

# Report: Strange parade – Lion Dance in Ogawaji



**strange parade of variants in Ogawaji, Uozu city**

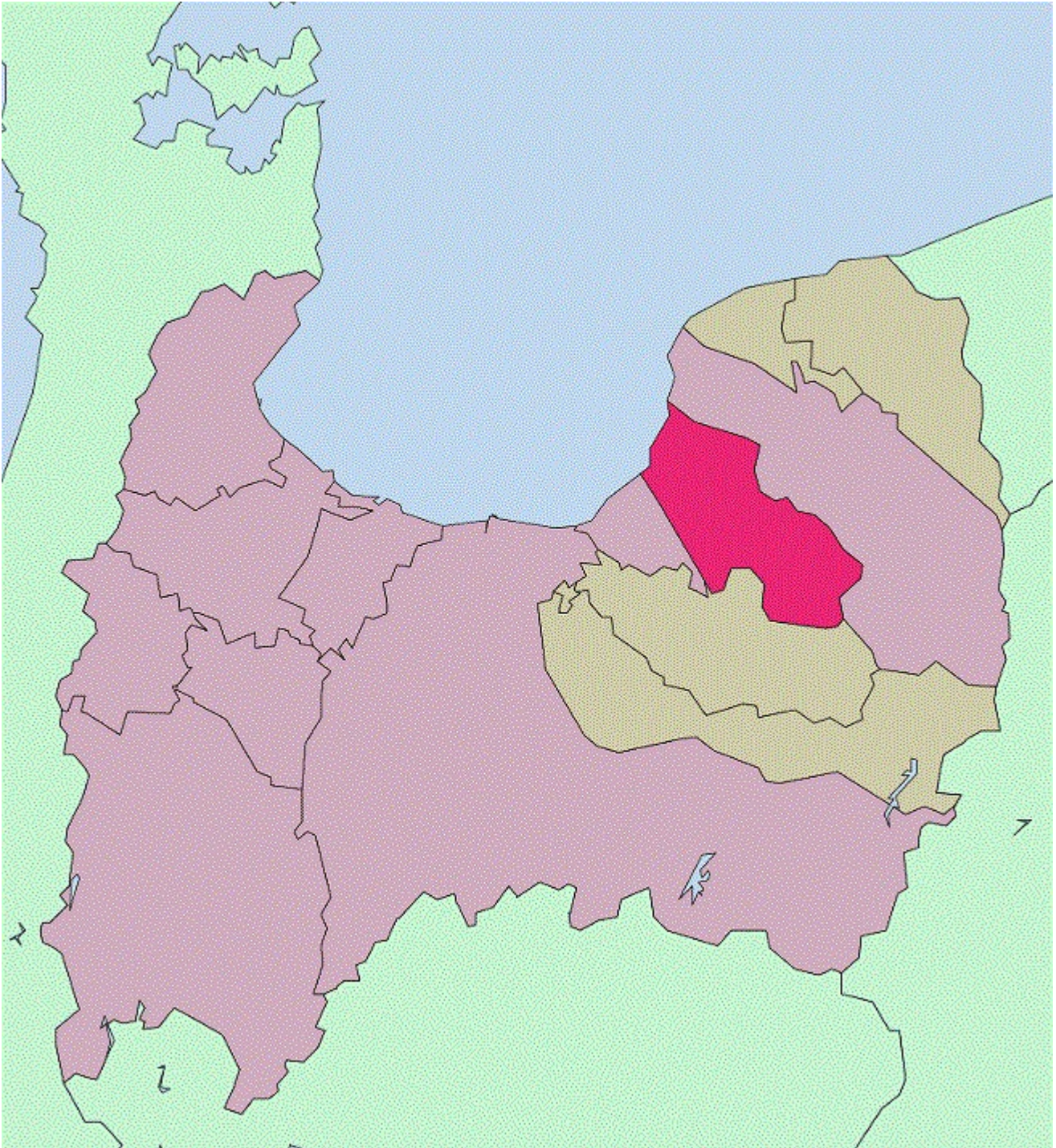
**Date** 4th January, 12th March, and 12th October pm 2:00~

**Location** Senkoji-temple, Ogawaji, Uozu city , Toyama prefecture

**How to get there** It takes 20 minutes from Toyama station or Unazuki-kurobe station



Toyama prefecture



Uozu city 宇治市

## Introduction

□An event we'll look at this time is "Lion Dance in Ogawaji".  
□This event is held on March 12th (and other days) in Uozu city in Toyama prefecture. Toyama prefecture is very prosperous region of Lion Dance, the performed number is over

850 now. There are a significant number of various kinds, and there are 10 main kinds we can break down into 3 categories. In that, the Ogawaji Lion Dance is classified as "Gyoudo Shishi" (Lion guiding the way), it follows the traditional style.

□ I went to see this event in 2018. The following is from then.

□ If you want to go to Uozu city, you have two options, Shinkansen or express bus.

\* In all of the above routes, the starting point is from Tokyo

□ In the case of a train, from Tokyo you will take the Shinkansen to Kurobe Unzuki-onsen (黒部宇治川温泉), transfer Toyama local line (Dentetsu Toyama; bound for Dentetsu Toyama (富山) station, for Shin Uozu (新ウヅウ) station.

It takes about 2~3 hours and costs about ¥14,000. If you take a bus, from Tokyo to Toyama station, and transfer to the local line (Ai no Kaze Toyama (愛の風富山) line; bound for Tomari (富山) and stop at Uozu station. The Uozu station is in front of Shin-Uozu station. It takes 8 hours and costs about ¥8,000. After arriving in Uozu city, you can take local bus (Kurosawa (黒沢) line) and get off at Ogawaji bus stop. But, there is only one bus every 2 hours, if you take a bus, you must get on a bus at 11:50, Kurosawa line (as of January 2020).

上越・北陸(長野経由)新幹線						Joetsu-Hokuriku (via Nagano) Shinkansen
時刻 Time	列車名 Train	番号 Train No.	行先 Destination	番線 Track	記事 Remarks	
9:28	TOKI	313	NIIGATA	20	1~5, Non-Reserved	
9:32	HAKUTAKA	557	KANAZAWA	23	1~4, Non-Reserved	
9:44	ASAMA	605	NAGANO	20	1~5, Non-Reserved	
9:52	TANIGAWA	83	GALA YUZAWA	22	1~4, Non-Reserved	

Tokyo station □□□



Shinkansen □□□□

□When I went to this event, I took a Shinkansen at 9□38 (from Tokyo). the Shinkansen crossed Honshu, by way of the still snowy Nagano prefecture, after a little over 2 hours, I arrived at about 12 o'clock.





Shin Kurobe station 新黒部駅  
is front of Kurobe Unzauki Onsen



## Dentetsu Toyama line 〇〇〇〇



front of Uozu station

## In Uozu city

□The event starts at 2□00. The next bus will leaves at 12□38 (as in 2018). I had a little time, so I stopped by the tourist information center. A person working there was very kind and loved the city. I got a lot of information and many booklets. I heard that it's about 4 kilometers from here to Ogawaji and road is flat. I decided to rent a bicycle. All are electric assist bicycle which are available from the information center, it costs \ 100~300.





Uozu city and Tateyama mountain range



□It's very fine, but the air is cold and feel chilly. Is this because it was still March or because this was Toyama? I was comfortable cycling, while seeing the snowy Tateyama mountain range. The city is very calm.



a road to Ogawaji



Senkoji temple □□□



The Kannondo □□□□

□I wonder, if I run some 2~30 minutes, I might finally arrive at the destination. It is the “Senko-ji temple”. There are steps for the “Kannon-do hall” right next to the building.



The Hakusan shrine□□□□



□The precincts of the Kannon-do hall are unexpectedly large. About 2~30 people already were as if surrounding the Kannon-do hall. The neighboring building is the Hakusa shrine. As for the men, while the women gather in the Hakusan shrine, the men gather in Kannondo hall. In the Kannon-do hall a priest gives sutra-chanting, and Shinto priesthood gives a congratulatory address in the Hakusan shrine. This is a rare event, mixing Buddhism and Shintoism. In Japan, originally, the syncretism of Shinto and Buddhism was widely seen from the Heian period (9~10 C) until the Meiji restoration (1968), and Shinto and Buddhism were not distinguished from each other as a general rule. Therefore a trace is sometimes still seen in this way.

□A group is going to do seven laps here. On that day, the event was going to begin at 2□00 pm, but it was half past 2 and it started at 3□00 after all. A Buddhist priest seemed to be late for a funeral.



□I looked at some strange people who come up the stairs

between some trees. It may be finally beginning. First, they stopped at the Hakusan shrine 白神山 and gathered at the foot of the steps, they then received purification of the Shinto priesthood. Several children who hold the flags stood up. With them in the lead, a parade begin.

## The parade has began





## Tengu

Strange people appeared with flute and drums before us who were waiting. At first, it is Tengu. The kind look that some mind seems to be weak here through Tengu is severe or it is a scary image. He come while jump up and down lightly.





baba-men□□□□

□They walk with their hands and feet at same time. Next, two people following Tengu walk towards the same direction. They don't jump, instead of push their hand up front powerfully with one step forward while glaring at front. They are called "baba-men(mask)". Further more, they wear distinctive clothes characteristic. One is the pants of the striped pattern on showy clothes, and another is all striped. And after all, to catch the eyes is a strange headpiece. It seems like a crown. I have never seen anything like that. It is not Japanese - style at all. Where did this design come from?





## Chinese Lion (Shishi)獅子

□Next comes a lion. Even though I call a lion, this is a Chinese legendary creature, it is totally different from the real animal. Japanese call them Kara-jishi (Chinese Lion). In Japan, there are many folk performing art about this Chinese lion. They are called Lion Dance. Lion Dance has various kinds. In this Ogawaji, it is the oldest style. They are only walking. Though, it's very tough to walk while lowering the body. Older men say that they cannot walk for a muscular.



anema-men (mask) □□□□

□And the lion following is a woman called “Anema”. She is coiffured old style and mouth bends for some reason and is walking while raising a sleeve by one step. And flute players, drum players and portable shrine. Though they say portable shrine (mikoshi□□□), they pull it on a carriage. It is difficult for a few people to carry it on shoulder, so it become today’s style. They decided to concider it to walk around 7 laps for walk around all town.



**mikoshi**□□□



□ This event is only they repeat this 7 times. It seems very strange.

□







□Legend says that both “baba-men” and “anema” was old heroes and heroine. Name was Morimoto Sanemon, Joudou Rokubei and Omatsu. They fight with next village or avaricious feudallord. But now, we do not know the merely true meaning. Only this strange event has remained today.







□A break time enters once on the way. They sit in front of Kannon-do, Shinto priest read a long address to the deities. After this, they walk around again.





□After they finished laps, they came back to the starting place, under the Hakusan shrine. The event is finished.





□At the event, they accept taking a ceremonial photograph.

□Totally about 30 minutes, this event had finished.

□If you want to video, please click here.↓

□□□for your information

[http://go-centraljapan.jp/lsc/lsc-upfile/pamphlet/01/33/133\\_1\\_file.pdf](http://go-centraljapan.jp/lsc/lsc-upfile/pamphlet/01/33/133_1_file.pdf) Pocket Guide Uozu

□If you have some time, I recommend sightseeing around Toyama. The place where there are old cityscapes, hot springs and natural. There are many places for sightseeing.



**world heritage “Gokayama”**



**castle and park**



**natural “Kurobe”**



**old town “Kanaya”**

evry pictures from <https://www.info-toyama.com/spot/21100/>  
Toyama prefecture 富山県

参考

<https://foreign.info-toyama.com/en/> Tourism information in  
Toyama