miyamikoshi*, and therefore they must all work together in order to carry the *Miyamikoshi* back to Musashino Hachimangu Shrine from its starting point in the centre town. The event can be seen to symbolize the teams of Kichijoji coming together to carry the shrine’s representative mikoshi. The *miyairi* is considered the most exciting event of the festival for the Musashi members, and the *Miyamikoshi* makes its way slowly with a lot of chanting and vigorous bouncing.

Half way along the route the *Miyamikoshi* is joined by the Musashino Bayashi music truck, which leads the way. They are then followed by the senior members of the Musashi team wearing their senior member’s *happi*, and female team members carrying lanterns bearing the names of all of the *shotenkai* teams. The procession

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9 When a member leaves the young carriers group and graduates to the Old Boys group they wear a white *happi*. In this way hierarchy is signified partially through dress in the festival.
continues all the way to the entrance of the shrine, where the Miyamikoshi is put down, just outside the torii. In a reflection of the start of the festival, only the members of the Musashi team can carry the Miyamikoshi within the grounds of the shrine. At this stage many of the older Musashi members carry the Miyamikoshi the short distance to the front of the shrine.

Despite the fact that the Musashi puts such emphasis on this event, it has not always been so welcomed by the other teams. As mentioned in chapter 4, protests were raised during the shotankai meeting by the young leaders, who wanted the event moved to the official last day of the festival on the 15th September. This request was refused and the event took place as usual on the Sunday of the festival. From comments made at the various Musashi meetings, it is clear that the miyairi is a special event for them and it is particularly important for it to occur on the Sunday of the festival. Due to the nature of the event, it requires ordinary members of the shotenkai (i.e. not members who are also members of the Musashi team) to work together to carry the mikoshi. This has particular significance given the origins of the Musashi team, which was formed in order to promote young people coming together and getting to know each other (Musashino Hachimangu Mikoshi Preservation Society, 2006). However, ultimately divisions are still emphasised as the Miyamikoshi is passed back to the Musashi team at the entrance to the shrine.

**Summary**

The events that take place during the Kichijoji Autumn Festival serve to highlight several aspects of hierarchy, which can be seen in the festival. The way that the events are separated by the two different kinds of team; Musashi and shotenkai, emphasizes the differences between the teams. They also show the different motivations behind the teams mobilization.
On the one hand, the Musashi team is trying to emphasize the unity of the town, and promote friendship between young people. This can be seen in their main events, which tend to require the cooperation of different members of the city. Throughout the festival, the shontenkai teams are required to carry the Miyamikoshi across their borders, which represents the support of the shotenkai for the Musashi team. In addition, the miyairi calls for all of the teams to work together to take the Miyamikoshi back to the shrine. This event symbolizes all of the teams, and therefore the town, coming together to escort the kami back to the shrine.

In contrast, the shotenkai view these events slightly differently. Many object to having to participate in the miyairi during the festival, and would rather this event be held after the main festival days are finished. The shotenkai also tend to emphasize difference in unity. This is especially noticeable during the main parade on both the Saturday and Sunday. At this time the teams make a great spectacle of their unique points as they make their way to the front of the stage. Taken together with the information on the unique points of the teams, provided in the brochure which is distributed to tourists and shoppers during the festival, it can be seen that the shotenkai wish to be seen individually. Whilst the shotenkai teams show unity by carrying their mikoshi into each other’s areas, they still wish to remain visibly different from each other. This is in direct contrast to ethos of the Musashi team.

There are also other differences between the teams, which are demonstrated during the festival itself. One of the main differences is the connection to the religious institution displayed by each of the teams. Being connected to the shrine, the Musashi team tends to act differently around the shrine. During the opening ceremony when the Miyamikoshi was being carried for the first time, only the members of the Musashi team were allowed to carry the Miyamikoshi within the grounds of the shrine. A point was made during the Musashi meeting emphasizing this and asking that everyone make sure
that no shotenkai team members carrying the Miyamikoshi within the shrine grounds. Ordinarily, the Musashi team relies on the shotenkai members to carry the Miyamikoshi, however, they were not allowed to do so here. This incident demonstrates a way that Musashi team asserts its influence over the shotenkai teams. Whilst they wish for the Miyamikoshi to represent the unity of the community, that unity only goes as far as the shrine gates. Then it is only those who have shown extra enthusiasm for the festival, and therefore who gain membership to the Musashi team, who are allowed to carry.

Finally, we can see how the teams utilise connections with the Musashi team to show, and possibly change, their hierarchical position. On the Sunday, the Miyamikoshi was mainly carried by members of the Taisho Saire team. The team also made a point of carrying their own mikoshi alongside the Miyamikoshi. This can be seen as a way of demonstrating their position within the festival, and the fact that they have a strong team. In addition, it is interesting to note that the Nakamichi Dori team also carried the Miyamikoshi with the Taisho Saire team that day. The Nakamichi Dori team is new and therefore is trying to establish itself. It could be that the Taisho Saire team is seizing this opportunity to influence the new team and thereby strengthen their position within the festival.
Chapter 7
A Film about Hierarchy

A large proportion of this thesis has focused on the enactment of hierarchy as shown in the film. In this chapter I will look at how making a film on hierarchy in a Japanese festival facilitated my research process, and some of the issues that were raised. I will look at how the film highlighted and allowed for the analysis of hierarchy. I will discuss some of the choices made with regard to the choice of events and characters in the film, as well as more technical issues. These include the use of editing, narration and subtitling, and the effect that these processes have on the portrayal of hierarchy.

The Events of the Film

The majority of the time that I was engaged in field research, I was also recording with my camera; this meant that a lot of footage was recorded. This footage contained numerous events that took place in the run-up to the festival, which may or may not have had any significance to my research on hierarchy within and between mikoshi teams. My continuous filming of the festival events was important not only for the footage but also for relationship building (Strunge Sass, 2014). Given the amount of footage, choices had to be made about which events should be included in the film as to include all of the usable footage would have resulted in a film that was unwieldy, long and lacking in any clear focus. Hierarchy is a difficult topic to portray in film, as many of the instances where hierarchy is formed or displayed are quite subtle and require

1 During this presentation the author described how she went drinking with underage teenagers during her field research in a high school in Denmark. The ensuing discussion concluded that in order to maintain relationships (especially one in which she may have negatively been viewed as occupying a higher power level, e.g. teacher) it was important for her to engage in such activities to cement her identity with the participants.

2 By ‘usable’ I am referring to the shots that were not in focus, or didn’t contain any actually information. One of the ways in which I was filming was to almost constantly have the camera on, as the time it takes to turn the camera on could have resulted in missing something. This meant that a lot of the footage was just pointed at the floor, sky etc.
extensive background knowledge from the viewer. This is further complicated by not knowing who the audience may be. Once a film is made, the filmmaker may not be able to control who it is shown to, and therefore cannot know if they have sufficient background knowledge to understand what is happening without extensive description. In order for many of the festival events to be included a vast amount of introductory material would need to be included in the film, which would make it impractical to both edit and view. It also became clear that most of the events contained very little visual reference to hierarchy and therefore could not stand alone as part of my visual presentation of hierarchy in the festival. Therefore, I decided to focus on just a few key events, which I felt offered the clearest view of my topic.

Upon viewing the footage that I had recorded it became clear the events that took place just prior to the festival not only offered self contained, manageable segments, but also offered the opportunity for certain ‘characters’ to become known. Piault, C. (1989) states how ritual is a favored topic as it offers a ‘prestructured’ event, which can be followed chronologically (p. 15). Whilst many of the events that took part in my film were not rituals, they followed this same style, in that they followed a pre-arranged timetable and offered self-contained opportunities to observe the social interactions between the participants. The film could be divided into the following events:

1. The construction of the *mikisho* and altar
2. The ritual sanctification of the *mikisho* altar
3. The construction of the *mikoshi*
4. The transport of the *mikoshi* to the shrine
5. Inviting the god into the *mikoshi*
6. The start of the festival
Given that this film and research is about hierarchy in a community it would be expected that the film should concentrate more on the festival. Other films produced about festival events in Japan have concentrated largely on the event itself, often serving as documentation of the vent itself. *The Toyama Shimotsuki Matsuri of Kodoki Hamlet* (n.d.) by Kristjan Mann and William Lee follows this path. The film starts by outlining the location and purpose of the festival using diagrams and maps, before moving on to the festival itself. In fact the majority of the film is of the festival dance with only limited explanation given about what is happening. Similarly *Seven Young Gods of Fortune: Fertility Rite of Dosojin* (1984) by Yasuhiro Omori largely features the festival as it makes its way around the town. There is only limited reference to the preparations that are made prior to the festival. However, as my research concentrates on hierarchy it was important for the film to concentrate on the instances when hierarchy formation and maintenance could be most clearly seen. Therefore I chose to highlight some of the events and rituals prior to the festival. The festival itself offered very limited opportunity to witness or analyse hierarchy and therefore only featured in a limited capacity in the film.

As can be seen in the outline of the film above, only two of the events explicitly involved ritual performance, however, all of the events (barring the ‘start of the festival’, which was included to show what the festival was and provide symmetry, as opposed to a direct argument about hierarchy or group dynamics) are self-contained events which have a clear start and end. They are also chronologically sequenced and, as such, offer a clear narrative for the preparation of the festival. In fact, each of the events in the film was timetabled, and therefore from a filmmaking point of view, were easy to attend and analyze.

The events, however, were not only chosen because they offered relatively self-contained segments that could be analyzed as a whole. They also offered the best
opportunities to show hierarchy, since many of them involved the training of newer members. Events, such as the construction of the mikoshi, offered an opportunity to observe how the younger team members were explicitly taught the intricacies of participating in the Musashi team. Part of being a member of the Musashi team is active involvement in all of the team activities. It is expected that newer members will seek to work their way through the ranks of the Musashi team. The episodes all provided opportunities for eager teammates to demonstrate their enthusiasm, as well as learn valuable skills for later in their involvement with the team. The film concentrates solely on the relations of hierarchy and the process of learning within the Musashi team. However the thesis, tackles the wider topic of hierarchies and difference between the various teams within the Kichijoji Autumn festival.

In addition to the activities portrayed in the film, there were many other events before and during the festival, such as the meetings, parties and other rituals, which offered similar opportunities for research. However, they did not offer the same prospects in a film. In many cases it was merely the fact that without extensive prior knowledge of who people were, the hierarchies would be unobservable. For example, during the various meetings a background knowledge of the spatial hierarchies played out in Japanese meetings would be needed to understand how hierarchies were being demonstrated. Some filmmakers have capitalized on this and incorporated it into their film. A prime example would be Timothy Asch and Napoleon Chagnon’s film The Ax Fight (1975). The Ax Fight primarily depicts an argument, which escalates into a violent fight in a Yanomami village in Venezeula. The film is separated into four distinct parts; the first part features the unedited footage of the fight, the second contains a descriptive discussion voice over by the anthropologists, the third contains kinship diagrams and further information, and finally the forth part is an edited version of what happened in the fight. Having watched the first part, it is clear that more explanation is needed. It is
difficult to tell exactly what is happening as the camera is shaky and information is scant. It is only after the viewer has been provided with background information that we can understand what is happening from an anthropological perspective. Marks (1995) states,

…as it proceeds, the film continues to turn in on itself as it replays the events of the scene, adding layers of interpretation to the events and becoming increasingly self-conscious about the process by which the interpretations are produced. The result is a film that reveals facets of the ethnographic conception of the subject and its relation to methodology as much as it sheds light on a profoundly unfamiliar culture.” (p. 344).

In a similar way I could have explained the hierarchical relationships being played out in the meeting and its spatial dynamics through the extensive use of diagrams within the film. However, I felt that this was not the direction in which I wanted to go, as I didn't want to be too directive in my presentation of data. I wished to make an argument, but also to allow for reinterpretation of the data. I instead chose document a more concrete argument in the written part of my thesis, as I felt that the information in the form of tables and diagrams could be better analyzed in text.

In other cases, such as the Musashi pre-festival party, clear social hierarchies were being demonstrated and created, however filmically it wasn’t a good event. The location and space didn’t offer the best viewpoints, and the angles of the camera were often limited. In addition, as a loud, raucous drinking party, it was often too noisy to be able to comprehend what anyone was saying. Upon viewing the footage I decided that any significant meaning would be lost in the overwhelming cacophony of the senses that made up the party. This is a good example of how using a camera offered excellent opportunities as a research method, but where the end result was not to be used in a film, or at least the kind of film I wanted to make. Instead, the process of filming was more
important as it allowed me opportunities to be involved in the party and to create good relationships with the Musashi team members.

Characters

The sequences included in the film also offered certain ‘characters’ who were able to facilitate the understanding of the different social levels within the context of the festival. This is something that came about after the filming had been completed and I was reviewing the footage. It became clear when I was viewing and cataloguing the raw footage that certain people were repeatedly present at various events. This had not been planned, and in actual fact they did not represent the only relationship negotiations that were taking place in the pre-festival events. As a participant observer I was trying to take in as much as possible, however, on reviewing my material later it became clear that I had focused on certain people with the camera. During the editing process these people were singled out and concentrated on in order to allow for the narrative of hierarchy at different levels to be played out. It was important for each level to be represented by someone in order to ease understanding.

One of these people was Yuria, who I had known casually for a few years, and therefore it was natural that I should have chosen to concentrate on her. This is especially evident during the filming of the building of the *mikisho*. This was one of the first events that I had filmed which had the potential to show the working relationship between various levels of the Musashi team. I knew that she had been recently promoted and therefore chose to focus more on her. In addition, she was learning how to set up the altar, which is a topic that I thought would be visually interesting. Hence she features heavily in the section on building the *mikisho*.

The other ‘characters’, however, were unknown to me prior to the start of my field research. Whilst it was not clear during filming why I had concentrated on these
individuals, on later reflection it became clear to me that their force of personality had brought them to the fore. Indeed from an analytical perspective the force of their personalities was part of the reason for their respective positions and integral to the process of their movement between the various levels of hierarchy. On further analysis it became evident that many of them were newly promoted members at different levels of the team hierarchy, and of central relevance to the subject of the film.

If we refer back to the outline of the film, the various events represent the different layers within the Musashi team. At the bottom of the hierarchy are the new team members. Their training can be witnessed in the making of the mikoshi, where they are trained in how to construct the Miyamikoshi. In the film I focus on one character for this section, Makoto who joined the team recently. In this section she is being shown how to tie the ropes that hold the poles on the mikoshi by more senior members of the team.

The next layer is represented by Yuria, who was promoted to the executive committee in the year that my film was shot. Her newly acquired role and status is represented in the section, which shows the making of the mikisho and altar and how she is being trained in how to set up the various accoutrements. The training of Makoto and Yuria show the differences in level, and how the training differs somewhat according to their status. The way that the two women are spoken to reflects their positions within the team.

Throughout all of the events it is the more senior members who are giving the training. In the construction of the mikoshi, Yuria is a member of this trainer group, as she moves from trainee to trainer. We can see how there are changes in behavior depending on the situation. In the event where she is a trainee she acted with deference towards the senior members. When building the mikoshi, on the other hand, she is much more forceful (sometimes too much so).
We can also see how at the upper levels there is a delicate negotiation between members depending on their level and knowledge. This can be seen especially with the interactions between Ogura-san, the leader of the team, and Aimi who has the greatest knowledge on how to construct the mikoshi.

**Summary**

By focusing on certain people within the Musashi team, as well as particular events I was able to clearly demonstrate the various hierarchical levels that exist within the Musashi team, as well how these levels are maintained and formed. The focus on these particular characters enabled me to look more deeply at their roles within the team and analyze how they negotiated their respective hierarchical positions with each other. In this way, the making of the film was vital as it allowed me, by focusing on certain people, to gain a clearer picture of the relationships within the Musashi team. Had I not been making the film I would still have witnessed these relationships and events, however, I would not have had the opportunity to analyze them to the same extent at a later date. One of the advantages of film is to enable a re-viewing of footage in order to examine things more closely\(^3\) (Collier & Collier, 1986; Pink, 2007). The very process of editing ensured that I was able to perceive these relationships at the different levels within the team. Therefore, as a research method, the use of film served as an invaluable process.

**Editing**

Editing the data for this research project was no easy feat. Given the nature of the filming process the film footage that I was left with varied greatly in quality. In addition

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\(^3\) An extreme example of this can be seen with the work of John Marshall and his filming of the San people. After 50 years of filming he edited the footage into the film series, *A Kalahari Family* (1951-2001)
sometimes the filming capturing process focused more on sound than visuals. Therefore decisions and compromises had to be made when making the final edits.

In the case of the quality of the footage a lot of it can be considered quite poor. In many ways this reflects the difficulties of using a camera to conduct primary research. Often I was unsure of what exactly to film in bustle of the pre-festival events. Other times I was in the right position, but this inevitably meant I was in the same position everyone else wanted to occupy. Many of the spaces in which the pre-festival events took place were small and crowded with the festival participants. At other times many people also wanted to observe and learn the same thing as the feature participant that I was filming. An example of this can be seen when I was filming the making of the *mikoshi*. For much of the time I was concentrated on filming Aimi in the capacity of teacher, and Makoto in the role of the student. However, there were also many other people that wanted to learn from Aimi. Makoto was the one who was being actively shown what to do, but the surrounding people were also learning by watching. This meant that a large crowd was huddled around Aimi and Makoto making it difficult for me to get a good angle. When it came to editing this and similar scenes, choices had to be made to edit out footage that was too wobbly due to being knocked by those around me, or in which most of the screen was taken up by other people’s heads.

In addition, the fact that this was a ritual event that took place once a year, made re-filming impossible. Even if I could have gone back the following year to film the same events again, the dynamic of the participants would have changed in that year. In concentrating on certain ‘characters’ I was trying to emphasize their respective positions within the team and how they learn and adapt to their hierarchical levels. These levels are in constant state of flux and therefore capturing their behaviour at that moment in time was important. As Grimshaw (2002) points out in reference to David MacDougall Doon School films using an observational methodology allows for the capturing of a
different kind of knowledge - “experiential or situated” (p. 88). It was therefore more important to capture the processes that were taking place than in creating ideal film situations.

Unfortunately this all resulted in some less than ideal editing. However, given the ultimate role of this as a research film and not one designed to be publically aired beyond small academic audience I deemed it acceptable. In fact when the film was shown to a group of visual anthropology students that comments made about the choice of editing technique were favourable. Many of the students commented on how the shaky nature of the filming allowed for the students to ‘feel like they were there,’ and many commented on how they felt more empathy for the characters and process they were undergoing in the learning of various festival techniques.

Another aspect that needed to be considered when editing was the potential impact of airing the film and the effect it might have on the participants. In some cases there were conversations that took place between participants that might have been sensitive or inflamed relationships. A decision had to be made in the editing process about the potential effects of leaving these instances and whether or not they were worth saving. As an example, during the discussions between Makoto, Aimi and Ogura-san about the best way to tie the *mikoshi* poles there were heated comments that might have reflected badly on each of them. There was a potential for their words to affect their personal relationships, and further, to impact their respective positions within the team. This is not an unusual case when filming ethnographic research. Vavrova & Henry (2015) have commented that whilst working on editing their film *An Extraordinary Wedding* (n.d.) how considerations had to be made regarding their participant’s wishes on the potential of comments made, even though they were made publically. It is more important to respect the wishes and observe the potential impact of the film, than to concentrate on getting and using the best material. In the end I decided to edit out the more
inflammatory parts, but keep the general gist of their interactions in the final edit. Tension between the characters can still be seen, without it being too potentially harmful.

When considering maximising the potential for the film certain choices were made in the editing process. I felt that it was important to make the most of the footage without manipulating it too much, and therefore hiding the potential data that could be perceived. One of these editing choices was the use of split-screen. In mainstream film and documentary, split-screen has been used to enable the viewer to observe the same scene from different angles (Mondada 2009). With reference to ethnographic film, Lomax (1971) has suggested that various cinematic techniques, including the use of split-screen, should be used in order to illustrate knowledge for a scientific audience. In my research film it was utilised to maximise the audience’s ability to witness the event in as true a manner as possible. In particular is the scene where the mikoshi is carried under the torii. As a moment of the great significance I felt that it was important to emphasize this in the film, as well as show a clear picture. I had two cameras filming this event from opposite angles. One was a long shot from behind where you could see the mikoshi travelling under the torii, however it was difficult to see that the mikoshi was being raised on the bearer’s arms. The other shot was a close-up in which you could see the mikoshi being raised as well as the expressions on the bearer’s faces, however as the shot was so close it was not possible to see that this was taking place under the torii. I felt it was important to show what was happening and therefore decided a split-shot would enable the whole situation to be viewed whilst still preserving the atmosphere of the occasion in terms of dynamics and sound.

When talking of editing a film and conveying anthropology meaning it is important to address the issue of montage. Through the juxtaposition of images academic theory can be implied and made more visible (Suhr & Willerslev 2012). It could be argued that
given I wished to present an abstract theory such as hierarchy that montage would be the ideal way to do so. However, there are several problems with the use of montage in film. On the one hand montage is an ineffectual way of expressing theory. There is a danger that the viewer may misinterpret the combination of images, sound and editing techniques.

There is simply no way of determining and validating the effects of montage in the abstract. Just as montage may be applied for multiple purposes, so might the outcome of montage point in a virtually infinite number of directions (Willerslev & Suhr 2013, p 12).

I felt that it was more important to suggest my theory on hierarchy whilst still allowing room for the viewer to make their own analysis and draw their own conclusions. By leaving the footage relatively un-manipulated the viewer had more access to the raw data.

**Subtitles and Narration**

In this next section, I wish to address some of the more technical aspects of the filmmaking process and discuss the affect that they have on the investigation of hierarchy. I will focus specifically on what can be described as the ‘written’ aspect of the film. By ‘written’ I am referring to the non-visual aspect of the footage, namely the subtitling and narration. By investigating these areas more fully I can show how careful consideration must be taken, and how making a film on hierarchy also involves investigating the hierarchies of the filmmaking process itself, as well as those present between the film’s subjects.
The Need for ‘Text’ in an Ethnographic Film

As a film featuring non-English speaking subjects, it was important for there to be a translation of what was being said by the film’s participants. Some ethnographic filmmakers have been able to avoid this focusing entirely on the visual aspect of the film, with little reference to the spoken word. A classic example of this is Robert Gardner’s *Forest of Bliss* (1986). This film famously has only seventeen words, in the form of a quote by Yeats shown as text at the start of the film. Other than this there is no commentary or dialogue to be found in the film, and indeed it could be argued that there are few people in the film. There are some main ‘characters’ but a lack of dialogue suggests that they are not the focus of the film. Instead the viewer is forced to read meaning from the repetition of such images as marigolds and other symbols of death. This brings us to one of the key criticisms of *Forest of Bliss*, that of academic merit. Many have questioned whether there is any anthropological message in the film (Sinha, 2009), or whether the lack of clear guidance distracts the viewer from discovering the message (Parry, 1988).

More recently, another film has been produced, which once again brings up the argument of the use of subtitles and narration in film. Produced in 2012 by Lucien Castaing-Taylor and Véréna Paravel, *Leviathan*, pushes the boundaries of ethnographic film containing no subtitles or narration, or in fact people to translate at all. The film takes place on board a fishing trawler in the Atlantic Ocean, however, that is about as much description about the film that can be given. Through the use of GoPro cameras positioned across the trawler and on the heads of the fishermen themselves, the film offers a sensory glimpse of what life is like on board the boat. As Snyder (2013) states, instead of the “discursive clarity” (Alvarez 2012) that the documentary tends toward, Castaing-Taylor and Paravel align with modes of interpreting beyond

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4 The text of the film states, “Everything in the world is eater or eaten, the seed is food and the fire is eater.” (*Forest of Bliss*, 1986)
seeing and hearing, to the exhausting/enfeebling/disorienting opalescence of the sea. Through this negotiation with the sea, Leviathan elides linear narrative andsequentiality sound/picture synchronicity, human characters, and even the principal recordist as the eventual storyteller. (p. 176)

Without dialogue or narration the viewer is forced to interpret what information is conveyed through the use of images and sound. This is a deliberate act designed to allow the viewer the freedom to come up with their own interpretation. (Pavsek, 2015). *Leviathan* also sought to provide few reference points with which the viewer could ‘anchor’ themselves. The lack of explanation, narrated or voiced by the participants, together with the way in which it was filmed serves to free the viewer from the constraints of stipulated meaning. Some scholars, such as Stevenson & Kohn (2015), have argued that this approach allows for increased and varied engagement with ethnographic material. However, this approach is problematic. Even though ethnographic films may be edited by an anthropologist in order to demonstrate a point or theory, film, and by extension visual material in general, contains a wealth of information, which may be misconstrued. This wealth of information can be interpreted in many ways, and an audience member may find something in the frame more useful or interesting than the subject that the filmmaker is concentrating on. Taylor (1996) states, “The indexicality of ethnographic film makes it open-ended, and thus susceptible to differing interpretations in a way anthropological writing is not.” (p. 75). In the case of written theses, data is presented already edited or “stripped” of information so that the reader has less chance of misinterpreting the information (MacDougall, 1998, p.190). However, I believe that a re-interpretation of the data should be possible as far as possible. The original (albeit edited) nature of film offers a chance for this process to happen.
However I still believe that is important for an anthropological film to convey a ‘message’ that is the product of the filmmakers understanding of the events that are being recorded and expressed through the medium, and this is problematic when there is a lack of words, spoken or written. In an apparent challenge to his later film-work, *Leviathan*, Taylor stated in an early piece of writing, “Through dialogue and narration, subtitles and intertitles, end credits and opening credits, film is shot through with language, just as imagery ineluctably infuses language.” (Taylor, 1996, p. 88). If this is indeed the case then I believe that careful consideration must be taken when using subtitles and narration. I will outline some of these issues below.

**Subtitles**

Traditionally there have been two approaches to translating the words of a film’s participants; subtitles and voice-overs. Voice-over, as a means of translating the ‘voice’ of the film’s subjects, has been largely dismissed by academic audiences as it doesn't allow the viewer to experience the full data set. As MacDougall (1995) points out, “Voice-over translation prevents us from hearing the inflections of the original voices, and we resent it.” (p. 87). In addition, as a researcher living and working in Japan, I wanted my film to be accessible to a wider audience, and therefore by allowing the Japanese to be heard, a Japanese audience could also engage with the film. These arguments convinced me that subtitles was the better medium, however, their use raised issues related to hierarchy. These issues included the process of making the translations, particularly what and who was subtitled, and how this affected hierarchy, as well as the various meanings created by the subtitles from both the perspective of the subjects, filmmaker and audience. These are particularly important issues to consider when

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5 In the film extra information (what would traditionally be heard in the narration) is portrayed in English text, however, I chose not to include Japanese text as well as this would create a crowded, confusing amount text to be read whilst watching the film.
making a film on hierarchy. First I will discuss the process chosen to make the subtitles, and then I will move to look at some of the issues with subtitles and hierarchy.

Translation

Because I am not fluent in Japanese I often used a translator at the events surrounding the festival. My language ability is strong enough to make conversation, and I can do a lot on my own, however, when it comes to deeper meanings or more complex conversations my ability is lacking. This was especially problematic when it came to translating the footage for my film. I was able to get the gist of most of the conversations on my own, however, for the purpose of subtitling I felt that I needed a more accurate translation of what was being said. This process presented its own challenges.

As I wasn’t paying for a translation service I had to rely on personal relationships to help me with my translations. I worked on the footage collaboratively with my translator. My translator would translate each sentence into English, discussing the possible variations of meaning with me, and then I would write it into English. I decided on this method as the act of translation and subtitling is a very complicated one. In many cases there were no alternatives possible in English as some phrases in Japanese are not translatable. An example of this can be seen in the dialogue on page 143. In this case I have translated ‘kawai so’ as ‘I feel sad for her’, however, this phrase has multiple meanings including, ‘how sad’, ‘it’s a shame’, or ‘what a pity’. In the film itself I chose not to include the translation of this phrase as the translation in English would be far too long. In this particular case I would suggest that it is not possible to translate this phrase in this situation as the speaker was suggesting something like, “you are picking on her and I feel sorry for her”. Therefore, I felt that the best way was to translate what would be natural to say in that situation in English.
In other cases words were changed to ease understanding of the situation for the viewer. For example, when the *mikoshi* is being moved Aimi says, “Hold onto the eaves”. In actual fact the word she uses is the technical term, *warabi*, which literally translates as ‘bracken’, presumably because the eaves of the *mikoshi* are curled like bracken. However, if I used the direct translation it would make no sense to the viewer, and the change of word would make no difference to the overall understanding of the situation, as the meaning wasn’t essentially changed. These are examples of how translations were negotiated to fit the particular situation, however, it is worth noting that further care must be taken when translating and subtitling, as this can have a profound effect on meaning in a film.

*Hierarchy and Subtitling*

Throughout the subtitling process, care has to be taken to ensure that meaning is not changed, and more importantly for this research, that identity and hierarchy is not adversely represented. The choice of who or what to include in the editing process has already been established as significant for the analysis and portrayal of hierarchy, both actual and perceived. In the same way perceived hierarchy can be affected by choices made during the subtitling process. At a base level, the selection of who to subtitle is already preferencing that person over others. In many cases this has already been done by the filming and editing process, with those in the frame being the ones to be subtitled. However, the making of a film is not that simple. In many instances of my own editing, the sound and visuals were separated and pasted into different places. Sometimes this was done because of poor sound quality on the original footage. Other times it was done so that the audio and visual material could complement each other. For example, when people were discussing something, a visual counterpart was displayed to help to illustrate this, or to provide a visual reference point for the viewer. This may lead to
some characters having a greater presence in the film than the initial viewing suggests.

As MacDougall (1995) states,

>A line of dialogue that is delivered at a distance, or in passing, and which might
go unnoticed by a native speaker can, by subtitling, be given a more central
position in the film if the filmmaker believes it is thematically important. In this
way, subtitles act on the verbal level somewhat as the camera acts on the visual
level in singling out objects and framing human relationships. (p. 86).

It could also lead to that person’s opinions having a greater influence, as their words are
being used for explanation⁶.

By extension, this leads to a situation where those being subtitled are included to
provide authority for the filmmaker and the film. As MacDougall (1998) points out,
“…interviews can also be easily used selectively, without the eliciting questions, and in
fragments to support a particular argument, relying on the audience’s assumption that
the authority of the speakers validates the authority of the entire structure” (p. 118). On
the other hand, subtitles play a valuable role in this respect by allowing the filmmaker to
voice their theories (Zhang, 2012). Through the inclusion of certain dialogue, a
filmmaker can indirectly express their theories and ideas, something which can prove
difficult without extensive use of narration or text. However, by using one person’s
opinions to represent all, the wrong intention may be conveyed, and therefore it is up to
the filmmaker to ensure integrity.

Another situation, in which care has to be taken, is when many people are speaking
at the same time. This is often a problem in ethnographic film as the characters are not
usually scripted⁷ and therefore there are many instances when people are talking over
each other, or are quickly interrupting each other. This makes the subtitling process

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⁶ See the discussion in Chapter 2 regarding the promotion of one person in a community through their involvement in the filmmaking process.

⁷ A notable exception to this is the films of Jean Rouch in which the dialogue of the characters was recorded later, for example Moi Un Noi (1958) and Jaguar (1967)
particularly difficult. It also means that some people will be ‘ignored’ and therefore as a filmmaker we have to be careful about the impact that this may have. By regularly choosing certain ‘voices’ over others we may be falsely portraying the position a person has in a society.

Whilst it is inevitable that certain characters will be isolated and used more frequently in an ethnographic film, it is important to consider the effect that this may have and make choices accordingly. In my own film I chose to focus on four main characters as they represented different levels within the hierarchy of the Mikoshi team. However, in order to illustrate their respective positions, many more people were involved and in actual fact take up a significant amount of subtitled time. However, for the purpose of the film they are not overtly identified, as their conversation is included in order to provide a backdrop for the main characters whose positions are identified. It is clear that to a certain extent some ‘characters’ will always be potentially falsely prioritized over others. For the purposes of displaying theory this could be considered acceptable, however, care must be taken not to adversely affect the field site and personal relationships between those studied. It is up to the integrity of the researcher to ensure that this does not happen.

**Narration**

Another aspect of the editing process, which is important to the creation of meaning in a film, is the narration. In documentary film, extensive narration is largely expected to provide context, explanation and conclusions for the viewer. However, in ethnographic film this is not always the case. In contrast to written ethnography, there is an expectation for ethnographic film to be more open to interpretation and therefore there is a reluctance to encourage the usage of explicit narration (Taylor, 1996; MacDougall, 1998). This creates its own problem. Whilst ethnographic film is expected
to leave room for interpretation, it has also been criticized, as a genre, for not being able to communicate anthropological theory (Catalan Eraso, 2006). There is a fear that meaning will be too open to interpretation, and that essential background knowledge and explanations are not provided. This is a problem that I encountered myself, and therefore I will outline the choices I made below.

Due to the abstract nature of my main topic I decided that some form of narration was needed, however, I felt uncomfortable with the standard spoken form. Having been trained in visual anthropology since my undergraduate degree, I have always felt that narration and voice-over in ethnographic film should be avoided, as there is a danger of the filmmaker speaking for the subjects as opposed to allowing them to have their own voice. In addition, I didn’t want to use a lot of narration as I still wished for there to be room for interpretation, and for the film to able to speak for itself. However, identifying the difference between the events, and what they meant both as a ritual, and hierarchically was important information that needed to be conveyed, and therefore some form of narration was required.

Once I decided to use narration I had to decide what ‘voice’ was going to be used. In this I had three choices, however each proved to be problematic in their own way. First of all I could have used my own voice, as it is my information that I wished to be conveyed. However, like many people I dislike the sound of my own voice, and I have trouble with some pronunciation. This could have been answered by the second option, which was to use a voice actor, however this leads to further choices as to who to use. I could have used a voice actor, but the question is whose accent would have been best. An American accent would probably have been the most widely understandable, but as a British researcher this may have seemed false. An alternative used by many mainstream documentaries is to use a native speaker (in my case a Japanese person speaking English) to read the commentary. However, there is a danger that this could
provide false authority (MacDougall, 1995; MacDougall, 1998). Viewers may associate the Japanese accent with being someone in the film, or a person who knows more about the subject, and therefore it could provide artificial legitimacy. I wished to avoid these pitfalls and therefore I decided to go with no voice at all. In the end I decided to use text instead of voice over for my narration.

In part this justified my limited use of narration as my titles had to be succinct enough to be read in the film. This meant that only the key information could be conveyed, such as the aim or meaning or certain events, or the identity of certain characters. The frugal use of information allowed for the topic to be focused on, without being lost in too much information. The visual material of the film contains a lot of information and it would be easy, through the extensive use of narration, to lose the main point of the film. In addition, the amount of data that can be conveyed through the visual materials is far greater than can be described in narration. As Henley (2000) states, “…the soundtrack of a film rarely provides enough time to draw out all the sociological significances of the events portrayed.” (p.213). I decided to pare down this data so that only the vital information was conveyed, and therefore allow for this to be the main focus. In this way I was privileging my topic over other meanings possible, however, I feel that this also ultimately allows for multiple interpretations of the data. By not explicitly stating my theories, but suggesting through narration, the viewer is able to draw their own conclusion. It will also be possible to use the film to show other points if wanted, for example, in my own teaching I often use ethnographic films to argue ideas that are not necessarily the focus of the films I show, but which still, none-the-less, provide good examples. Therefore, I believe it is important not to make the focus of the film so forceful that it excludes all other possibilities or interpretations of meaning.
Hierarchies of Filmmaking

All of the decisions outlined above have had a profound effect, not only on the analysis and interpretation of hierarchy, but also on the portrayal of hierarchy. Throughout the editing process (starting with when I ‘edited’ who I was pointing the camera at) I have made choices that have privileged some people over others. It is therefore possible for the filmmaker to ‘create’ the scene in which hierarchies can be portrayed. This in turn could have an effect on those people’s hierarchical position, from their own perspective as well from others – both people they know and those they don’t, like audience members. As Møhl (2011) points out,

The act of filming is a particular practice that structures the position of the anthropologist in the field. Furthermore, it is a tangible mode of investigation that privileges the participation of those filmed both in the process of representation and in the course of their production of knowledge. (p. 227)

In some ways these hierarchies were created by the characters themselves. Whilst I was filming, some people actively sought the camera, whilst others made a great effort to avoid it. Therefore, many of the people who featured in my film were there through choice and were consequently, in a way, advertising their respective positions. Others may have been privileged by the filmmaking process. This is not to say they didn’t occupy a significant space, as those who were most vocal were also often, by the nature of the festival, higher up on the hierarchical scale. However, by appearing in the film they are the only participants who can be acknowledged by the viewer. The viewer has no opportunity to make interpretations of other people involved in the festival. In this way we can see that the presence of the filmmaker and camera can have an effect on the fieldsite, that could be either positive or negative, regarding the investigation of hierarchy (Catalan Eraso, 2006). The same could be argued for written ethnography, however, due to the different relationship that exists between filmmaker/subject, as
opposed to researcher/researched, it is inevitable that the viewpoints expressed in an ethnographic film will belong to the few (Henley, 2000). A much greater level of interaction must be reached when filming (with) someone and therefore the relationship can be quite different from those experienced by researchers alone. This leads us to consider the role that the filmmaker plays in creating these hierarchical positions. It is clear that the filmmaker has a great power over the film subjects when it comes to representing their hierarchical structure. Through the choices of who to film and subtitle, the filmmaker is portraying assumptions about the subjects position and identity. Therefore it is important for the filmmaker to consider these decisions carefully so that people are not falsely promoted or represented.

Finally, some thought needs to be given to the status of this film within the hierarchy of ethnographic filmmaking. It quickly became apparent that the film I was making would probably not be able to stand-alone and be offered as an ethnographic film in its own right. Therefore I needed to assess what space this film could occupy. In terms of assisting my research into the various hierarchies surrounding the community festival the filmmaking process and analysis proved to invaluable. However, on viewing the film at a later date myself, and airing it to various audiences, most notably for students of visual anthropology and conferences⁸ it became apparent that the film needed a lot more to be classified as an ethnographic film. Using Crawford’s (1992) categorization of ethnographic film material it became clear that my film had all the hallmarks of a ‘research film’. According to Crawford (1992),

Research films are edited films made specifically fit research purposes and hence not intended for public screening or an audience other than a highly specialized academic audience. (1992, 74).

⁸ The film was preliminary shown at the Anthropology of Japan in Japan conference held in April 2015 at Seijo University in Tokyo. It was then edited and shown to a class of visual anthropology students at Temple University, Japan campus in July 2017, and aired at theEAJS conference in August 2017 in Lisbon.
Whilst I still support my decision not to include narration in order to allow the viewer to draw conclusions based on the data presented before them, it did mean that the audience would have to be educated on the specifics of the research before being able to make and meaningful conclusions. Even the visual anthropology students who were based at a university in Tokyo needed further information in the form of an introductory PowerPoint presentation in order to see the patterns evident in the film.

Given that my film can now be identified as a research film we can see further hierarchies that my research has suggested. In this case the hierarchical position of the film itself when compared to other ethnographic films. The need for additional information in the form of an introduction, or an accompanying text (such as this thesis) suggests a lower position than many ethnographic films which are able to be viewed independently. This is even more important when we compare it to other observational style films which are more fully able to stand alone without the use of explanatory text.

This begs the question of why more wasn’t included in the film to allow it to stand more fully on its own. It would have been easy to add narration, diagrams and other forms of ‘text’ in order to make my message more discernable to the viewer. However my primary focus was to allow the material to speak for itself and allow the viewer to draw their own conclusions regarding the state of hierarchy in the festival. Grimshaw (2001) notes a similar reasoning behind the films of observational filmmakers, David and Judith MacDougall.

… they create a space for the exercise of critical reason. Audiences are not expected to surrender their rationality, their cognitive appeal, since in the darkness of the auditorium the film-makers make the audience work. (p123)

It was important for the film material to be viewed in as natural a state as editing would allow and therefore allow students and researchers of the topic access to the data

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Films such as *Forest of Bliss* (1985), *Sweetgrass* (2009) and *Leviathan* (2012) contain little spoken words by the subjects and yet the meaning is still discernable through the use of editing techniques.
without being unduly led by my filmic techniques to convey meaning. Instead it was important for the meaning to be discernable in the visual material itself.
Chapter 8
Visual Research on Hierarchy

One of the aims of this research was to analyse the efficacy of film as a research method. I now propose focusing on my role within the festival, and my personal experience of hierarchy in regard to the various positions that I held and experienced. My position as filmmaker led me to interact with other groups using various forms of media to document the festival, including local media representatives. As a group closely connected to, and yet still distinct from the festival teams, the media offers an interesting opportunity to analyse the hierarchies in the festival from an outside perspective. It also led to an interesting demonstration of hierarchy between myself as a filmmaker, other media representatives, and the teams in the festival, which further emphasised the role that outside groups can play in the maintenance of hierarchy within the festival.

In this chapter I will start by looking further at film as a research method, and the advantages of adopting this approach. I will then outline the ways in which my presence highlighted both hierarchy formation, and continuation, amongst those on the periphery of the festival, as opposed to festival team members. I will particularly note the processes involved with my role as filmmaker and how these differ to other media representatives.

The Camera as a Research Method

There are several ways that being a filmmaker, as opposed to purely a researcher, proved to be helpful to my own research. In this section I will outline some of the ways that the camera enabled my research on hierarchy to take place, both during and after my fieldwork.
The camera as an ‘in’

In the first instance, the camera proved to be a way of making contact with my research participants in a way that was instantly understandable. My initial contact was through the leader of the Musashi group, Ogura-san, and through him I was introduced to the other members at various meetings and social gatherings. At each event I was introduced to the team members as a researcher who was making a documentary film about the festival. Everyone was provided with a brief written outline of my research aims, however, most people had little interest in the research, and instead focused on the filmmaking. In this way I believe that the camera and my role as a documentary filmmaker helped people to understand who I was. Instead of being a researcher standing in the corner taking notes, or merely seen as just standing there observing them, I had a recognizable role to fulfil. Marion (2010) refers to this phenomenon as a “passport”, allowing access to a world in which outsiders are not always welcome. He states, “In my case, photography served as both a social passport – allowing me access to the world of ballroom dancing – and a cultural passport – facilitating greater understanding and better representation.” (Marion, 2010, p.25). This is also true of my own research.

Many of the festival team members had little interest in the research I was carrying out, and only a basic understanding of why I was conducting my study. Many expressed surprise at the fact that I was researching the background workings of the festival. When talking to people as to how and why they were doing certain things many people were initially reticent to answer. This wasn’t, however, due to the fact that they felt uncomfortable talking about certain subjects. Instead it stemmed from the opinion that nobody would be interested in what they had to say. In their opinion only the festival itself was interesting to outsiders. The meetings and routine administration prior to the
festival were considered to be of little interest. The film, however, was something that could be easily grasped and understood. The participants in the festival were used to having members of the media filming various events prior to the festival. The camera made my purpose as a filmmaker instantly recognisable and therefore my presence needed little explanation. The access afforded by the camera allowed me to pursue my research interests more thoroughly by giving me access to the people and events surrounding the festival. Filmmaking opened a window to viewing and sensing relationships of hierarchy that existed within the festival by producing what the participants saw more neutrally as a record of the event.

The Camera as Identity

Another advantage of using a camera at a field site, which has been highlighted by Marion (2010) and Piault (1989), is the fact that the camera offers a role for the researcher as a participant. Many of the festival related events that I observed were physical and represented the ‘job’ of the participants within the festival. In some cases this was a practical endeavour, such as tying poles on to the mikoshi, and in others it represented learning the way in which something was done, being trained both in method and deference to a new position. If I were to merely observe the team members as they were working I might be seen negatively as I wasn't ‘helping out’. However, as a filmmaker, I also had a function at the events; I was there to film. As I too was performing a function, I was treated more as a member of the team. As Marc Piault stated in a roundtable discussion on filming ritual,

… take the reaction of the people in my film, Akazama. When they saw that I had a camera, they suddenly understood that I had an instrument, and that I was really working, seriously. They didn't regard writing down and discussing things as work at all. But once I had an instrument, that was different... Using a camera
is a way to interact, and people accept that you are working. (Henley, 1989, p. 22).

When turning up at an event I was greeted and asked how I was doing, or how my work was progressing in the same way as the other team members treated each other. As time progressed and I was seen as a regular feature at festival-related events, people would assist me in my ‘work’. Sometimes this was by moving obstacles so I could get a clearer view of what was happening. Other times it was pointing out something that would be interesting to film. For example, when the Musashi team was building their *mikoshi*, Yuria pointed out that I should film underneath the *mikoshi* where the wedges to hold the supporting poles were being inserted. This is something that I wouldn't have known about had she not shown me, and I dutifully filmed the wedges being hammered into place. Being shown the wedges also added extra detail to my research, in that it highlighted what the participants themselves saw as interesting. When the participants saw me carrying a camera, they felt that they should direct me towards what they thought was important. This represented an individual opinion and therefore served to demonstrate the individual experiences of the festival. The place Yuria was pointing out is integral to the construction of the *mikoshi* as a whole. In addition, it is where the plaque bearing the names of the original team members is located, and therefore was the source of some pride for Yuria, and the rest of the team.

When looking at using filmmaking as part of methodology it is important to consider the effect the use of a camera will have on the research participants. Shrum et al. (2005) have suggested that the camera can play a role as an ‘actor’ during field research. They argue that the camera is seen both independently and connected to the research, imbuing them with an alternative identity. They state, “The camera can take on the identity of the researcher or that of the subject, and in the next instant be a third party observer, a meta-subject occupying the focus of the video-active context or meta-researcher hovering
inconspicuously over the research scene.” (Shrum et al., 2005, p. 8). This suggests that the camera can play multiple roles, just as the researcher can and must in the field. Participant observation as a method implies that the researcher must be prepared to occupy different roles in the field site. Sometimes the role may be purely observational; in my case this was apparent when I observed the various meetings that took place before the festival. It was clear that I had no role to play in the meeting, and therefore I occupied a space near the back of the room, where I could inconspicuously observe what was being discussed. At other times my role was much more participatory and I was taking part in what was happening at the time. This could be when I was carrying the mikoshi, or when I was filming an activity that people wanted to be recorded.

By using a camera, the diversity of the roles that I played, as well as the ‘roles’ my camera played were extensive. I was seen on the one hand as a filmmaker, and on another as a researcher. I was also seen as a participant in the team and festival. This can be seen in an example from the pre-festival Musashi team drinking party, when I was asked to introduce myself during the party speeches. During the party I continued to film the events and interview people. I was filming the speeches when I was asked to go to the front of the room to be introduced. I had to quickly change from being a filmmaker to another role, and those around me shifted with my change. One of the participants grabbed the camera off me and continued filming the speeches just as I had been. The only difference now was that I was giving the speech. The filmmaking became participatory, with other people contributing not only to what I should be filming but actually taking part in the filmmaking process. Shrum et al. (2005, p. 9) refer to this as the ‘fluid wall’, using the concept of the ‘invisible wall’ as used by documentary filmmakers to show a separation between the filmmaker and the filmed. The ‘fluid wall’ suggests movement between those being filmed and the filmmaker. They go on to acknowledge that whilst the ‘fluid wall’ is useful when conducting
research, it doesn’t work so well in an actual film. In my case the ‘fluid wall’ served to
break down barriers and therefore strengthen ties between myself and research
participants, however, due to the loud nature of the party, the footage wasn’t usable in
the film I intended to make. It did, however, serve to strengthen the connection
between myself and the festival team members, and the filmmaking became a shared
process.

The Camera and the Participants

This leads to a discussion as to why certain things are filmed and for whom we are
filming. During the episode in which Yuria pointed out something important on the
mikoshi to film, I immediately filmed what she was pointing at. This was done for two
reasons; firstly, given her position within the festival, if she thought that something was
worth filming, then it was probably important. Secondly, it was important to film what
she wanted me to film. Part of the collaborative filmmaking process is to work together
with the film’s subjects to produce something that enables both the filmmaker’s and the
participants’ aims. This is a concept that is fully realized in the collaborative
the collaborative filmmaking process states:

Flores shows how a community-based video project he developed
collaboratively with local Q’eqchi people simultaneously ‘provided important
ethnographic insights about an indigenous group and its transformations’ and
‘provided the communities with new mechanisms for sociocultural

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1 One of the advantages of using film as a research method is the wealth of data captured which can then
be re-interpreted or used in various ways to present different arguments. This leads to the wide variety of
ethnographic films available today, including some of the more experimental forms which have pushed
the boundaries of ethnographic film. However, for a film to remain ethnographic there must be some
dialogue with anthropological theory (Ramey, 2011)
reconstruction and awareness after an intensely traumatic and violent period of

In this way the filmmaking process can be used to further the aims of both the
filmmaker and the film’s subject. This is, in a way, the true essence of collaborative
filmmaking. That is not to say that this collaboration is not a part of all filmmaking. It is
clear that all ethnographic filmmaking is to some extent collaborative. Maybe not all
films are as evidently collaborative as those in which political aims are stated by the
film’s participants, however, there is always an essence of working together because by
the very nature of the medium, permission must be given, even if it is implicit, in order
to film. As Banks (2001) states:

All image production by social researchers in the field, indeed all firsthand
social research of any kind, must be collaborative to some extent. The
researcher's very presence among a group of people is the result of a series of
social negotiations, some formal (such as obtaining visas and research permits
from government agencies), most informal (establishing trust, giving gifts,
saying ‘please’). At the point at which a camera - stills, cine or video - is
produced, even if no explicit permission is sought, the researcher often relies on
a tacit agreement between herself and her research subjects formed through their
earlier contact. (Banks, 2001: 119-120)

In the case of Yuria pointing out what to film it was important to follow her lead. Not
only could it have resulted in valuable footage, but it also went further to cementing the
relationship that I had formed with her. This was invaluable for future filming and
research as it enabled a long-term, positive relationship.

Yuria’s relationship with me was in part motivated by knowledge that she would
indeed be part of the film. In many cases, and particularly in Japan, people are aware of
the processes involved in filmmaking. They may not be fully aware of the consequences
of appearing in a film (which is why it is important for the filmmaker to inform participants of the ethnical implications of appearing in a film), however, they do have a good understanding of the filmmaking process. As Pink (2007) observed in her research conducted on people’s relationship between their sense of identity and home in the UK and Spain,

They had preconceived ideas about what to expect from and how to behave with a video camera. Although none of my informants had ever experienced a similar research exercise, each of our video recordings could be seen as a performance that had been informed by existing cultural and personal knowledge and experience about how one performs and communicates ‘on camera’. (p. 101-2)

It could be argued that a participant’s preconceived ideas about film may hamper research, however, I believe that this is not always true. For a start, by using a camera at almost every event and meeting it was impossible for the film’s participants to act in a certain way in front of the camera. After a while the participants became used to the camera’s presence. This methodology was made famous by the photographer Richard Billingham whose work portraying his family won him critical acclaim. His book Ray’s a Laugh (1996) depicts candid, and often harshly frank images of his family, as a commentary on the poverty of his childhood. In order to achieve these open images, he spent much of his daily life taking pictures of his family. Eventually they became so used to his camera ‘clicking’ that they stopped hiding their behaviour and just carried on how they would normally behave. This demonstrates how people can become accustomed to a camera, and therefore, by using a camera all the time the influence of the camera on people’s actions can be minimized. Methodologically, it is advantageous to embody the role of filmmaker throughout the field research, not only for reasons of identity, but also to allow the subject to become at ease with the process.
Yet at the same time the camera is at the centre of a dialogic process. The presence of the camera allows for all parties to focus on what is important for the project from their individual perspectives. The research participant can immediately recognize what the filmmaker is concentrating on by the direction in which the camera pointing and the presence of the ‘red light’ (Møhl, 2011). The participant can also make what is important to them known, by instructing the filmmaker where to film. This involves the participant concentrating on what it is they wish to be followed, and therefore, focuses everyone’s thinking on what it is important. As Henley (2000) states, “It can also concentrate the minds of the protagonists as to what it is about their lives that they specifically want to present to you.” (p.220). It almost acts as a kind of pre-editing, but using both the filmmaker’s and participants’ perspectives. This, of course, brings up a further debate of focusing too narrowly in the initial research and therefore not allowing the whole picture to be seen (Henley, 2000). The ‘pre-editing’ by the researcher and/or the participants could result in a narrow research field. However, I believe that the benefit in terms of fostering good relationships, as well as understanding what the participants themselves believe is important, makes it just as noteworthy a method.

**Interviewing**

Expanding on the discussion regarding the style of recording that took place during my fieldwork it is important to also address the issue of interviewing. The film created from this research is conspicuous in its lack of formal interviews. This is a choice that was deliberately made for several reasons. First of all, the end product represents a research film, the purpose of which was primarily to enable the investigation of hierarchy in the festival. As hierarchical creation and exchanges take place in subtle, often non-verbal ways it was important to gain as pure a recording of what ‘naturally’ could take place as possible. An observational style approach to recording was adopted
to allow these exchanges to take place. Observational cinema, as a general guideline, doesn't support the use of formal interviews. Instead life is allowed to unfold as it naturally would if the filmmaker/researcher was not there. The lack of interaction or emphasis on verbal communication with subjects allows for the researcher to, as Grimshaw (2005) puts it, foster “a new awareness of the non-verbal” (p.22). Whilst some forms of hierarchy may be enacted verbally between the participants, it was also important to record the examples of hierarchy that the participants may not have been aware of themselves.

In particular, interviews were eschewed in favour of a new sensitivity to context and to different, non-verbal ways by which social meaning was communicated. Recording technology was kept to a minimum, operated by film-makers as an extension of their bodies.” (Grimshaw, 2005, p.22)

The formal recorded interviews I recorded were telling enough in themselves. The participants in this research wanted the interview questions ahead of time in order to prepare their answers, which negated the purpose of the interviews from the start. In terms of interviewing, more was achieved when questions were asked in an informal, conversational way, which unfortunately could not be recorded on camera without the help of a second person to work the camera. This would have been at odds with what Grimshaw (2005) as technology being an extension of the filmmaker’s body, and may have further jeopardized the need to keep the field site as realistic as possible. If I were more focused on the film as an end product than conducting extensive interviews would of course help the viewer. Ultimately choices had to made regarding what was important for the research and its final presentation.
The Filmmaker and Hierarchy Within the Festival

Being a filmmaker allowed me first-hand access to some of the different relationships that exist around the festival. It was important for my research to be involved as a participant observer – not only as a member of the team, but also as a member of the media. My role within the festival allowed me to experience the various social relationships first hand, and therefore, I could analyse these connections from a different perspective. The importance of this process of engagement has been acknowledged by other anthropologists. Cox (2011) comments, “My gradual accommodation to the world of tea ceremony was made possible partly by an enskilment of vision and an adjustment of body and temperament to its richly structured environment, and partly by realisation that the waywardness and discomforts of my body were common to the experiences of my fellow participants.” (p. 68). In a similar way my experiences of the festival allowed me to understand more fully the way that the participants experienced the festival. As a member of the team I was able to go through the same processes of learning and negotiating my position as the other new members. I also had a very different role within the festival and therefore I was able to encounter different relationships connected to the festival.

I was by no means the only person recording the various festival events; and on a number of occasions others were filming and photographing what went on. They ranged from amateur photographers who sometimes self-published their works to professionals employed by TV news channels to document the event for a news segment. I felt that it was important to include the presence of the media in my research on hierarchy for several reasons. Indeed I was to an extent included in the frame of being a member of the media. The different media representatives have their own particular and unique hierarchical relationships. The presence of the media and their relationships with the festival teams both reflects and contributes to the hierarchical relationships that exist.
within the festival. The various media representatives will be outlined below in relation to their hierarchical ranking within the festival. In addition, the wider meaning of their hierarchical positions will also be discussed.

At the top of hierarchical media chain, as demonstrated in the events below, were representatives of the professional media. The festival itself was covered by several news channels that were filming on the days of the festival in order to broadcast a short news piece that evening. Interest in the festival was particularly high in the year of my research as the former (and present) Prime Minister Shinzō Abe\(^2\) decided to attend on one of the days. In addition, one of the cable news film crews was making an extended piece on the festival to be aired in the week prior to the festival. Every year the local media company, Japan Cable Network (Musashino Mitaka), films the festival for the local news. The short news segment serves to advertise the festival and to inform the local population of the festival events. In 2011, the JCN news team was involved in filming a special 30-minute programme about the festival, which would highlight the teams a little more and show some of the background to the festival. This meant that they were present at some of the organisational events, such as the Overall Briefing, which had previously not been filmed. This is where I met the film crew for the first time, which led to further encounters that in turn provided additional insights into my understanding of the hierarchies that exist within the festival.

**Media Hierarchy at the Overall Briefing**

The presence of the JCN news crew led to an interesting dynamic with myself as a filmmaker. I was present at the festival meeting along with my translator to both observe and film the event. My primary contact with the festival was through the leader

\(^2\) Shinzō Abe was Prime Minster from 2006-2007, and again from 2012-present. In addition, as a graduate of Seikei University, which is located in Kichijoji, he had connections to the city.
of the Musashi team, Ogura-san, however, this festival meeting was held by the
*shotenkai* teams, and therefore I was there by invitation only. I had had little connection
at that point with the members of the *shotenkai* teams. Despite this, they were very
welcoming and accommodating to my needs as both researcher and filmmaker. There
were, however, interesting differences between the way the JCN news team and myself
were treated that highlight some of the hierarchical differences between people who are
involved in the festival in a more peripheral role, including those who are there to
document the event.

The main way in which the JCN news team was differentiated from other members
of the media was in the way they were treated by the participants at the meeting. The
JCN news crew are part of a national media company and they were given preferential
treatment over the other media representatives present. On arrival at the meeting I was
told to set up my camera at the back of the room. I was introduced as making a
documentary film, but as I had no connection to a TV channel or company in Japan I
was cautioned, along with another person who was there to report on the meeting, to
defer to the needs of the news crew. I was placed in the same category as a reporter who
produced a small magazine on the events of Kichijoji. Although known by everyone,
the reporter had little official capacity as he self-produced the magazine. Both the
independent reporter and myself were expected to concede to the wants of the JNC
news crew and to act appropriately by not getting in the way.

The positioning of the members of the media was interesting in itself since it
reflected the priorities JNC news had in recording the events and was relatively
autonomous of the hierarchical relationships within the festival structure. Usually, in
Japanese meetings, the person who occupies the highest position sits furthest from the
door (Bestor, 1989). In figure 4.1, we can see that this holds true for the people
participating in the Overall Briefing. The top table containing the main festival
organisers, is placed furthest from the door, the shotenkaï leaders and city representatives, such as the fire department and police, occupy the spaces moving away from the top table, and the sekkininsha, who represent the lowest level present, occupy the rather awkward space in the middle.

In terms of members of the media, myself and the independent magazine producer were placed in the corner at the back, furthest from the door and next to the city representatives. The JCN news crew were situated right next to the door, diagonally opposite the city representatives and the top table. It is unusual that the JCN news crew would be standing so close to door if the principles of hierarchical placement were being adhered to. This can be explained by the fact that the JCN news crew chose their own position, and the rest of the media arranged themselves around their choice of position. This is reminiscent of the experiences of Ted Bestor (1989) during his early field research in Tokyo. He states,

> At the first formal chōkai event that my wife and I attended together, we sat down without too much thought in what I already knew to be low-status position: against the front wall toward the bottom of the hall. It visibly startled people that husband and wife would sit together, and several people gently urged us towards separate spots. When we foolishly declined… the elaborate gradations of status and the “immutable” division between men’s and the women’s sides were suddenly rearranged around us. (p. 191).

In a similar way, the JCN news team chose a position, and everyone else was expected to rearrange themselves accordingly. Both myself and the independent journalist, occupying the lowest level on the media hierarchy were placed furthest from the JCN news crew.

One of the reasons for the JCN news team’s choice is probably the subject of their film. They were making an explanatory programme about the festival and therefore the
meeting wasn’t being filmed for its contents. Instead it was just a short segment demonstrating what happens behind the scenes. The location of the camera suggests that the subjects of interest were the top table and the city representatives. In part, this acknowledges the nature of the festival representing the city, and therefore it would be appropriate to feature visible representatives of the city. It also makes a more visually pleasing topic, as the city representatives were all present in their respective uniforms.

On the other side of the room, and therefore not in shot, were the shotenkai leaders, who were dressed casually. To the untrained eye, no one would have known who or what they represented and therefore they could easily be left out of the news segment.

To a viewer of the JCN program, the most important people in the meeting would have been the top table and city representatives as they were the only characters visible in the footage. In actual fact the most important people were the top table, shotenkai leaders and sekkininsha. These people did all of the organizing both prior to and during the festival. The city representatives had relatively little to do with the festival, and certainly no power within the festival committee. In this way we can see how visual media can distort the truth of a situation. The truth was skewed in favor of highlighting the top table and the city officials despite their lack of involvement in the festival organization. At no point was there any reference to the Musashi team, and therefore to the outside viewer their involvement in the festival would have been seen as negligible.

The way that the JCN news crew were treated and the way all other members of the media were expected to arrange themselves according to the JCN team’s needs demonstrates their hierarchical position within the media representatives. As a filmmaker I was seen as being a member of the media, and therefore I was expected to follow the lead of everyone else. This led to me being able to experience the hierarchies of peripheral festival participants first hand, as well as allowing me access to another group associated with the festival. In addition, later analysis of the spatial dynamics of
the media representatives revealed how the media affects, and can be used to affect the hierarchical relationships of those involved.

**Hierarchy of the Film Crew**

The presence of the JCN news team offered another chance to see how the festival affects the hierarchy of those who take place, not only within the context of the festival but in the wider world as well. I was able to talk with the JCN news team following the Overall Briefing, and they volunteered to assist me in my research, which resulted in an invitation to go to the JCN news station.

The news crew consisted of two people; a cameraman, and a producer. The producer was also a member of the Taisho Saire shotenkai team, which allowed the news crew important access. As a general rule all those who are involved in the festival must wear an official *happi* (jacket). Therefore, anyone wishing to officially film or photograph the festival also had to wear one of the team’s *happi*. In order to join one of the shotenkai team’s you had to have a reference from someone connected to the team or *shotenkai*, so it was important to know somebody in the team. As a result of the producer’s connection to this team, the film crew was able to gain greater access to the festival and therefore they were able to wear the *happi* of the Taisho Saire team.

The news team filmed the event every year, and therefore I expressed interest in seeing their previous material. This was in part in order to gain a further understanding of the news team’s connection to the festival, and also to see the footage of the festival. The Kichijoji Autumn festival is somewhat unique in comparison to other *mikoshi* festivals in Japan in that it mainly focuses on travelling around narrow, covered
shopping streets\textsuperscript{3}. From a filmmaking point of view this meant there would be difficulties in finding good vantage points and dealing with echoing sound. I wanted to view a professional company’s footage to see how they dealt with some of these technical issues.

My visit to the TV studio provided me with insights into the complex, contextual and cross-cutting nature of hierarchy in Japanese society, and in the ways in which it was enacted in the context of the Kichijoji festival. During the events in which the TV crew filmed the festival, Kitagawa-san, the man that I took to be the producer, was treated as such in front of the festival members. The cameraman followed his lead and acted in a deferential manner towards him, respectfully following his lead. The same cameraman had filmed the festival for several years, but had never been a member of a festival team. However, in the TV studio, this relationship was very much reversed. Whereas the cameraman had previously acted quietly, following Kitagawa-san around, in the TV studio he was very much in charge. His demeanour became more confident and almost everyone in the studio treated him with the respect usually shown to those in hierarchically higher positions. In actual fact it turned out that Kitamura-san’s job as the Planning Division chief was more office-based and he was only involved in the filming of the festival because of his contact with one of the teams. In this way it became clear that membership of a festival team can raise a person’s position hierarchically for the time of the festival, however, on returning to everyday situations, the existing order is maintained. This example bears a passing resemblance to Victor Turner’s analysis of the ‘liminal state’ during rituals. Both the producer, and the cameraman’s behaviour to each other was markedly different during the festival events. In this case, the respective positions of the two were switched during the festival events. This is contrary to the

\footnote{This is not to say that other festivals in Japan don’t travel down the covered shopping arcades, but that the Kichijoji Autumn festivals spends a very large percentage of time on these streets, as opposed to more open residential streets which are the main feature of most \textit{mikoshi} festivals.}
example given by Turner in *Betwixt and Between: The Liminal Period in Rites de Passage* (1987) in which the protagonist is shown to lose their status and identity in the community during the liminal state. In my example the producer actually gains status, however this is consistent with a character occupying a very different state during the liminal period. In contrast to Turner’s findings, the subject (in this case the TV producer) does not return to everyday life changed by the experience. Instead the special state is only present during the festival or associated events. Upon retuning to everyday life at the TV company, the producer returned to his original role and status. In this case the usual hierarchy is dictated by the job that each individual holds, whereas during the liminal state within the festival it is determined by membership of a team. Making assessments of people’s positions within ritual events is also dependant on the functions that they must carry out and therefore it is difficult to read too much into changing hierarchical relationships. In order to fulfil their filmmaking function, the producer and the cameraman played different roles to what they were used to during the festival. However, this didn’t necessarily mean that they would then be fully engaging in the changes expected following the liminal period of many festival or ritual participants. As can be seen by this episode, following the festival the producer did not gain any standing amongst his peers, however the long-term effects of his festival role may have some result on his position and standing within his company. Their roles as employees of the JCN news company far outweighed the changes in status that may be accompanied by participation in a festival.

**Local Media - Photographers**

Another event, which highlights the hierarchy of those recording the festival, occurred during the main parade on the second day of the festival. The procession of *mikoshi* and the position of the taiko drummers centers on the stage truck positioned at
one end of Heiwa Dori. It is also an ideal location to record the parade as it is raised and allows for the whole parade to be easily viewed. Each year the advertising posters for the festival feature a picture of the parade taken from this ideal vantage spot.

Ogura-San had mentioned that the stage was an ideal place to film from and so he took me there soon after the stage was set up. At the time there were half a dozen photographers and cameramen already on the stage setting up their equipment to record the parade. However, it was quickly made clear by both the media representatives and the leaders of the shotenkai who were in the area that I was not allowed on the stage, and I was asked to leave.

Figure 8.1. Front cover of the 2011 Kichijoji Autumn Festival Brochure featuring a photo taken from the main stage

This incident provides an interesting insight into both the hierarchy of the media representatives, and the hierarchy within the festival. As far as the media representatives were concerned, I was not an official member of the press, as despite my adhering to festival policy by wearing a team happi, I did not have a press badge. Other people in a similar category to me, for example, the man who produced his own magazine, were
also not allowed onto the stage. This is the only event in which an official badge is 
required and this was used as a means of asserting authority. On other occasions, 
including the rituals performed at the opening ceremony, myself and other media 
representatives freely moved right up to the inner area of the shrine with no problem. So 
this event represented one of the few times when the professional media could assert 
their position.

From the perspective of the festival teams, this incident showed another kind of 
hierarchical situation altogether. The second day of the festival is considered to be 
focusing on the shotenkai teams, and therefore the Musashi team, and the Miyamikoshi, 
take a back seat in most of the events on Sunday. This is further demonstrated by this 
incident. Ultimately the decision as to whether to allow me onto the stage was not down 
to the other members of the media. It was a decision made by the leaders of the 
shotenkai. As I was introduced to the festival by the leader of the Musashi team, and 
spent most of my time filming them, I was seen as part of the Musashi team. It became 
clear during the discussion about whether or not I could go on the stage that the decision 
was based more on my team affiliation, than on any specific policy. I received the 
distinct impression that had I not been taken there by the leader of the Musashi team, 
allowances may have been made. Had I approached the leader of the organizing team, 
Heiwa Dori, chances are I may have been allowed to stand on the stage despite the 
protestations of the media members. So whilst the Musashi is technically hierarchically 
higher within the structure of the festival, the shotenkai teams assert their own levels 
based on individual contexts.

This incident highlights the difference between the levels of the various members of 
the media. It also highlights how the festival participants consideration of the media 
members affects their ability to do their job. In my own experience the consideration of 
the members of the Musashi team allowed me to carry out my filming and research. I
also received considerations from other members of the festival. For example, the priest of the Musashino Hachimangu shrine changed his attitude towards me throughout my field research. At first he was reluctant for me to film and warned me against using night vision during the secret ceremony to install the kami in the mikoshi. However, upon arrival at the ritual site he had turned on some background lighting, which the Musashi members commented must have been for my benefit. By the end of the festival, at a special closing ceremony, he actively sought me out and invited me to stand next to him as he performed the ritual to remove the kami from the mikoshi. These examples show how the participant’s opinion of the filmmaker can have a direct impact on their work.

**Summary**

From the very beginning, film was an integral part of my research. From my first contact with the festival participants, using a camera allowed me not only access to the field site, but also a way to experience some of the hierarchies connected with the peripheral edges of the festival first hand.

As a method of research, film proved invaluable as it provided me with a role that was easily understandable to the festival participants. Using a camera imbued me with an identity that was clearly defined and easy to comprehend. I could also be seen as actively ‘working’ and therefore as a contributing member of the group. This in turn allowed me to build relationships with the festival participants. In addition, using a camera also allowed me access to events and information that may not have been accessible without it. It became clear that information was made readily available to me, partly because of the presence of the camera. Therefore the camera was invaluable as a method of not only entering the field, but of acquiring information that may not have been readily available had I not fulfilled my role as ‘filmmaker’.
In addition, by being a confirmed member of a peripheral group, i.e. the media, I was able to experience first hand the hierarchies that exist around the festival. I was expected to behave according to my position with respect to those around me, and I was able to observe the ways in which hierarchies and their adherence are negotiated. I was also able to experience how membership of a team changes your position within the festival, and therefore also among my fellow media members. This enriched my research on hierarchies within the festival from both an analytical and insider perspective.
Chapter 9
Discussion and Conclusion

The festival hierarchies investigated in this research can roughly be separated into two categories; those between the mikoshi teams, and those within the teams. Each offers a complex and complementary view of the relationships that exist within the community festival. It has also become clear through this research that different methodologies were advantageous in the exploration of the different forms of hierarchy.

Hierarchies Between Teams

The structure of the Kichijoji Autumn Festival allows for the straightforward exploration of hierarchies between mikoshi festival teams. The teams can effectively be separated into three levels; the Musashi team which represents the shrine, the four organising shotenkai teams, and the rest of the shotenkai teams. This structure has been largely stipulated by the history of Kichijoji and the original formation of the festival.

The history of the festival offers a clear explanation for these hierarchies. As the town of Kichijoji developed, so did the relationships between members of the community. Identity, especially that of mikoshi teams, is often formed in opposition to an ‘other’ (Onjo, 2006), and in the case of the Kichijoji festival, it too was formed in opposition to another festival. The original festival organised by the Itsukaichi-kaido shopping district served in part to display their position of power within the community. People living away from this main shopping strip were restricted from taking part in the festival, which resulted in a fragmented community. This sense of fragmentation is a theme, which has continued through to today. As the city of Kichijoji developed and the centre of commercial power moved away from Itsukaichi-kaido towards the station area of Kichijoji, a new festival developed. This festival had one mikoshi, which represented
the whole of the community. This continued for many years until eventually, due to political, social and financial circumstances, the festival was abandoned.

The festival was recreated by the citizens of Kichijoji in 1973 and once again one mikoshi represented the whole of Kichijoji. According to the mission statement of the Musashi team it was created with the purpose of unifying the young people of Kichijoji (Preservation Society Anniversary book, 2006), however, it became clear that this did not represent the wants of all of the people of Kichijoji. Some of the shotenkai wanted their own mikoshi for their own district with their own objectives in mind. The divisions that arose as a result of this process have grown to the point where today the festival is largely fragmented along motivational lines.

Team Motivations

The Musashi team and the shotenkai teams have very different motivations for joining the festival. When we refer to the mission statement of the Musashi team we can see that community building is at the heart of this team, a fact reflected in the make up of the team itself. Having representatives from most of the shotenkai teams means that the Musashi team embodies the whole of Kichijoji. The Miyamikoshi represents the shrine, which in turn represents the whole of the town, as opposed to a separate residential area or commercial street. In this way we can see that community building is a strong motivational factor for the Musashi team.

When we focus closer on the individuals themselves we can see a slightly different motivational aspect coming out. The strong family ties within the Musashi team reflect the generational nature of the team. The family commitment to the festival, and the Musashi team, is something that is clearly seen in the film. Throughout the film references are made to the various family ties, and three of the main characters are closely related. I believe that this is an important motivating factor in joining the
Musashi team, and one that was repeated throughout my fieldwork observations. It was less apparent, however, with the people who were only members of the shotenkai teams. Many of solely shotenkai team members were more casual in their membership, and some only joined the festival for one of the two days of the festival.

The shotenkai teams have a very different motivational orientation, associated with the festival as a commercial venture. Attracting custom to their shotenkai area is very much a factor in their participation. This aspect of the festival is one reason why the festival is held on a weekend as opposed to the previous set date of the 15th of September. The weekend enables customers to go shopping and watch the festival at the same time. The teams are repeatedly warned not to disturb potential shoppers, and to consider their safety at all times. This is something that is adhered to by all of the shotenkai teams, but one that is sometimes ignored by the Musashi team, as can be seen in their willingness to openly drink and to allow children to ride the Miyamikoshi.

The fun aspect of the festival, the pleasure gained from participating in it, was in itself a key motivating factor, according to interviews and conversations with members of the shotenkai teams. Pleasure articulates in different ways with the ethos of the respective teams and their motivations for membership. Membership of the Musashi team requires long-term commitment and the nurturing of relationships developed over time. The ‘fun’ of the festival works to foster stronger community ties and celebrate membership of and participation in a collaborative venture. In the case of the shotenkai team members are on the whole less committed to community aspect of the festival preferring to limit their connection to the shotenkai they are associated with.

**Legitimacy**

Ultimately the different motivations behind the Musashi team and the shotenkai teams reflect their position within the festival. Each of the teams draw on their
motivations as a way of legitimising their status. For the Musashi team, history and tradition is used as a means of controlling their position within the festival. This can be seen in the various rituals which are enacted by the Musashi team. The rituals portrayed in the film were only available in that form to the Musashi team. The *shotenkai* teams had much reduced versions of the rituals. The following of traditional rites places the Musashi team, and by extension the Kichijoji Autumn Festival, in a hierarchical ranking with other *mikoshi* festival across Japan. The Musashi team in Kichijoji often makes reference to the Sanja festival, and the Asakusa area, in order to provide legitimacy for their status. When Musashi reintroduced the festival in 1973, a shop in Asakusa was chosen to refurbish the *mikoshi*. They also follow many of the traditional rites and rituals of other *mikoshi* festival in order to legitimise their position at the top of the Kichijoji Autumn festival.

Recently the *shotenkai* teams have been following suit, so that now they all have a ritual to install the *kami* in their *mikoshi* in order to gain recognition as an ‘authentic’ *mikoshi* team. From conversations with members of the *shotenkai* teams, it is clear that legitimising their position within the festival with regard to the Musashi team was one of the main motivating factors behind the *shotenkai* teams recently adopting the ritual to invite the *kami* into the *mikoshi*. The *shotenkai* teams of Kichijoji all have unique aspects, which help to form their identity in opposition to the other teams. By adopting the practices of some more famous festivals across Japan, the *shotenkai* teams are attempting to legitimise their position through association. However, it is not yet seen to be a major event in the *shotenkai* teams participation in the festival. The low attendance at the various religious rituals suggests that the enjoyment of taking part in the festival far outweighs any wider political or religious issues. The team that makes the largest effort to acknowledge their hierarchical position in connection to other festivals is the Musashi team.

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Team Hierarchy Dynamics

When talking of the hierarchies between the various teams of the Kichijoji Autumn Festival it could be easy to assume that they are set according to the prescribed level that the team occupies. While this is sometimes represented as being the case, in reality the relationships within the festival are constantly changing. The changing position of the Taisho Saire team provides an example of this. As a relatively new member of the festival the team occupies a position, along with most of the teams, in the third tier of the festival. However, the team has been making a concerted effort to improve upon its position. This has been done largely through the use of the Musashi team.

The way in which the Taisho Saire team have consciously developed a closer relationship with the Mushashi team is significant to understanding the dynamics and relationship building processes within the hierarchical structure of the festival. It also reflects the ambivalent attitudes that are held towards the Musashi team. Although the Musashi team draws its membership from the shotenkai teams many members of the shotenkai teams somewhat resent the Musashi team, because of its higher status. Yet precisely because of its higher ranking there are good reasons why some members of shotenkai teams might choose to attain membership of the Masashi team.

Many of the shotenkai members who choose to join the Musashi team are related to current members. The Taisho Saire team, on the other hand, is actively increasing its membership of the Musashi team, despite limited family connections within the team. The Taisho Saire team makes up about 15 percent of the regular Musashi team; a significant percentage considering that the team is not one of the original four shotenkai teams. In addition, the Taisho Saire team carried the Miyamikoshi on the Sunday of the festival alongside their own mikoshi. The result of their increased presence in the Musashi team is a rising influence in the festival as a whole. Indeed the Taisho Saire
team managed to secure a place on the second tier of the festival hierarchy, by jointly organising the festival in 2012 with the Daiya Gai team.

Hierarchies between teams – methodology

Throughout the field research process film was used as a key method of data gathering. Despite the arguments against using film from the start of research gathering I felt that the potential benefits outweighed the negatives. Other scholars support this idea. For example, Banks & Zeitlyn (2015) make reference to this in regards to the PhD research conducted by Carlo Cubero (2008)

In this case planning and setting up the film taught him more about how things happen on Culebra than is contained in the formal content of the film itself. In other words, through the process of making the film he acquired a lot of ethnographic knowledge, some of which was ‘data’ that he actively sought out but much of which was acquired implicitly or indirectly in the course of discussing with participants just what the film would be ‘about’. (p 14)

In a similar way I was able to gain further insights through the fact that I was filming that would not have been available to me had I not been filming. These include the festival members actively seeking me out and showing me things to film, as well allowing for relationships that had been hard to see at the time, to become more transparent once viewed in the film footage. However, this does not mean that film was integral throughout the whole process of analysis and data presentation.

Film was only one of the methodologies employed in my research. I used film as an central part of my research method, but always having in mind that film was one of the ways in which my findings were going to be finally presented. In some cases film was primarily used as a means of recording data, producing footage that was unlikely to appear in the final film. For example, I spent much time attending the various meetings
that took place in organising the festival. Although the meetings were all filmed, the footage was not used in the final film. Instead the filming served as a way of documenting the proceedings so that they could be reviewed later on and discussed with the participants. In addition to participant observation, I also conducted archival research on the history of the festival and collected and translated the various documents produced for and by the festival committees.

In researching the festival and in deciding the best ways to present my findings there was a dialogical relationship between film and text as media for conveying my findings, and film as an integral part of the method by which data was obtained. In researching and analysing the hierarchical relationships between the festival teams, there was little relevant visual data to be used. Indeed the main sources of data lay outside the contemporary events that I filmed, though the past histories were certainly active in the present. Had this research relied solely on the visual data gathering and presentation, the hierarchical relationships between the festival teams, as well their complex historical relationships, would not have been revealed. And for this reason my analysis of the relationships between the teams is covered more substantially in the written text than in the film, the one complementing the other.

**Hierarchy within the teams**

My investigation into hierarchy within the *mikoshi* teams was limited mainly to the Musashi team, as this was my primary contact within the festival. The research into the hierarchies within the Musashi team was made possible through the analysis of film footage taken at various events prior to the festival. It was also evident in the interviews and conversations conducted with the team members as well as through observations made during the festival.
There are three official levels within the Musashi team; the Old Boys, the Executive Committee, and the regular team members, which reflects wider research conducted on mikoshi matsuri (Traphagan, 2000). However, within these levels further distinctions are at play that are delicately negotiated between the members. Sometimes these are negotiated according to set principles, such as age, and at other times it is due to more personal aspects, such as family relationships or personality. It is clear that hierarchy is not only constrained by set societal rules, but instead is a much more dynamic process.

There are several ways in which the members negotiate their relationships within the team, for example, there were several instances where the use of linguistic terminology either helped or hindered a person’s position. Aimi’s exchanges with Ogura-san demonstrate the way in which the subtle use of terminology allowed for the acknowledgment of his position with regard to hers. Even though she was more knowledgeable on the process of constructing the mikoshi, she also made sure that his position remained above hers throughout their discussions. Her daughter, Yuria, on the other hand was less adept at this and sometimes spoke to those on the same level or above her in a way that wasn’t respectful of their positions. Her obvious embarrassment at this suggested that whilst she was aware of the role she needed to play, she was still learning how to do it.

Throughout my dealings with the Musashi team it was clear that individual factors of sociability and engagement were important in forming relationships that facilitated the successful incorporation of team members within the hierarchy. All new team members are being shown, from the moment of entry, how to act appropriately within the social dynamics of the team. However, there is room for individual personalities to shine. Film as a research method enabled me to ‘capture’ those moments and to communicate them to the viewers. In focussing on the training of new recruits to conduct practical festival matters, the film also revealed the ways in which they negotiated their relationships.
with each other. Yuria and Makoto, who became among the main characters of the film were the most actively involved in the various festival and festival-related events. In the team party, they were highly social, visiting all of the tables and drinking together. They were also the most active in the more practical preparations of the festival, such as in the construction of the *mikoshi*. Arguably it is this combination of sociability, enthusiasm and a willingness to work that results in a heightened position within the team.

It must be acknowledged, however, that there are other ways to show enthusiasm, and that different forms are acknowledged within the team. Whilst characters such as Yuria and Makoto acted with visible enthusiasm throughout the festival, there were other members who were much less demonstrative. Masayori Ogura, Ogura-san’s nephew, a hard-working member of both the Sun Road and Musashi team showed his commitment and engagement in his own way. He has obviously worked hard to achieve his recent acceptance into the Musashi team and is in the process consolidating his relationships and establishing his status within the team’s hierarchy. However, he was a naturally shy person who had difficulty in engaging in the easy conversation witnessed with Yuria and Makoto. Instead his enthusiasm was shown by keeping his head down and working hard. Ultimately, it is clear that as long as a commitment to the team is shown it is possible to progress through to the Musashi team. It must be noted, however, that as a member of the Ogura family his path was probably already laid out.

**Film as Research Presentation**

In terms of presenting my findings the film played an invaluable role. The relationships between the various members of the Musashi team are very complex and often it is not easy to explain why some of the activities they engage in are done in the way prescribed. The film enables this understanding in terms of the festival as a whole.
The group can be clearly seen working together to achieve the goal of carrying the *mikoshi*, which is shown in the final section of the film. The final section also shows the need for the extensive training which is offered to the new recruits. The weight of the *mikoshi* and exuberance in carrying it can quickly be seen in the footage. This then helps to explain why the training is so extensive. However, the written thesis is required to take this argument further and apply it the festival as a whole. If the skills needed are so important why are the *shotenkai* teams not offering the same training to their new recruits. By bringing in deeper understanding of the individual team motivations the thesis enables the reader to understand how the teams differ in aspects such as training. The written part of the research allows for this be explained, whilst the film allows for the reasoning to be displayed.

At the more abstract level of social and cultural meanings, film images allow objects to appear in both their guises as symbolically meaningful (to those who know, or care) and not meaningful. Or, to put it another way, they underscore the point that although symbols may be produced by a society, they are not necessarily seen as meaningful by those who observe them or even use them.

(MacDougall 2006, p 50)

The film was able to enrich the research by not only allowing for the deeper hierarchical relationships to become evident, but also by allowing for these relationships to be shown. As MacDougall (2006) suggests, film has a different way of communicating knowledge than text, and both are legitimate forms of representation.

**Limitations**

One of my research hypotheses was investigate if hierarchy could be portrayed in an ethnographic film without the need for an accompanying text. Hierarchy is an abstract concept, and as this thesis has shown, is subtly demonstrated in a variety of forms and
situations. I have argued that most ethnographic films do actually contain ‘text’ in the form of narration and subtitling, which filmmakers commonly use in order to convey theory (Zhang, 2012). In addition, it has been argued by Banks (2007) that the research investigated in an ethnographic film naturally has a written counterpart. It would be strange for a researcher not to also write a paper, or produce some kind of written report of the investigation.

…a film created and presented as an outcome of a piece of social research will not be the sole output; there will be reports, a dissertation, published papers, conference presentation and other forms of written and language-based output. Taken together these form a corpus of research results, each part making its own point but each supporting or adding alternative perspectives to the others.

(Banks 2007, p. 100)

In the case of my own research I have not only written this thesis but have extensively presented parts of the findings at conferences both domestically and internationally. Often segments of the video footage were shown as part of the conference paper.

However, the question I am interested in investigating further, and one that I think is important when looking at the field of visual anthropology, is whether the film can support itself unaided. In the case of this research it is a difficult question to answer. Whilst the film can be watched alone, it doesn’t contain all the concepts of hierarchy that are present in and around the festival. Due to time constraints, as well as lack of footage, the film focuses exclusively on the Musashi team. It looks specifically at the way in which hierarchy is learnt and negotiated within the various levels of the team. The thesis, on the other hand, looks at a far wider arena of hierarchy, including the hierarchical structure of the festival and how it operates. This is partly because of the fact that the thesis is able to hold a lot more analytical information. That is not to say film cannot hold a wealth of information, which can be analysed in extensive ways
(Pink, 2007). Instead it must be acknowledged that film and text are able to convey different kinds of data. Film can convey the sensation of being present at or even participating in an event, or the subtle processes of communication between people. This is more difficult to achieve in writing unless you are particularly adept at prose.

What I wish to suggest is that much that is cumulative in writing becomes, in the cinema, composite. We grasp objects and events in their complexes and continuities, and it is the interrelationships of these that are often more important than the components of the images taken separately. This concurrence within the image, which is both concrete and perceptual, is by no means the only important difference between writing and filming, but it is one that has the potential to produce quite different accounts of human beings in their social settings, and indeed will inevitably do so. The cultural complexes revealed in visual media not only involve distinctive sets and arrangements of material objects, but also the relations between objects and actions, and the interplay between actions occurring simultaneously or in close combination, as in the interactive postures and gestures that human beings adopt in conversation. (MacDougall 2006, p37-8)

The film produced for this research was able to convey much more information about the subtle hierarchical relationships between the various team members and allow for the viewer to witness these negotiations first hand. However, the film contained only certain events and limited forms of hierarchy. My thesis, on the other hand looked into many more kinds of hierarchy, including those between the various teams, which I wasn’t able to be convey in the film. Therefore, the question must be asked if in fact film and text should be separated. As Henley (2000) points out,

If we think of ethnographic films as a direct alternative to ethnographic texts and seek to judge them by the same criteria, then it is all too easy to dismiss them as
being inadequate. But if we consider them as a means of representation that may be used in conjunction with written texts to provide more rounded and comprehensive ethnographic accounts, then the present combination of technical and intellectual circumstances provides every encouragement for thinking that the promise of ethnographic film, held in suspension since the first days of modern anthropology, is finally to be redeemed. (p. 222)

I hope that though this thesis I been able to show the merits of different methodologies, analyses and ways of presenting data. Ultimately, I believe that they are all valid, and in the essence of a well-rounded study that they can, and should, be used in conjunction with each other.
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**Filmography**


