

The quinquennial grand shrine festival with the Nogata meteorite

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Though there are many folklore concerning meteorite falls, a few genuine meteorites have been identified. One of them, the Nogata meteorite is related to the oldest recorded meteorite fall (A.D. 861) (Shima *et al.*, 1983).

Nogata meteorite is kept as a “shrine treasure” at Suga Jinja shrine, where the meteorite has fallen. It is publicly demonstrated only when the grand shrine festival is held once in five years.

We introduce the quinquennial festival held on 2011 October. The meteorite is carried by the cart (Fig. 1) at the head of a parade, and many decorated carts follow. The parade continued over an hour.

Such a religious treatment would be remarkable feature of the Japanese animism. I do not know other example than Japanese shrine of such keeping of meteorite in the religious place around the world. Japanese people feel the “split of nature” from the meteorite fall, which may lead such keeping.

Reference

Shima, *et al.*, 1983, *Meteoritics*, 18, 87



Figure 1. Nogata meteorite is put on the front of the cart.