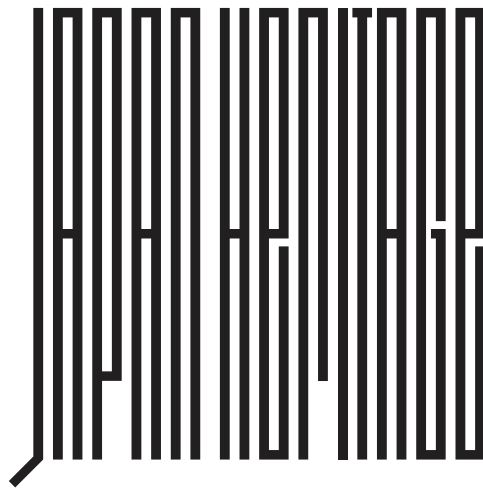
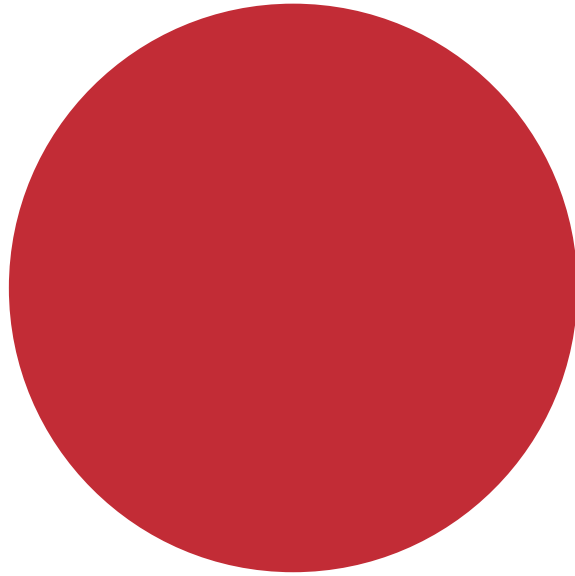


JAPAN HERITAGE



JAPAN HERITAGE

Agency for Cultural Affairs

Outline of Japan Heritage

1) The Mission of Japan Heritage

Heritage is a connection to our past: a legacy of our cultural and natural history, and an invaluable source of inspiration to pass on to future generations.

The Agency for Cultural Affairs' Japan Heritage aims to promote our unique cultural traditions, encourage use of our national cultural properties, and to revitalize regional economies.

Japan's tangible and intangible cultural properties have been preserved through narratives based on unique regional histories and traditions.

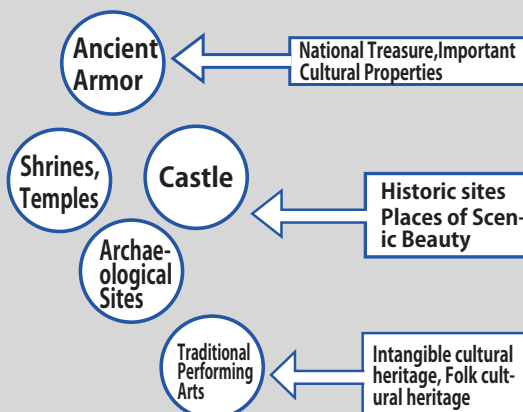
By recognizing these stories as Japan Heritage, the Agency plans to promote these historical legacies and to provide comprehensive support so that this heritage may be effectively preserved and maintained.

2) The Primary Objectives of Japan Heritage

- To recognize the narratives that bind Japan's regional cultural properties
- To maintain and use these regional cultural properties in a cohesive manner
- To strategically and effectively promote the narratives pertaining to cultural properties within Japan and abroad

Previous Administration on Cultural Properties

Designate and preserve each property as a 'Site'

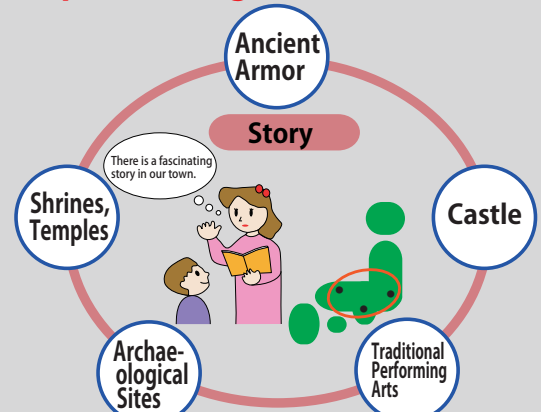


Focus on "Preservation"

effect
• Fails to communicate area's appeal

Japan Heritage

Link each narrative, region and Cultural Property to promote Japan Heritage



Focus on "Site Utilization"

effect
• Local branding promotion and regional identity recognition

Application Requirements for Japan Heritage Designation

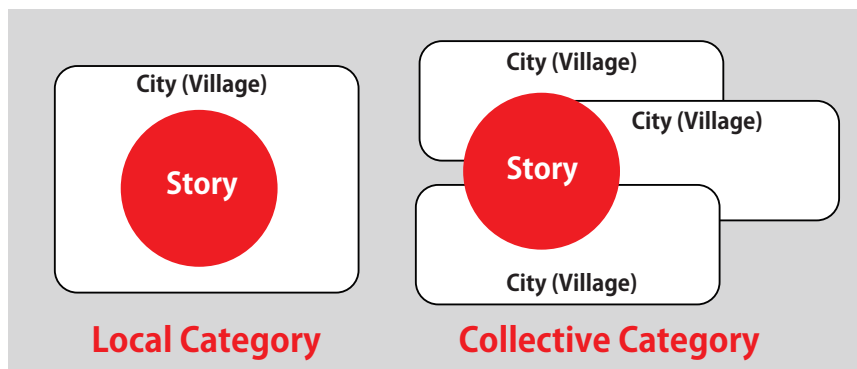
3) Criteria for Japan Heritage Designation

Japan Heritage designation is based on three criteria:

- Historically unique traditions or customs that have been passed on for generations.
- A clear theme that supports the area's appeal and that is represented at the core of the narrative. This can include cultural properties such as structures, archaeological sites, sightseeing spots, and local festivals.
- Inclusion of a narrative, rather than simply a summary of regional history and a description of local cultural properties.

Japan Heritage status is divided into two categories:

1. Local Category: A narrative pertaining to one city or village
2. Collective Category: A narrative pertaining to several cities or villages



4) Application Requirements for Japan Heritage Designation

The Agency for Cultural Affairs will annually solicit applications at the prefectural level.

1. An applicant may be a municipal government. Applications under the Collective Category may be submitted jointly in the name of all relevant cities or municipal governments. If the municipal governments are in the same prefecture, the prefecture may apply on their behalf.
2. Each application must include at least one nationally-designated tangible or intangible Cultural Property. Locally recognized or unrecognized cultural properties that are part of the narrative may also be included.
3. Site submissions for the Local Category must meet at least one of the following conditions:
 - A municipal government that has formulated The Basic Scheme for Historic and Cultural Properties or Plan on Maintenance and Improvement of Traditional Scenery.
 - A municipal government with submissions that have been included on the World Heritage List Nominations or its Tentative List.

Japan Heritage Designation Process

5) Designation Processes

The Agency for Cultural Affairs designates Japan Heritage based on the judgement of the Japan Heritage Review Board, a board consisting of professionals from outside the Agency.



6) Review Criteria

There are three criteria for Japan Heritage designation.

1) Narrative describes the distinct historical features of the area as well as supporting the appeal of Japan as a whole.

※ In specific terms, a comprehensive review of applicants is judged by the following points:

(1)Interest: Narrative should encourage and develop visitors' interest in the area

(2)Originality: Narrative reveals new insights and information about the area.

(3)Appeal: Narrative is easily and clearly understood without specific knowledge

(4)Uniqueness: Narrative has exceptional aspects not found in other areas of Japan

(5)Local: Narrative includes unique local culture

2)A concrete strategy with a future vision of how an area can develop while taking advantage of its cultural properties.

3) Efforts are coordinated to revitalize the local areas through Japan Heritage, such as strategic and effective domestic and international promotion of the narratives

Future Initiatives

7) The Number of Stories for Japan Heritage Designation

The government has estimated that the number of annual foreign tourists to Japan will reach 20 million by the year 2020. In preparation for 2020 and that year's Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, it is ideal that Japan Heritage sites be designated throughout Japan to attract tourists and revitalize different regions and multiple local economies.

It is important that the number of Japan Heritage sites be limited in order to maintain brand image and integrity. Therefore, the Agency for Cultural Affairs plans to award Japan Heritage designation to a maximum of approximately 100 sites by 2020. The Agency also plans to provide monetary support for Japan Heritage through a fund administered by the Japan Arts Council called "The Japan Heritage Promotion Project."

8) "The Japan Heritage Promotion Project" Initiatives

1. Promotion and Training: nationwide Japan Heritage coordinators, multilingual website, brochures, a community of volunteer guides
2. Publicity and Education: presentations, exhibitions, workshops, symposiums, and public relations events aimed at domestic and foreign audiences, Japan Heritage Expert certification
3. Research and Study: information gathering and documentation related to potential Japan Heritage sites
4. Equipping Sites for Public Use: directional and explanatory signage, lavatories, and benches

The Japan Heritage logo

9) About the Japan Heritage logo

The Japan Heritage logo was designed by Taku Sato. The red circle symbolizes Japan, and the group of thin lines that appear as a vertical lattice, spell out the word Japan Heritage. This group of lines creates a surface and expresses a shift of perspective towards a connectivity of the narratives and cultural properties that lead to Japan Heritage.

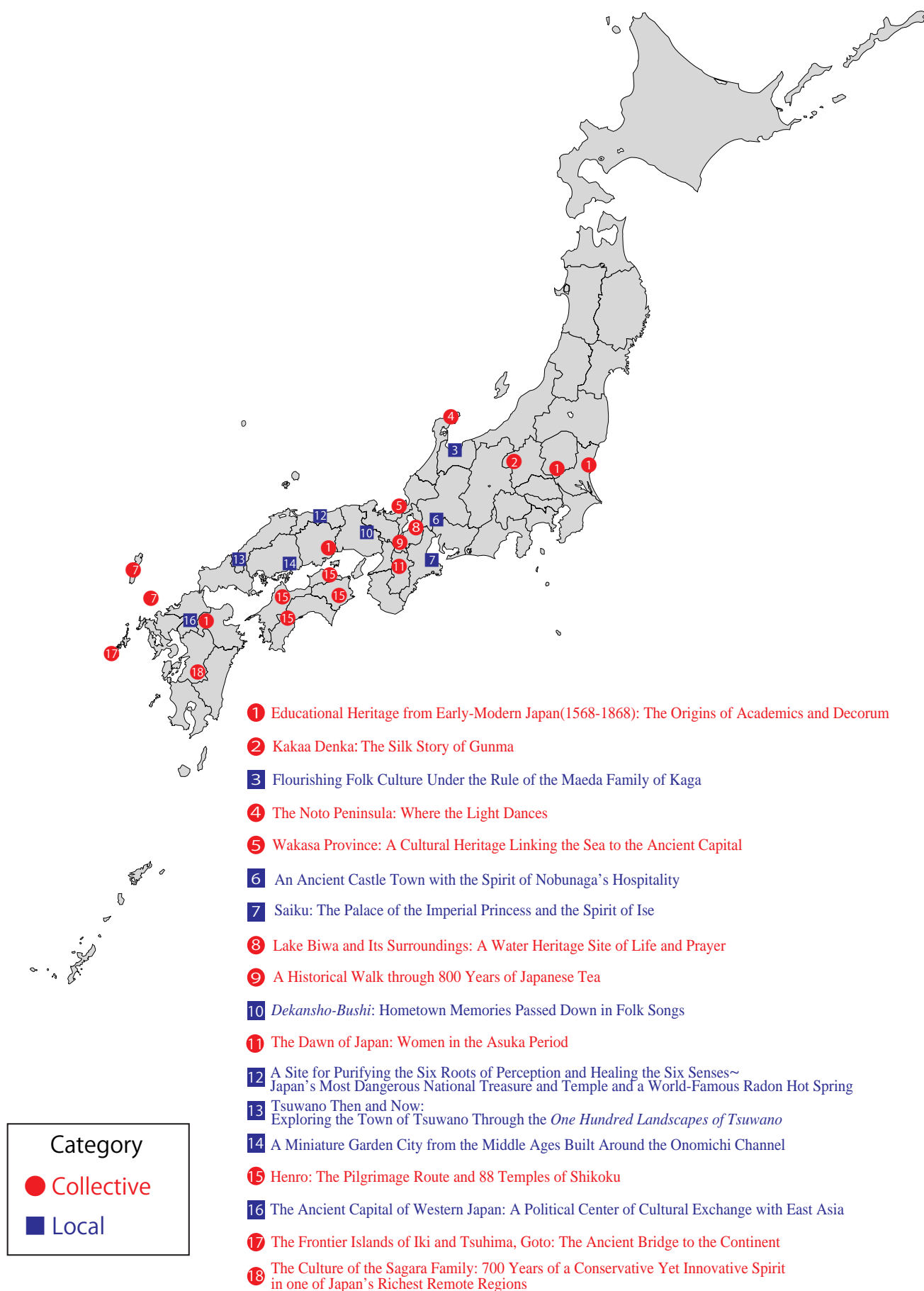


10) Official use of the logomark

- 1) Media organizations such as newspapers, television, and magazines
- 2) Applicants who have already been designated Japan Heritage
- 3) Councils and affiliated bodies that receive subsidies from the Japan Heritage Promotion Board can use the logo freely for the purpose of marketing, informing and encouraging further understanding and appreciation of the Japan Heritage narratives.
- 4) Owners and caretakers of designated cultural properties and any associations, enterprises and individuals that are connected to areas of the narratives.
- 5) Other organizations or individuals that are recognized by the Review Board can apply to the councils (please refer to no.3 above) and use the logo freely for the purpose of marketing, informing and encouraging the further understanding of the narratives of Japan Heritage.

Please look at the Japan Heritage website for further details on how to apply.

Designated Japan Heritage



Designated Story 1

TITLE

Educational Heritage from Early-Modern Japan (1568-1868)
:The Origins of Academics and Decorum

CLASSIFICATION

Collective

AREA

Mito, (Ibaraki Prefecture), Ashikaga (Tochigi Prefecture),
Bizen (Okayama Prefecture), Hita (Oita Prefecture)

SUMMARY

In Japan, even prior to the introduction of a modern educational system, lessons in reading, writing, arithmetic, and etiquette were taught to the upper-class bushi (samurai class) as well as to commoners. This high standard of education owes much to the widespread introduction of clan schools, regional schools, and private schools where people could study regardless of rank or class. These institutions played an important role in the nation's Meiji-era shift from a feudal society to a modern one. The country's long-standing focus on the cultivation of scholarship and decorum is an important cultural asset and is widely recognized as instrumental to the success of Japan's modernization.



CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Kodokan: The former Clan School of Mito (1841-1872, Mito City)



Ashikaga Gakko: The oldest academy of Japan (15c-1872, Ashikaga City)



Raiki Seigi: Classical Chinese Texts of Decorum (Southern Song Dynasty, Ashikaga City)



Shizutani Gakko: The former School for common people of Okayama Clan (1670-1870, Bizen City)



Kangien: The Private Academy established by Tanso Hirose (1817-1897, Hita City)



Sekisai: A ritual for Confucius (Bizen City)

CONTACT

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World Heritage Promotion Office, Historical and Cultural Properties Section, Mito City Board of Education

Designated Story 2

TITLE

Kakaa Denka: The Silk Story of Gunma

CLASSIFICATION

Collective

AREA

Kiryu city, Kanra, Nakanojou towns, Katashina village, Gunma Prefecture

SUMMARY

Jyoshu (present-day Gunma Prefecture) was at the center of Japan's thriving silk industry in which women supported their households by raising silkworms, and by producing filature and textiles. From the Meiji Era to the end of World War II, many women were employed in silk factories or as silk weavers. The Jyoshu man was proud of his spouse and affectionately termed her "The Best Wife In the World." Thus, the image of the "kakaa denka woman" (a wife who controls the house) became popularized and now symbolizes a hard-working woman who takes an active role in the home or workplace. Visiting silk factories or traditional houses of silkworm production evoke images and memories of the dedicated women who supported Japan's development.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Former Obata-gumi Seishi brick warehouse:The warehouse constructed for storing cocoons(1962-, Kanra Town)



Nagairyu Sericulture school:The school for sericulture method unique to the district(1887,Katashina Village)



Office of Kiryu Nenshi Limited Partnership Company: Office of large silk throwing factory(1917-,Kiryu City)



Gotoh Orimono:Textile factory where the dyeing technology was improved(1870,Kiryu City)



Tomizawake Jutaku:Large sericulture farmhouse in the latter half of Edo period(End of 18c, Nakanojo Town)

CONTACT

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World Heritage Division, Department of Planning and Development, Gunma Prefectural Government

Designated Story 3

TITLE

Flourishing Folk Culture Under the Rule of the Maeda Family of Kaga

CLASSIFICATION

Local

AREA

Takaoka, Toyama Prefecture

SUMMARY

The city of Takaoka has thrived in the area of commerce and industry, and boasts a rich, unique culture cultivated by the local merchants, passed down from generation to generation. Upon the decommissioning and eventual destruction of Takaoka Castle under the One Castle Per Province Law, the townspeople grew anxious about the future prosperity of the town. To quell these anxieties, the ruling class of the Kaga Domain (present-day Ishikawa Prefecture and Western Toyama Prefecture) employed strategic political policies to revitalize Takaoka's local economy and transform the area into a town of industry and commerce. As Takaoka continued to gain further attention for its lacquerware and metalwork products, it also became widely known for its fertile land and good port access, which would place the area at the center of the commercial goods trade - handling anything from rice, cotton, and fertilizer. As a result of this, Takaoka acquired the moniker of the "Kitchen of Kaga". The merchant class also donated their wealth to the revival of the city, leading to the creation of lavish festivals and a rich local culture. Takaoka has continued to thrive as an industrial town, and even to this day, you can see the history of Takaoka's old merchant roots reflected in the town's infrastructure, architecture, craftsmanship and local festivals.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Takaoka Mikurumayama: A traditional festival in Takaoka still celebrated nowadays; held on the 1st May every year



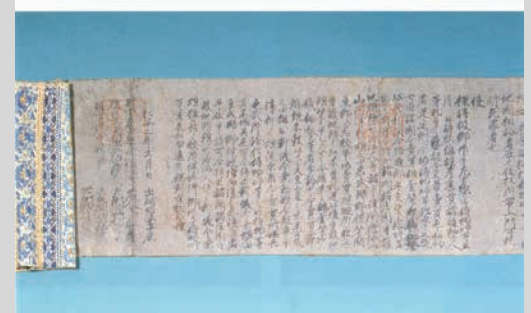
Takaoka Metal Casting Tools and Crafts: Some of the tools used during the casting process and a collection of finished products



Takaoka Castle Site: Even till this day, the fortifications where Takaoka Castle once stood are still beautifully preserved (1609-1615)



Yamachosuji (Important preservation district of historic buildings): A street lined with storehouses made with thick mud walls a material used to effectively protect from fire-damage



Letter from the Emperor (Ninan Era): An ancient archive detailing the origins of Takaoka's metal casters

CONTACT

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Cultural Properties Section, Takaoka Board of Education

Designated Story 4

TITLE

The Noto Peninsula: Where the Light Dances

CLASSIFICATION

Collective

AREA

Nanao, Wajima, Suzu cities; Shiga, Anamizu, Noto towns, Ishikawa Prefecture

SUMMARY

For centuries, the Noto Peninsula which juts out into the Sea of Japan, was at the center of cultural exchange. This allowed the peninsula to develop its distinctive culture with numerous local matsuri (festivals). The most celebrated among them are the Kiriko Festivals with their illuminated lantern parade floats. In summer, around 200 districts are lit with tall kiriko lantern floats, and residents of old farming and fishing villages form processions in which they carry mikoshi (portable shrines) and kiriko, which can weigh up to 2 tonnes each and reach heights of 15 meters. These floats compete for the honor of being judged the most fierce and spirited. The festival's origins can be found in Gion-shinko faith and in Japan's summer purification rites. The Noto Peninsula is the only region in Japan where such a large number of lantern festivals take place. A summertime visit to the region would not be complete without encountering one of these festivals and experiencing the spiritual presence of the Japanese kami (deities).

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Abare Festival (Noto Town)



Horyu-tanabata Kiriko Festival(Suzu City)



Wajima Taisai Festival(Wajima City)



Okinami-tairyo Festival(Anamizu Town)



Saikai Festival(Shika Town)



Issaki Hoto Festival(Nanao City)

CONTACT

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Cultural Properties Division, Ishikawa Prefectural Board of Education

Designated Story 5

TITLE

Wakasa Province: A Cultural Heritage Linking the Sea to the Ancient Capital

CLASSIFICATION

Collective

AREA

Obama city, Wakasa town, Fukui Prefecture

SUMMARY

The province of Wakasa was situated along the Sea of Japan's coastline in what is now Fukui Prefecture. It was referred to as miketsukuni (a region that produced food offerings for the Imperial Court) and played an important role in providing foodstuffs such as sea salt, mackerel, and other marine products to the ancient, landlocked capital of Nara and Kyoto. Wakasa's role as a source of supplying the foodstuffs led to the development of a unique culinary culture. The coastal hub of Wakasa also connected the sea trade from China and Korea to the inland trade routes.

Local ports and castle towns sprang up and flourished along this route. Traveling tradesmen brought with them festival customs, entertainments, and Buddhist culture that soon spread far and wide into rural farming areas and fishing villages. This ultimately resulted in distinct cultures and customs evolving in the different villages and hamlets. The ancient thoroughfare is now called the saba-kaido (Mackerel Road) and here visitors can experience nature, eat delicious traditional foods, attend festivals, as well as view traditional houses and roads that harken back to the earlier days of great prosperity.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Saba Kaido: The main road linking Wakasa and the former Capital conveying foods and culture (Obama City, Wakasa Town)



Important preservation district of historic buildings Obama Nishigumi Former ryotei Hōtōrō: The building built in the Meiji Period in the historical Obama Nishigumi district, leaving heavily the time of the vestiges (Obama City)



Omizuokuri: The historical rite that recounts the strong ties between Wakasa and Nara since ancient times (Obama City)



Gion Festival group on Obama (Hōze Matsuri): The traditional festivals been introduced from Kyoto (Obama City)



Wakasa-nuri Lacquer: The sleek and stately lacquerware inherited for 400 years (Obama City)



The Five Lakes of Mikata: The typical scenic spot of Wakasa Bay producing lake foods and leaving traditional functions (Wakasa Town)

CONTACT

Address: 3-17-1, Ote, Fukui City, Fukui Prefecture tel: +81 776-20-0572 E-mail: bunshin@pref.fukui.lg.jp
Department Cultural Affairs Division, Landscape Development Group, Fukui Prefecture

Designated Story 6

TITLE

An Ancient Castle Town with the Spirit of Nobunaga's Hospitality

CLASSIFICATION

Local

AREA

Gifu, Gifu Prefecture

SUMMARY

General Nobunaga, a great leader of the Sengoku (Warring States) Period aimed to unify Japan around his stronghold at Gifu Castle. While he certainly waged war, Nobunaga also focused his energy on creating a welcoming atmosphere for the retainers and officials who visited the castle town. He constructed a palace known as "Paradise on Earth" that he imbued with a charm never before seen in military castle architecture. Spectacular views welcomed visitors who could also enjoy Ukai (cormorant fishing) on the Nagara River. Nobunaga's omotenashi (hospitality) seemed contradictory with his reputation as a cool-headed general. As a result, it fascinated his distinguished guests including the Portuguese missionary Luis Frois. Although the role of the castle has changed over time, the cultural foundation that Nobunaga laid thrives in the town and along the river, and it remains one of the area's important cultural assets.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Gifu Castle Site: Domination Base of General Nobunaga(13-1600)



Golden leafed roof tile:Used to decorate the Palace of Nobunaga (1567-1576)



Rakuichi-rakuza Seisatsu: The notice board in free markets and open guilds policy(1567)



Kawaramachi: The townscape of houses with unique unvarnished wood latticework walls



Japanese Performing Arts on a boat: Performance integral to the cormorant fishing view



Nagara River Cormorant Fishing:Fishing method that has a history of more than 1300 years(702-present)



Cultural Landscape of Gifu in the middle basin of Nagara River:A essential scene for Nobunaga's Hospitality

CONTACT

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Social Education Division, Board of Education, Gifu City

Designated Story 7

TITLE

Saiku: The Palace of the Imperial Princess and the Spirit Of Ise

CLASSIFICATION

Local

AREA

Meiwa, Mie Prefecture

SUMMARY

A Saio was an Imperial Princess who served Amaterasu-Omikami (the sun goddess) of the Ise Shrine on behalf of the Emperor and royal family. Saio existed from the late 7th – late 14th centuries and each successive princess spent her life as an intermediary between the realms of the gods and men. She lived in servitude to the kami (gods) and prayed for the country's peace and prosperity.

The palace of the Saio was known as Saiku, and was situated near the entrance of the Grand Shrine of Ise. It is said that each Saio passed her life in elegance in a fashion similar to those of the elite in the capital of Kyoto. The remains of the palace and the surrounding area have long been protected and preserved by locals as a sacred site. Today the spirit and prayers of the Imperial Princesses live on at the original site of the nation's only Saiku.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Saiku Site: Remains of the palace where Saio lived and the government office



Saio Woods: Symbol of Saiku that has been protected by the local people



Harai River: The river where Saio performed the purification ceremony



Take Shrine: A place of holy prayers where the palace of the Saio was once located



Saio Onono Minato Onmisogiba Site: A former sea coast location where Saio performed the purification ceremony

CONTACT

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Saiku-ato Culture and Tourism Division, Cultural Properties Section, Meiwa town Office

Designated Story 8

TITLE

Lake Biwa and Its Surroundings: A Water Heritage Site of Life and Prayer

CLASSIFICATION

Collective

AREA

Otsu, Hikone, Omihachiman, Takashima, Higashiomi, Maibara cities, Shiga Prefecture

SUMMARY

Water has long been worshipped as a medium for purification and healing. When Buddhism arrived in Japan from East Asia, the Buddha of Healing, Yakushi-Nyorai, was worshipped for his radiant Eastern Pure Land “water paradise” teachings. Many temples and shrines were built facing the “water paradise” of Lake Biwa and they remain a major attraction today. Local people have long adhered to a strict set of regulations to protect the cleanliness of Biwa as their daily lives rely on its spring water and traditional mountain-fed water distribution systems.

The spectacular views of the shore and lakeside districts, overflowing with life, have long inspired art and gardens. Recently, these areas have also been attracting visitors who see in them a representation of the perfect harmony between humans and water. Here, one finds the essence of the rich history of Japanese “water culture.”

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



(C) Biwako Visitors Bureau

Hieizan Enryakuji: Founded on Mt.Hiei by Saicho in 788 as the head temple of the Tendai sect of Buddhism(Otsu City)



(C) Biwako Visitors Bureau

Genkyu Rakuraku-en: The landscape garden and lord's private palace located to the northeast of Hikone castle created in 1677(Hikone City)



(C) Biwako Visitors Bureau

Suigo the Omihachiman riverside district:a registered Ramsar wetland and one of the three most popular wetland attractions in Japan(Omihachiman City)



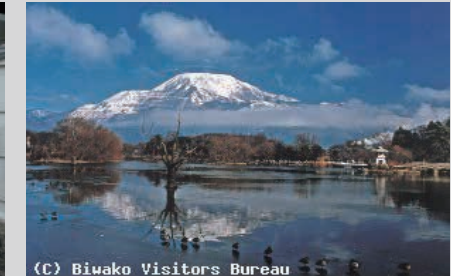
(C) Biwako Visitors Bureau

Shirahige-jinja: Famous for the large vermilion-lacquered torii (gateway) standing in the lake (Takashima City)



(C) Biwako Visitors Bureau

Important Preservation Districts of Historic Buildings, Townscape of Gokasho Kondo: Many houses surrounded by clapboard and white walls (Higashiomi City)



(C) Biwako Visitors Bureau

The western flank area of Mt.Ibuki: The highest in Shiga Prefecture. Here, even now is faith as a God live in(Maibara City)

CONTACT

Address: 4-1-1, Kyomachi, Otsu City, Shiga Prefecture tel: +81 77-528-4674 E-mail: ma07@pref.shiga.lg.jp

Cultural Properties Protection Division, Shiga Prefectural Board of Education

Designated Story 9

TITLE

A Historical Walk through 800 Years of Japanese Tea

CLASSIFICATION

Collective

AREA

Minamiyamashiro Region (Uji, Joyo, Yawata, Kyotanabe, Kizugawa, Ujitawara, Wazuka, Minamiyamashiro), Kyoto Prefecture

SUMMARY

Tea was first introduced to Japan from China during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). In Kyoto's Minamiyamashiro region, tea production techniques were established and different types of green tea were developed. These include the matcha used in the tea ceremony, sencha for daily tea consumption, and gyokuro, which is regarded as one of the finest grades of green tea in the world. For over 800 years, people living in this region have developed a wide variety of first-class teas and continue to be leaders in tea production and processing, while also continuing to make important cultural contributions to the lasting traditions of the tea ceremony. Visitors to this region can experience the different developmental stages in the history of tea production through the beautiful tea fields, rows of wholesale shops and tea-related festivals.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Meisui Kumiage-no-gi: Ritual in which water is drawn from the Uji River for the tea ceremony (Uji City)



Kamikoma tea wholesaler district: Merchants here exported their tea overseas via Kobe Harbor (19th c., Kizugawa City)



Fields of tencha (the raw material for matcha) ready to be covered for shade-growing (18th c., Yawata City)



Fields of sencha planted across a landscape of rolling hills (19th c., Wazuka Town)



Birthplace of Nagatani Souen, inventor of sencha (18th c., Ujitawara Town)



Tea bushes planted in straight lines up hillsides (19th c., Minamiyamashiro Village)

CONTACT

Address: Yabunouchi-cho, Nishiiru, Shinmachi, Shimodachiuri-dori, Kamigyo-ku, Kyoto City, Kyoto Prefecture

Tel: +81 75-414-4529 E-mail: kikakuriji-seisaku@pref.kyoto.lg.jp

Office of The Director General for Regional Initiatives Promotion, Kyoto Prefecture

Designated Story 10

TITLE

Dekansho-Bushi: Hometown Memories Passed Down in Folk Songs

CLASSIFICATION

Local

AREA

Sasayama, Hyogo Prefecture

SUMMARY

Tanba Sasayama flourished as a castle town during the Edo Period and is famous for dekansho-bushi, the traditional folk songs of that region. The song lyrics depicted the local climate, human nature, famous sights, and culinary specialties of the area. People here have cherished and treasured their landscape and culture throughout the ages by singing dekansho-bushi. To this day, local people continue to compose new lyrics for the over 300 dekansho-bushi and pass these musical traditions on to the next generation. Through these songs visitors can experience the traditional town atmosphere of Tanba Sasayama with its rows of old houses and charming streets.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Dekansho Bushi: The folk song continues to be sung from the Edo period that represents Tanba Sasayama



Sasayama Castle Site: The famous castle which was built in 1609



Houmei Sake Brewing: Shop that brews sake (rice wine) with traditional way by Tanba Touji Brewer



Maruyama Village: Thatched private houses reconstructed and used as B&B



Tamba Tachikui Kiln: Ascending kiln which fires local Tamba ware made for over 800 years



Aoyama History Village: The museum displays records of Aoyama Family whom ruled Sasayama feudal clan

CONTACT

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Department of Policy Planning Division, Sasayama City

Designated Story 11

TITLE

The Dawn of Japan: Women in the Asuka Period

CLASSIFICATION

Collective

AREA

Asuka village, Kashihara city, Takatori town,
Nara Prefecture

SUMMARY

Japan was established as a state in the Asuka Period (592-710AD) during which time there were many female empresses. Many of these women made significant contributions to the artistic, religious, and political transformations of the time, including the founding the new capital, the establishment of diplomatic relations with neighboring countries, and the enactment of laws such as, the Taiho-ritsuryo (Taiho Code). Women created and honed new forms of expression in Japan in the fields of politics, culture, and religion. For example, women poets composed waka while at the same time female priests disseminated the lessons of the Buddha. Asuka represents the dawning of Japan as a nation state in which women actively flourished and whose achievements continue to influence life in contemporary Japan.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Den-Asukaitabukinomiya Palace Site: Palace of Asuka area(630-694, Asuka Village)



Fujiwara Palace Site: Palace of Fujiwara Capital(694-710, Kashihara City)



Garden Remains at the Asuka Capital Site: The garden of Asuka Capital(656-694, Asuka Village)



Mural of Takamatsuzuka Tomb: Mural paintings in the stone chamber (Late 7c-Early 8c, Asuka Village)



“Saruishi” of Takatori Castle Site: Monkey shaped statues in the ruins of Takatori Castle(Takatori Town)

CONTACT

Address: 91-3 Kawahara, Oaza, Asuka-mura, Takaichi-gun, Nara Prefecture tel: +81 744-54-5600 E-mail: bunkazai@tobutori-asuka.jp
Cultural Properties Section, Asuka Village

Designated Story 12

TITLE

A Site for Purifying the Six Roots of Perception and Healing the Six Senses~Japan's Most Dangerous National Treasure and a World-Famous Radon Hot Spring~

CLASSIFICATION

Local

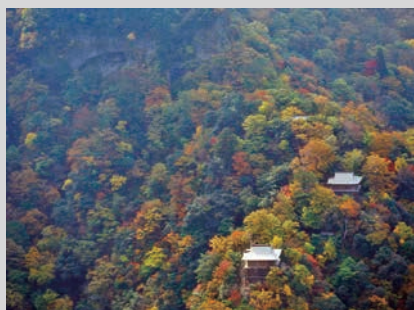
AREA

Misasa, Tottori Prefecture

SUMMARY

Mount Mitoku features a characteristic landscape that interweaves steep topography used as the training ground for mountain asceticism, with architecture which displays the syncretic fusion of Shintoism and Buddhism in its design and structure. The solemnity of the mountain has continued to inspire awe for 1000 years. Misasa Onsen serves as a place where visitors can purify their body and mind before a pilgrimage to Mount Mitoku. According to a local legend, the hot spring was introduced to a traveler on a pilgrimage to the mountain by a white wolf. 900 years after its discovery, Misasa Onsen continues to maintain close ties to the religious beliefs at Mount Mitoku. Current visitors purify their six roots of perception (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind) through a religious pilgrimage to the mountain's sheer cliff, and come to embody a unique world through the healing of their six senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and spirit) at the therapeutic springs.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Mount Mitoku: Sacred mountain, heart of the rokkon shôjô (purification of the six roots of perception)



Nageiredo Temple: Symbol of Mount Mitoku, its construction remains a mystery (late Heian period)



Sanbutsu-ji: Main building from Edo period, start of the road to Nageiredo (National Treasure)



Kiya Ryokan: Wooden architecture inn listed as tangible cultural property by Japanese government (Taisho period)



Misasa Onsen: Major stop of the pilgrimage to Mount Mitoku, world-class radon hot springs (around 1164)



Monk's vegetarian cooking and Mitoku tofu: Mount Mitoku's traditional food that purifies your body

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Designated Story 13

TITLE

Tsuwano Then and Now: Exploring the Town of Tsuwano
Through the *One Hundred Landscapes of Tsuwano*

CLASSIFICATION

Local

AREA

Tsuwano, Shimane Prefecture

SUMMARY

Tsuwano was a castle town that developed along the Tsuwano River and is renowned for its natural beauty. It is home to the Tsuwano Hyakkeizu (The One Hundred Landscapes of Tsuwano), an art book by a local artist that captures imagery of Edo-period Tsuwano. The book depicts scenes and information about famous sightseeing spots, nature, traditional performing arts, customs, and daily life. Local people have continued efforts to protect the town from development and as a result, they have succeeded in preserving its traditional atmosphere. Visitors to Tsuwano can experience the contemporary scenery while comparing it to the depictions in the Tsuwano Hyakkeizu and imagining the scenes and lives of Edo period life.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Tsuwano Castle Site: It's original defensive stone walls are still present at a mountain top



Egret dance of Yasaka shrine: A dance with unique costumes, performed on streets(1542-)



Shiraito fall: Thread-like waterfall was greatly admired by samurai lord Kamei

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Designated Story 14

TITLE

A Miniature Garden City from the Middle Ages
Built Around the Onomichi Channel

CLASSIFICATION

Local

AREA

Onomichi, Hiroshima Prefecture

SUMMARY

Onomichi is a city facing the Seto Inland Sea that is surrounded by three mountains and many islands. The Onomichi Channel flows through the center of the city and has always acted as a route for culture, industry and people. Since the Middle Ages, this water way has been instrumental in making Onomichi the most important port in the Seto Inland Sea. Many temples, gardens, and houses were erected in the limited space between the mountains and the Onomichi Channel, and as a result, the miniature garden city with its intricate alleys and slopes still looks much the same today. The maze of alleyways and hilly landscapes offer glorious views and scenery within the confines of a small coastal town. Onomichi's charms continue to attract many visitors.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Pagoda of Tennei-ji: Three-storied pagoda built in the Medieval Period (1388)



Main hall, Precincts, Pagodas of Jodo-ji: Japanese temple built in the Medieval Period (1327)



Miharashi-tei: The Japanese style inn founded on a sightly location



Landscape of Slopes and Alleys: A characteristic landscape in Onomichi City



Sumiyoshimatsuri: Traditional Fireworks Festival in the Onomichi Channel (19c-present)

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Designated Story 15

TITLE

Henro: The Pilgrimage Route and 88 Temples of Shikoku

CLASSIFICATION

Collective

AREA

Tokushima Prefecture, Kochi Prefecture, Ehime Prefecture, Kagawa Prefecture & 57 local government office

SUMMARY

The Shikoku Henro is a pilgrimage route of 88 temples that was established by the great Buddhist priest, Kukai(Kobo Daishi), over 1200 years ago on Shikoku Island. It is one of the world's longest circular pilgrimage routes, extending some 1400 kilometers across Shikoku's regions of Awa, Tosa, Iyo, and Sanuki. Pilgrims still make the journey on steep mountain roads, up long stone stairways, through pastoral countryside, along calm seashores and around remote promontories. Walking the paths, visitors can easily find other pilgrims journeying around Shikoku. This circular type of pilgrimage is different from those practiced under Christianity or Islam which focus on the voyage to and return from a holy place. In Japan, anyone can be a pilgrim regardless of nationality or religion, and all are sure to receive a warm welcome from the locals. Walking the "Henro Route" and retracing the footsteps of Kukai(Kobo Daishi)--whether for the sake of a memorial, personal discipline, redemption, or health--is a spiritual journey and a rare opportunity to experience the culture of pilgrimage and of Shikoku Island.

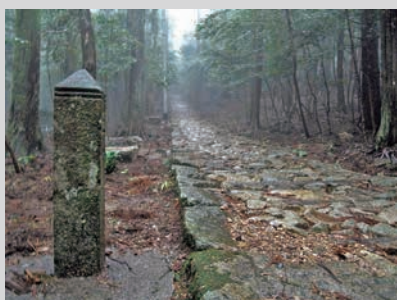
CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Chikurinji: The main hall of the 31st Temple National Important Cultural Property (8c, Kochi City)



Motoyamaji: The main hall of the 70th Temple, National Treasure (1300, Mitoyo City)



Kakurinji-michi: the pilgrimage route in To-kushima(Awa) (Edo Period, Katsuura Town)



Taisanji: The main hall of 52th Temple, National Treasure (1305, Matuyama City)



The front approach to Taihouji: The 44th Temple (8c, Kumakougen Town)

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Designated Story 16

TITLE

The Ancient Capital of Western Japan: A Political Center of Cultural Exchange with East Asia

CLASSIFICATION

Local

AREA

Dazaifu, Fukuoka Prefecture

SUMMARY

Dazaifu was an important governmental district situated in Kyushu from the 8th to the 12th century. Moreover, it was a crossroads of culture, religion, and politics due to the influx and settlement of peoples from East Asia. Its location was ideal for the establishment of military facilities and for metropolitan development. As a result, it served as a base for military affairs and foreign diplomacy. Many religious structures and guesthouses can still be seen, and guests are reminded of the importance by the straight streets and grid-allotments around the National Historical Site that helped to define ancient Japan's Western capital.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



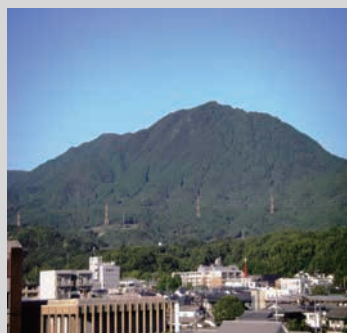
Dazaifu-Seicho Site: The remains of the Kyushu regional government Dazaifu office(8th-12th centuries)



Kanzeon-ji / Kaidan-in: The most important temples in the Kyushu region (since the 7th century)



Mizuki Site: The remains of the embankment and moat, which protected Dazaifu (built in 664)



Mt Houman: The mountain where a famous Buddhist priest Saicho prayed for safety on the voyage to Tang (China) in the 9th century



Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine: The mausoleum for Sugawara no Michizane, who was a scholar, poet, and politician of the Heian era



Dazaifu Tenmangu Jinko Gyoji: The parade held every September between Dazaifu Tenmangu Shrine and Michizane's old residence, Nankan(since 1101)

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Designated Story 17

TITLE

The Frontier Islands of Iki and Tsushima, Goto
The Ancient Bridge to the Continent

CLASSIFICATION

Collective

AREA

Tsushima, Iki, Goto, Shinkamigoto District
(Islands of Nagasaki Prefecture)

SUMMARY

Nagasaki's islands, situated between the mainlands of Japan and Asia, have been an important hub for marine transportation and cultural exchange since ancient times. Ties with the Korean Peninsula were particularly strong. Iki Island capitalized on the power of its marine trade and built a kingdom and capital city during the Yayoi Era. Similarly, Tsushima Island gained a monopoly on trade and diplomatic affairs with Korea, and prospered as a hub for commercial activity and as an arrival point for official envoys. Although the area's trading advantage has weakened over time, traces of past prosperity are still visible in the local homes, castle remains, and gardens. Vestiges of cultural interchange are evident in the islands' culinary specialties such as shochu (a distilled spirit) and noodles. Throughout history, these islands have experienced considerable exchange with mainland Asia through repeated periods of conflict and interaction. Visitors to Iki and Tsushima Islands can readily feel the strong bond between countries and peoples that is unique to this region.

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Kaneda Castle Site: An ancient, Korean-style mountain castle for national defense (667AD, Tsushima City)



Miiraku : The last domestic port of call for Kento-shi, the Japanese envoy to Tang Dynasty China (702-838 AD, Goto City)



Harunotsuji Site: The site of the capital of Iki-oku (circa 350-450 BC, Iki City)



Gravestones of Hinoshima: Graves from the medieval era (1400AD, Shinkamigoto Town)



Kaneishi Castle Site: The ruins of the castle of the House of So, ruling family of the Tsushima Domain (1669-1678AD, Tsushima City)

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Designated Story 18

TITLE

The Culture of Sagara Family: 700 Years of a Conservative Yet Innovative Spirit in one of Japan's Richest Remote Regions

CLASSIFICATION

Collective

AREA

Hitoyoshi city, Nishiki, Asagiri, Taragi, Yunomae towns, Mizukami, Sagara, Itsuki, Yamae, Kuma Villages, Kumamoto Prefecture

SUMMARY

Sagara, lord of the Hitoyoshikuma, protected his territory from foreign invasions by taking advantage of the steep landscapes of Kyushu's mountains that surrounded his domain. The Sagara family governed this land for 700 years so were given the name "Sagara 700" in reference to their long dominion. During that time, a strong community spirit between the ruling lords and their vassals developed. It was a culture of respect and worship that centered on the area's many temples and shrines, Buddhist statues, and kagura (sacred dances). By gradually absorbing foreign culture, the domain developed unique culinary traditions and entertainments. It even developed its own transportation systems. Thus, the area epitomizes the best of Japanese culture: the product of an unusual balance between conservatism and open-mindedness. Shiba Ryotaro, a well-known Japanese historian and writer, calls this district "the richest of Japan's remote regions."

CULTURAL PROPERTIES



Shorenji Amidadou: The family temple of "Kami Sagara" (1295~Today, Taragi Town)



Kuma ken: The roots of the rock, paper, scissors. A loser drinks shochu (Edo era, Hitoyoshi Kuma Area)



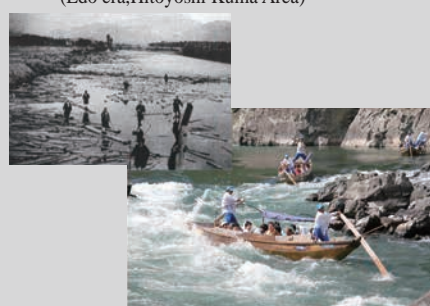
Usudaiko odori: A dance begun for the purpose of military arts encouragement by Sagara's Family (Edo era, Hitoyoshi Kuma Area)



Hitoyoshi Castle Site: The castle of Sagara's Family (1470~1868, Hitoyoshi City)



Kuma Shochu: Traditional Japanese Distilled Spirit, Formed by rice and subsurface water of Hitoyoshi Kuma (1559~Today, Hitoyoshi Kuma Area)



Kuma River: The one of the three best rapid streams in Japan. In the Edo era, it was used for transportation by water to Yatsushiro (Hitoyoshi Kuma Area)

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