

Momotaro Find the truth behind the legend

The legend of Momotaro, a legend handed down in Okayama, is the origin of the Momotaro folk tale that everyone knows,
However, this legend tells a very different story than the folk tale does.

The Stories Compared

Legend of Momotaro



Momotaro, hero of folk tale

Once upon a time, there lived an old man and an old woman. One day when the old woman went to the river to wash clothes, a huge peach came floating down the river.

Upon taking the peach home and splitting it open, the old couple saw a boy come out! They named him Momotaro and raised him with care. After he had grown, Momotaro left home to banish evil ogres.

On the way, a dog, monkey, and pheasant agreed to join Momotaro in exchange for the old woman's millet dumplings that he carried. They traveled to the island of Onigashima. routed the ogres, and went home with treasure, A happy ending!



Was the ogre really evil?

A fortune-telling ogre? The folk tale is completely different!

Once upon a time in Okayama, back when it was called Kibi,

there was an ogre called Ura who lived at Kinojo Castle and terrorized the villagers. Because of this, the king of Yamato told Kibitsuhiko-no-mikoto to vanquish Ura.

Kibitsuhiko-no-mikoto set up camp at Kibi no Nakayama, and after shoring up his defenses by bullding a shield of megalitis, he attacked Ura with arrows, his specially, to a contracted by sometimes, arrows from the two sides would collide in mid-air. The battle ended when the wounded Ura transformed into a carp and fled, However, Kibitsuhiko-no-mikoto transformed into a comorant and eaght Ura, completely varietying him.

Following Ura's defeat, his head was buried beneath a kettle in the Okamaden (kettle hall) at Kibitsu Shrine. One day, Ura appeared to Kibsuhike-on-Mikotio in a dream and anounced, If my wife uses this kettle to cook rice, I will become your servant and tall people's fortunes by making the kettle ring. Thus, even today, a kettle-ringing ritual for telling fortunes, called the Naru-kama Shirj, Lakes place at Kibitsu Shrine.

There are several interpretations of Ura, the purported ogre, One for example, is that in this battle, Ura was not unilaterally evil in the battle between Yamato and Kibi, and was a person who taught Kibi how to make steel. Furthermore, even after his defeat in battle against Kibisubiko-on-mikroto, Ura continues to guide people by telling. their fortunes. Perhaps Ura was not actually an ogre, but a great person who lived in Kibi.



Experience Okayama hospitality with *Ura* mythology

There are a number of ways to view Ura, Ura is just as beloved by the local residents as Momotaro is, as we know from a festival named after Ura that is held in Okayama. The viewpoint of Ura, the purported oper, is also taken seriously, and both the events depicted by the tale and the hidden reality behind the tale are warmly accepted in this city. We invite you to experience the hospitality of Okayama for yourself, and discover the true tale of Momotaro as seen through the eyes of Ura — which is not just a name, but a word that refers to the hidden side of something in Japanese.



A column of local reports on Japan Heritage.

Ms. Konda, a writer, has been visiting locations related to the legend. She shows us the world of ancient Kibi, overflowing with history and romance! For more information about her columns, blease visit the website.





Akiko Konda

Ms. Konda is a writer. Seeing the Kanonii Honma clay figurines in Kashihara Ms. Acoda is a writer. Seeing the Kalnoniy Horma clay injurities in Nashmart-ain. Nara Prefective prompted her to begin visiting archiveological sides and museum at various locations and start origining research on day figurines. Ms. Konda has done extensive work on introducing cultural properties at various locations is easy-to-understand language, 8he has also been sharing the attractive features cultural properties in a continuous manner through making television and radio





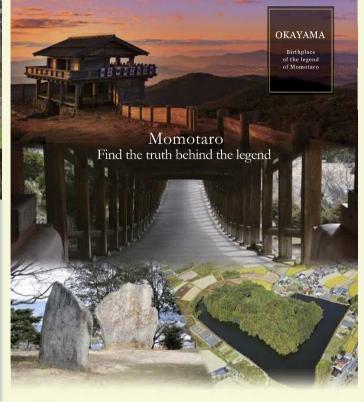
[Japan Heritage] Okayama, the Birthplace of the legend of Momotaro \sim A tale of ogre conquest handed down through ancient Kibi heritage \sim



Japan Heritage"Okayama, the Birthplace of the legend of Momotaro"Promotion Council Japan Heritage Promotion Project, 2018

https://momotaro-ura.jp Japan Heritage "legend of Momotaro" search







Experience Okayama hospitality with *Ura* mythology

Was the ogre really evil? Even now, many mysteries surround the legend of Momotaro. What is the true form of the ogre "Ura" spoken of in the legend?



Take a tour trip to the legend of Momotaro! Even today, many ruins and shrines connected with the legend of













The influence of Kibi in the background of the legend of Momotaro

legend as the battle between Kibitsuhiko-no-mikoto and Ura.

In ancient times, there were individuals who held great power in various parts of the Japanese archipelago, and their power can still be sensed through the burial mounds and ruins that remain today. The ancient province of Kibi was one of the place, that it still has enormous burial mounds and ruins that tell us about those days. It is thought

that Kibi's ancient leaders fought against other powers, and their deeds passed into





Sentaimonseki stone at Tatetsuki-jinja Shrine

Tatelsuk-jijija Shrine. Ibe delily of Tatelsuk-jirija Shrine, located atop the Tatelsuk-jirija Shrine, located atop the Tatelsuki Ruins. The belt-shaped pattern carved into the stone demonstrates the outstanding carving techniques of the Yayol period. The legend also has it that Klbitsuhiko-no-mikoto used it as a flying

Tsukuriyama(遊川) Burial Mound

The burisl mound is about 350m long. This is the fourth-largest keyhole-shaped burisl mound in the country. It attests to the existence of a major power that was capable of building such enormous burisl mounds in Klüb. Artifacts related to the Korean peninsula have been unearthed in the vicinity it is the largest burial mound in Japan th





sea of pink from the peacl blossoms in early April!





The mound becomes a

Ryomizan



to carry such large st

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Yata-otsuka Burial Mound

This round burial mound is one of Kibi's three large stone burial mounds. It is thought to be the family tomb of Shimotsumichi, on of the descendants of Kibitsuhiko-no-Mikoto's brother.



Musa-otsuka Burial Mound

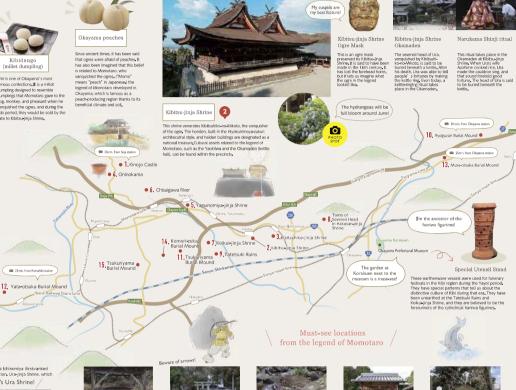
als round burial mound is one of bi's three large stone burial mound is thought to be the family tomb of amitsumichi, one of Kibitsuhi-

Komori-zuka Burial Mound

is keyhole-shaped burial mi

Tsukurivama(作山) Burial Mound

This keyhole-shaped burial mound, built in the mid-fifth century, is the tenth-largest in the country, 282 m in overall length, it is large enough to be seen from Kinojo Castle.



Chisugawa River is a river that flows from MLKinojo. The legend has told that the river turned bright red from the blood of Ura, who was injured by an arrow short by Kibitsuhiko-on-Mikoto. The river have gotton the name because of the red color that resulted from a high iron content.



According to legend, this pot was used by Ura to boil people as sacrifices. In reality, however, it appears to be a kettle made for the people by the monk Chogen in the Kamakura period.

Votive tablets

Yaguinomiya-jinja Shrine

This is the spot where arrows shot collided in mid-air and fell to the ground?
Yagunomiya is a shrine that venerates the location where arrows shot by (biltsuhikon-Mikoto and Lira during baltic collided in mid-air and fell to the ground. A large stone that Ura is aslate to have thrown can be found in the precincts.



Koikui-jinja Shrine

This is the spot where Ura was

By transforming into a cormorant. Kibitsuhiko-no-mikoto was able to catch and sanguish Ura, who had changed into a carp to escape. Kokul-jinja Shrine was built to venerate the location where Ura was caught. There is also a bursal housed from the Yayrol period here, and various artifacts have been unearther.



There is a mound approximately
1.5-meters high called "Kornekami," a
subsidiary shrine on the grounds of
Hakusan Jin ja Shrine. Legend has it that
Kibitsuhiko-no-Mikoto, who had defeated
Ura in battle, beheaded Ura and stuck his head on a pike for public display here.



in Hakusan-jinja Shrine