

## Sacred Sites and Sports Tourism: Bonding and the Memory of Symbol Landmarks Motivate Human Mobility —A Case Study of the Koshien District

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We illustrate the following two theories on human mobility. 1. Naming a place or landmark is an act of ownership: a place name may activate bonding, and identification with the landmark and acknowledgment of a certain spatial order in a region (Chapter 1(1)–(6), 3 (3), 4 (3)): To toponyms we apply Saussure's forgotten insight on the use of anagrams in Homeric poems (c1907/c2013), referenced by Baudrillard (1975/2016). Cleverly forged assemblies of toponyms reinforce the mnemonic for a certain itinerary, creating symbolic configurations and bonding around desirable destinations: i.e., sacred sites (Chapter 1(2)–(4)). 2. Life proceeds in a perpetual ebb-and-flow of the sacral and the profane. 2a) Tourism is a form of mobility, a ritual endeavor to escape the everyday by transitory bonding with space, resources, and cognition to gain points of spiritual power. 2b) Sports is ritualized warfare, displaying both sacral and profane elements. Both sports and tourism rely on memory, resonance, and flow (Chapter 1(5)–(6), Chapter 2). This case study of the Koshien District, the host community for sports tourism at the sacred Japanese baseball site, Koshien Baseball Stadium, built in 1924, helps to clarify how bonding and memory are indispensable not only for tourism but also for the host community (Chapters 3–4).

Keywords: memory, bonding, mobility, toponym, aesthetics of everyday life, baseball, Koshien

### 1. Problems Confronting Sports Tourism: Stakeholder and Host Community —A Productive Relationship to Mutual Advantage

The most serious problems that tourism faces, especially sports tourism, seem to be overcrowding, traffic jams, noise pollution, litter and garbage, price hikes, and the nuisances of fandom that bother the members of the community who are indifferent to sports events, a situation that is mainly caused by the temporary congestion of facilities (Kuvan & Akan 2005<sup>1</sup>; Eisinger 2000<sup>2</sup>). Research conducted at an Olympic games site in Rio de Janeiro showed that the closer a sports event was located to a certain community, the more intense the opposition to the event and reluctance toward volunteer activity (Rocha 2020<sup>3</sup>). The negative recollections linger, whereas the euphoria and sense of achievement that reach peaks at opening and closing ceremonies of megaevents gradually fade, while the material profits of the stakeholders

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precipitously disappear (Kim & Kaplanidou 2018<sup>4</sup>; Dolan et al. 2019<sup>5</sup>; Magno & Dossena 2020<sup>6</sup>). The sense of disturbance/enjoyment or alienation/bond that the host community harbors toward the events or the local team differ in nuance among individual members, depending on their various predispositions (Weimar et al. 2017<sup>7</sup>; Styliadis et al. 2016<sup>8</sup>).

Under these circumstances, can the relationship between the host community of the sport events and its stakeholders (interested parties) become more amicable and fruitful? Earlier studies have reported that the host community is not only interested in material profit, but in the exaltation and enrichment of local identity, the heightened sense of belonging to or living in a cherished territory. What the implications of this are for a host community that embraces a site sacred to baseball will be analyzed in Chapter 4, Sections (2) and (3).

### **(1) Explication of Research Viewpoints**

At least one study of sacred site tourism at Santiago de Compostella suggests that in assessing the satisfaction/or dissatisfaction of tourists, stakeholders, and the host community, the procedure should also be based on a conceptual, qualitative viewpoint: It is not so much the quantifiable numbers as the careful analysis of various, subjective evaluations *per se*, executed from predisposed sensibilities, that are important (Lopez et al. 2019<sup>9</sup>). The combination of *sports tourism* with *sacred sites tourism* is a phenomenon familiar to residents of the Koshien district in the immediate vicinity of the Koshien Baseball Stadium, for almost a century considered the sacred site for high school baseball in Japan. In Chapters 2 and 3 we shall go into this topic in detail. In Chapter 4 we shall consider the issue of community identity as being at the crux of the problem. We shall take care to consider both the qualitative and the quantifiable aspects of this issue.

### **(2) Prior Observations about Sacred Sites and Place Names**

One vital theme in tourism marketing research is that of mining the rich resources that afford identity to the community. Of particular interest here, as farfetched as it might seem, is Saussure's neglected insight and discovery, the recurrence of anagrams in the Homeric poems.

In Chapter 6 of his book *L'échange symbolique et la mort*, which analyses the procedures of symbolic consumption and circulation, Jean Baudrillard takes admiring note of Saussure's *opus* in a section especially dedicated to *anagrammes*, Baudrillard would value this insight much higher than that which led to the flowering in the 20<sup>th</sup> century of semiologies and structuralismes; Baudrillard estimated as most important Saussure's discovery of the mechanism ("*opération symbolique*") by which the mnemonic reverberation of symbols could be effected: That subtle mechanism of weaving of fragmented symbols into the texture of life, at its so many levels, from the most exalted to the most despicable and subliminal (Baudrillard 2016<sup>11</sup>; Baudrillard 1975/1980<sup>12</sup>). Saussure laboriously extracted the dismembered phonemes, syllables of relevant names "intentionally" interspersed in the epic texts.

That Saussure "found" so many examples of anagrams (mainly invocations of names of gods) in such an archaic classical landmark as the *Odyssey* and *Iliad*, and that the method of anagrams in poetic verses continues to be used by poets from diverse cultures and epochs would seem to point to the primary function of poetry, which we assert to be: the proof and memory of

names, places, events, emotions, and thoughts, even coinciding with the beginnings of oral history, the era of myths and legends. Remember that the *Odyssey* begins with an invocation to the goddess of memory: “Tell me, O Muse, of the man of many devices, ·····Of these things, goddess, daughter of Zeus, beginning where thou wilt, tell thou even unto us.”<sup>13)</sup> Instead of the names of deities, however, we want to look at the invocation of place names, the branding of toponyms, which is so important in tourism. We consider Benedict Anderson’s explication of the role of language zones in the transmission of images and ideologies in *Imagined Communities* (1983/2016<sup>14)</sup>) to provide decisive credibility to Saussure’s insights and Baudrillard’s proposals. The essence lies in the mnemonic mechanism (“*opération symbolique*”) of verbal and symbolic configurations. With these mnemonic mechanisms in place, it is not surprising how the digitalized world is inundated in a flash by potent trolls and catchphrases.

### (3) The Urbanonym Koshien: Proposals for Understanding its Influence

Place names give a location, identify a geographic point.

This could undoubtedly be perceived from a totally different light in cases of invasion, war, and colonialization. However, in times of peace, people feeling outright indignation, discomfort, or uneasiness with place names seem to be in minority; however, many do feel it could have been somewhat better, or indifferently anything else.

In the name Koshien, revival and resuscitation is signified in the sign of the Chinese zodiac and calendar, “Koshi” indicating the initial year for an ensuing cycle of sixty years. Thus, Koshien means the “Garden of Sexagenary Renewal” or “Garden of Resuscitation.” A genial inspiration of real estate development, the Hanshin Electric Railway named the nearest hub station Koshien after the Koshien Baseball Stadium, its namesake. The baseball stadium, completed just one year after the Great Kanto Earthquake (1923), was the symbol and landmark of Hanshin’s real estate development with the catchphrase “Suburban Life” (*Kougai-seikatsu*) and served as the catalyst to a modernist movement in the region called *Hanshinkan Modernism*.

Shozo Misaki, since 1917 managing director of Hanshin Electric Railways, was the mastermind behind the construction of the Koshien Baseball Stadium. Etsuji Maisaka, Misaki’s fourth son and biographer, recounts the following episode, relying on his father’s diary, and his elder brother’s notes.

Misaki had studied in America, and the model for the new baseball stadium was the Yankee Stadium in New York. According to Maisaka, after the Great Kanto Earthquake in September 1923, the construction works at the new baseball stadium had to be stopped as a series of disruptions arose across Japan, including general social upheaval and unrest.

However, Misaki had the construction works resumed and brought it to completion in August 1924. On New Year’s Day 1924, he had visited the Nishinomiya Shrine and saw a plaque announcing the commencement of the Chinese sexagenary cycle (“*Taishou-jusan-nen-Koshi-notoshi*”). This made quite a strong impression on him and motivated him to propose at a board meeting the name Koshien for the stadium to commemorate the new sexagenary calendar cycle. This was original, and unlike other new baseball stadiums at the time, assigned explicatory place names. The board was enthusiastic and approved the naming for its simplicity, analogy with

other Hanshin place names (*Kouroen*), and favorable message of hope and recovery in Japan's future after the devastating earthquake. According to Michio Tamaki, Misaki's diary entry for February 6 could corroborate a board approval of the name Koshien at the beginning of February.<sup>15)</sup>

The Chinese ideograph "ko" is propitious and auspicious, formed in the semblance of a shield, indicating primality, vigor, strength, combativeness, adolescence, and germination. The ideograph 甲 is reiterated in numerous landmarks and place names such as the Rokko Mountains, Kabutoyama; and in Koyoen; and it conforms pleasantly to the phonetic configuration of numerous adjacent landmarks like the Mukogawa River, Hyogo, as we have already explicated in detail (Morita 2020<sup>16)</sup>).

Chinese ideographs and hieroglyphs transmit visual and symbolic content, emphasized by the phonetic sound "ko" and its connotations through assonance and rhyme: combativeness, military, sprouting, and germination, and assisted the proliferation of heroic narratives that feed the lore of the sacred sport, as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

As will be illustrated in Chapter 4(2)) in the case study of the nine Koshien districts, respondents' commentaries to questionnaires affirmed the high degree of recognition that the toponym Koshien possesses. [Question 7 (requesting respondents to describe their free associations with the place name Koshien), Question 15 (requesting evaluation of the scenic value of the Koshien Baseball Stadium), and Question 19 (requesting evaluation of the place name Koshien) all had entry columns for commentaries on the reasons of their evaluations].

Koshien has become synonymous with contests involving high school students. A whole array of contests named something-*koshien* feed off the narrative of high school baseball; in these *koshien*-championships, which have proliferated in many parts of Japan, adolescents grapple with a variety of pursuits like calligraphy, cooking, sweets, and manga: The public is captivated by youthful effort and the aesthetics of competition displayed during the grueling procedure of selection.

To explain this phenomenon, we propose the following explanation: Narrative stories provide vehicles for the transit. Toponyms keep the story alive; keep the story in circulation; keep the image in the collective consciousness, like the names of celebrities.

Overall, our interpretation is that the extensive media exposure builds on these auspicious meanings and network of martial associations, strongly highlighting the element of youthful conflict (rites of passage) and the aesthetics of renaissance through conflict that is celebrated in the High School Baseball Championship.

The toponym Koshien provides the prefix for diverse souvenirs: cookies, noodle bowls shaped after the stadium, and good luck ampules filled with stadium ground soil. Many contests for youth use the postfix Koshien as a common noun for tournament: Kochi Prefecture presides over a renowned manga contest called Manga Koshien. These postfixes reinforce the mnemonic effect of the toponym.

Thus it is that the toponyms construct a mechanism of circulation for the populace, channeling its movements and its activity, shaping, accelerating, and controlling its mobility, guiding the

territorial game artery of flow, as Francesco-Alessio Ursini and Haiping Long point out (2020<sup>17</sup>). It is quite difficult to distinguish between the differently nuanced functions of urbanonyms; what is decisive is that urbanonyms, as do other toponyms, express the need of the community to share a common heritage, a common hierarchy and structured spatial order.

Duncan Light, using examples of toponyms in Beatles' lyrics and saga (Strawberry Fields), agrees that toponyms function as markers of the spatial order through which the inhabitant or tourist navigates (2014<sup>18</sup>). The insight here is that the toponym serves as a marker for the site, which assumes a spiritual value; the site where people converge to celebrate and commemorate their spiritual links; a link reinforced also by mediation through souvenirs, images, and other references. Thus the toponym has an overwhelmingly mnemonic function, as markers of spatial ordering (levels of sacredness).

#### **(4) The Mnemonic Effect of Railroad Songs**

A relevant example from Japan are the Railroad Songs (*Tetsudou-shouka*), which had roots in the rhetorical embellishments used in Japanese classical literature, feeding off the symbolic terrain of famous landmarks and venues and sacred sites composing literary *topoi*. As early as 1900 lyrics were set for the first Railroad Songs, which ultimately expanded to a veritable encyclopedia of itineraries with more than 330 verses intoning the destination sites of the state-owned railway. Being extremely popular, hundreds of songs celebrating the routes and sites of the many other private newcomer railroads proliferated in aftermath. No wonder that more than a hundred years afterwards, the arrival chime of the super express *Shinkansen* still uses the melody of the original Railroad Song.

#### **(5) Theories of the Origin of Tourism:**

##### **Memory and Ownership, a Common Denominator with Sports**

Let us set down our theories.

Theory 1: Naming and bonding: mobility and recognition intersect; landmarks are necessary for mastery of space. As with other activities, tourism shares a cognitive and mnemonic aspect. It is an ascertainment, a tour and patrol of power or natural resources and of energy; points considered communication points with the supernatural, or with the past, tourist sites serve to officiate with the past, or new aspects of oneself.

Theory 2: Life proceeds in a perpetual ebb-and-flow of the sacral and the profane. Theory 2a: Memory, consumption and resonance: Mobility is time and space use in living activities, a strategy for survival; we are always on the move for the collection and consumption of resources, spiritual and material, even where life and death intersect. Memory provides the basis for episodes and narratives and incubates symbols. As a result, memory creates an echo chamber (resonance) of empathetic associations. Theory 2b: Tourism is ritualized mobility; sports is ritualized warfare, both displaying sacral and profane elements. Both sports and tourism thrive on the core experiences of memory, resonance, and flow (a continuous transfer of energy; <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/flow>). Sports has the particular aspect of fandom and vicarious engagement (i.e., spectatorship, sponsorship).

In this chapter we have explicated the importance of place names in our theories as an



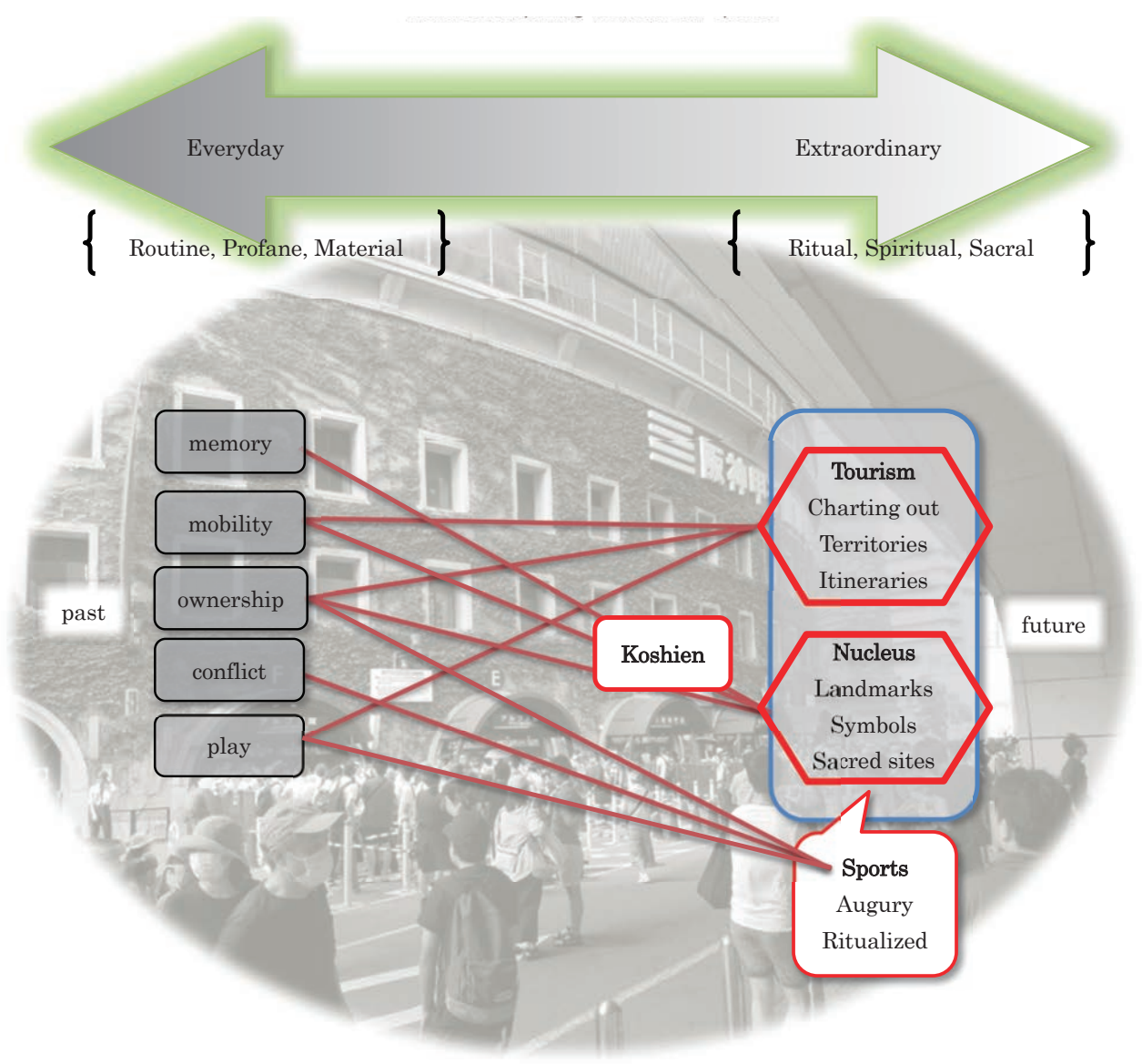
introduction to the case study in Chapter 4, where we will analyze in detail the link between identity and place names, examining polled data to illustrate our theories.

**(6) The Aesthetics of Everyday Life or the Consumption of Beauty**

As a framework for the theories above, we propose the Aesthetics of Everyday Life, which we define as a strategy for survival, a common denominator of all things living; it is an organic system of efforts, individual and collective, to consume beauty, i.e., the best resources and values possible, be it through the cycles of gift and benefit, or through the cycles of deception and predation. We evaluate our everyday cycles of life by our own “aesthetic” standards, and proceed to improve our lives.

In our lifelong search for values, we follow activities that are in accordance with our customized Aesthetics of Everyday Life—for instance, just to name a few, the search for resources to survive compels us to *mobility*, and we come into *conflict* with others regarding the *ownership* or use of resources and *territory*. *Play* is a deeply ingrained drive in humans and serves to prepare and train us for potential occurrences.

Figure 1. Lifelong Search for Values = Aesthetics of Everyday Life  
—Elements Inspiring Tourism and Sports



*Memory*, deeply linked to the sensorial functions and susceptible to various *narratives* and imaginaries, helps us navigate and chart out uncharted *territories* and define them as *landmarks* and *sacred sites* (italics for keywords listed in Fig. 1).

If we accept that life is driven by this consumption of beauty, we can easily deduce why travel (tourism) and sports afford pleasure to so many. Especially for humans, in this Aesthetics of Everyday Life (economy of beauty) seems to be ingrained a deep urge to instill sense in the apparently senselessness of the repetitive cycles of everyday: an urge toward the sacral and spiritual, i.e., ritualization. History tells us that every culture has a calendar, pivoting on seasonal timelines for survival and sacral content. Tourism, which is an evolutionary shoot-off of migration and pilgrimages, in its turn spontaneously emerges around certain timelines and itineraries. Sports events, having an augural character, are held following a calendar that points to their origins. For instance, Koshien High School Baseball may be regarded as a passage rite for adolescents competing in tournaments as representatives of the various Japanese provinces, and fits into a scholastic calendar. Sendai Ikuei Gakuen High School won the 2022 National High School Baseball Championship, held at Koshien this August. The high school is from the Eastern Tohoku area. Notably, the mass media feted their triumph as an augur of good omen for the region still staggering from the after-effects of the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011, an empowering victory for youth suffering under lock-downs and social-distancing measures due to the pandemic.

Thus, the Aesthetics of Everyday Life inspires us to vault over from the everyday toward the extraordinary, from the material to the spiritual, from the profane to the sacral. Constructing the ritual structures of travel and sports events is only one aspect of the aestheticization of everyday life.

## 2. The Sacral and the Profane:

### Definition of Travel and Travel Destinations - Sacred Sites and the Sacral Function of Sports

#### (1) Theoretical Overview

Space is not homogeneous—it is marked, it is demarcated by destinations, by natural barriers and landmarks; it can express social stratifications spatiotemporal transformation (Bryant & Jary 1991<sup>19</sup>; Hoggart & Kofman 1992<sup>20</sup>). It can also be aestheticized, it can also be marked out or proliferated by satellite language zones, as explicated so well by Anderson (1983/2016<sup>14</sup>).

Travel is a process of ascertaining the significance of life, or it can be a means of livelihood; to continue life itself, the road must be undertaken. Therefore it is meaningful to entangle as many beloved hot-spot power-spot destinations as possible in a transportation network, to stimulate procuring or transporting values, and transport the goods. Spread the good news, consolidate a behavioral migratory pattern, by setting up an itinerary network, studded with sacred sites or simply set up a compelling sacred site. Better yet, propagate a narrative, a myth that would consolidate the aesthetic and mythic supremacy of a place as a convergence point, as the media has so ably crafted for Koshien Baseball Stadium for almost a century. A trip to the stadium to witness the passage ritual of the young heroes, *samurai* aesthetics, and spiritual values, provides an escape from the mundane routine to close in on the pure sphere of sublimating invigoration

and excitement.

## (2) Liminal Sites: Sports and the Sacral

Philip Seaton and his team convincingly argue in *Contents Tourism in Japan: Pilgrimages to "Sacred Sites" of Popular Culture* that contents tourism is an evolved form of sacred site pilgrimage (Seaton et al., 2017<sup>21</sup>); we take this further and suggest that it would also apply to sports tourism, as would seem to be validated by the national acceptance of the Koshien Baseball Stadium as a “sacred site” with a mythical narrative.

Sports as a professional activity gained prominence after the 18th century, culminating after the industrial revolution in the revival of the Olympic Games in 1896, in which quantifiable achievements came to be measured by the second and millimeter, contesting the boundaries of human prowess. Sports has something in it that tells us that it is an attempt to surpass the dull repetition and routine of everyday and arrive at the extraordinary. In that sense, sports is a ritual affording us access to the holy conflict of life, and in that sense affords us a taste of the sacral.

Robert Ellis attempts to examine the ramifications of the stadium as a sacred site; but to fathom all the important connotations is difficult if one limits oneself primarily to a Christian theological viewpoint; we assert that it requires an anthropological, mythical standpoint of somewhat primordial dimensions (Ellis 2019<sup>22</sup>). Strictly intolerant in this regard is Werner Petermandl’s analysis of the origin of sports eliminating nuances of the sacral (Petermandl 2017<sup>23</sup>). In this respect, we consider the suggestions of Charles S. Prebish and others analyzing the multifarious phenomenon sport as a liminal transit mediator between the sacral and the profane to be particularly insightful (Prebish 1993<sup>24</sup>; O’ Connor 2018<sup>25</sup>; Abrutyn 2018<sup>26</sup>; Lewis & Hirt 2019<sup>27</sup>; Roberts 1995<sup>28</sup>).

Games share a common beginning with sports, that is, play and pray (Maranise 2013<sup>29</sup>): They most likely started from betting and battling, duels, and the search for omens, having a primeval origin. They are a ritualization of the repetitive and routine competitive activities that make up life, searching for a solution and closure; they tend therefore toward the sacral, being a celebration, approaching the intrinsically sacral itself.

Arenas enclosing the sacred space dedicated to the games can have the shape of a circle, oval, or rectangle; diamond; containment of the sacred arena of conflict is necessary to mark the arena unmistakably from the mundane surroundings, marking the terrain out for sacred warfare.

The sacred arena needs a surrounding sanctuary or an appropriate terrain to elevate the meaning of its location.

## 3. Historical Background of High School Baseball in Japan

### (1) Baseball: An Imported American Sport

Before we begin our case study of the sacred baseball site Koshien in detail, we will provide a sketch of its historical background. We outline below the formation of the mythical narrative of the baseball player as the new *samurai* hero and the sense of empowerment that baseball gave the Japanese after the Meiji Reformation.

Baseball gradually gained popularity in Japan beginning in the Meiji era. Literary works



published in the 1930s on the history of collegiate baseball in Japan lead Satoshi Shimizu to conclude that it started from contacts between resident Americans, foreign instructors and engineers who had arrived in Japan, and members of the local community. Of particular interest, the interactions occurring in the sites neighboring the foreign concessions, such as Yokohama, and the local community, a fashion spread mediated by the increasingly enthusiastic extracurricular activity of the recently founded higher institutions of learning, colleges and higher schools, established following western (strongly American-influenced) models, and greatly promoted by the rivalry between leading universities and higher schools, where the new elite converged (Shimizu 1991<sup>30</sup>).

An example of decisive influence was the American Horace Wilson, who taught at Kaisei-Gakkou, a predecessor of Tokyo University. Feeling the need for physical education, he founded a baseball club at his new school and gave momentum to the idea that baseball was an exemplary American sport, spurring a rush to establish new clubs by the educated and elite in the Tokyo area (Shimizu 1991<sup>30</sup>). Significant was the deep impact on the Japanese psyche of the “international matches” between the Ikko First Higher School and the Yokohama Athletic Club and American teams from 1894 to 1904, where the Ikko team emerged overwhelmingly victorious (Roden 1980<sup>31</sup>). Also memorable was the overseas expedition tour in the USA by the Waseda University Baseball Team in 1905 after the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese War. This tour lasted about a year.

This new-found popularity succumbed temporarily to a fierce wave of jingoistic criticism, as in the *Tokyo Asahi Shimbun* column “*Yakyu-to-sono-gaidokuron*” (Critique of the Immoral Perils of the Sport of Baseball [1911, August 29–September 19]) taking this line of attack: The pursuit of baseball has adverse influence on the morale and academic performance of students, deemed especially harmful because of baseball’s spectacular emergence as the darling of the mass media, and with a perhaps a viable future as a professional sport. Japanese baseball survived this onslaught spectacularly. After playing the stunt of dividing public opinion with editorials on the immoralities of baseball, the Osaka branch of the same *Asahi Shimbun* undertook the project of setting up an all-Japan student baseball tournament to capitalize on its immoral aspects: the mission to re-educate the students.

Baseball wins a solid position in the national terrain, not only in the amateur but also in the professional sectors; and continued to consolidate its popularity, witnessing the construction of major stadiums such as Koshien Baseball Stadium (1924), modeled after Yankee Stadium in New York, and Jingu Baseball Stadium (1926), even well after the outbreak of Sino-Japanese war, well into the 1930s, Kourakuen Baseball Stadium (1936); however, as war with the USA became ever more imminent, baseball had to resort to various subterfuges, such as switching from an American baseball jargon to a rigidly Japanese nomenclature and wording, and then disappearing from the inland scene altogether and reappearing in occupied Manchuria (Sakamoto 2020<sup>32</sup>).

Baseball had been taken up so enthusiastically because it offered a refreshingly welcome, western type of team sport activity for youth, which was congruous with the perceived need for westernization. Following the familiar mottoes of *Bunmei-kaika* (civilization and enlightenment)

and *Fukoku-kyouhei* (national prosperity and reinforcement of defense), the Japanese government ratcheted up westernization of many aspects of traditional customs and daily life. The structure of a baseball game, with the triad mathematical score system, playing up the territorial implications of winning the bases in the diamond, plus the homecoming metaphor of the homerun was agreeable to the dislocated agrarian *elite*, as has been pointed out in another context in the case of American colonial settlerism (Fortier 2015<sup>33</sup>). A good infusion of the *samurai* spirit, i.e., Japanese *noblesse oblige* and fair play ethics transformed baseball into a showcase of new-found Japanese *bushido* (knightly) virtues and reclaimed the traditional values of the abolished *samurai* class after the Meiji Reformation (Roden 1980<sup>31</sup>). A meaningful affinity of club activities with the activity for youth endorsed by the traditional *goju*, or brotherhood gatherings has also been pointed out (Cave 2004<sup>34</sup>).

## (2) Sportsmanship and *Samurai* Spirit

After the Meiji Reformation, there was an influx and dislocation of people from farming rural areas in a search for livelihoods in the industrialized metropolises; this displacement triggered the social transformation of the community and vitalized among the displaced multitudes nostalgia and fandom for one's own roots and birthplace: a fascinating subject to be treated in the popular songs of *Enka*, songs replete with narratives of lost love and forsaken birthplaces and families, stoking *Alma mater* compatriotism and other affinities. High school baseball has become a revered "institution" peculiar to Japan, with its divergence from and at the same time symbiosis with professional baseball, a love-hate relationship (laced perhaps with the chance of getting a passport to professional baseball). High school baseball fandom has its own protocol, etiquette, ritual, rules, communities, hierarchies, and organizations. High school baseball fandom is characterized by a fastidious obsession with honor and fair play and an arduous cult of adolescence, displaying many characteristics of the passage rite (Shimizu 1991<sup>30</sup>; Ishisaka 2008<sup>35</sup>; Nishihara 2013<sup>36</sup>). Individual hero-worship seems to be reserved for the exceptional few, whereas selfless teamplay during the grueling tournament series gets the most attention.

The opening ceremony of the championship league begins with the league championship anthem and the entry parade of the players, followed by the ceremonial restitution of the league championship flag, opening speeches, and the taking of the sportsmanship oath; and ends with the exit parade of the players. The parades flaunt precise military discipline. Sports and war

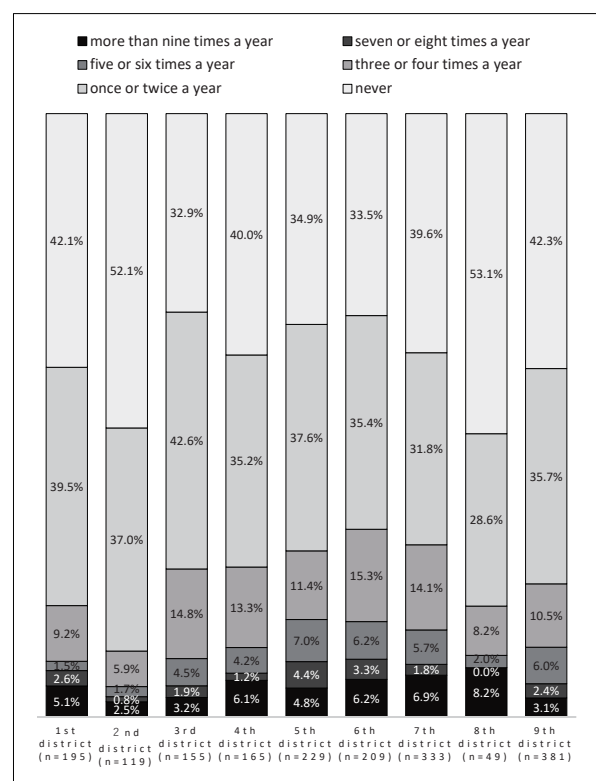


Figure 2. Residents' Koshien Baseball Stadium Annual Access Frequency (District)

interlace, as Tricia Jenkins has pointed out: team play plays out strife (2014<sup>37</sup>). In our view, slightly disagreeing with Jenkins, it does not trivialize its conflict, but *ritualizes* its content.

### (3) Place Name Preference

Conceding a place to an alien totem, to an indifferent namesake, to the spirit of place, as the dominant spirit; this what is at stake: Whether a place name has an unpleasant or pleasant connotations differs from individual to individual.

Does the sympathy/antipathy toward the Hanshin Tigers baseball team correspond in level to the sympathy/antipathy toward their home-ground Koshien Baseball Stadium, or its namesake, the Koshien Station and the name of the district itself, Koshien? So far, we can at least safely infer that the measure of predisposition toward acknowledging this heritage would seem to be one of the key factors. We shall consider this aspect, among others, in our case study in the next chapter.

## 4. Case Study: Survey in the Koshien District

### (1) Basic Data

The survey was carried out from January to November 2020. The polling results analyzed reflect the responses incorporated as of Dec. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Questionnaires were distributed among the residents of nine Koshien districts, or nine local administrative units, facing the main throughfare Koshien-suji (Koshien Avenue), which leads to the “sacred site,” Koshien Baseball Stadium (Appendix A). Nishinomiya City has 663 administrative districts, or “*chou*,” including 39 districts with place names linked to the landmark “Koshien,” suggesting the geographical and historical relationship. Among these 39 districts, we chose 9 districts for research. They are in the immediate vicinity of the Koshien Baseball Stadium, and were among the first areas developed for housing and sold in lots after 1929. We hoped that there might be a higher possibility of links or transferred memories from their forebearers or predecessors.

Questionnaires were distributed and replies received by post (postage paid by addressee) in this community. We collected 1,868 answers. In December 2019, we began our preparations to distribute the questionnaires in these nine districts with an estimated number of 14,054 residents and 6,496 households, using the Japan Post posting service with delivery area designation (*haitastubutsu-chiiki-shitei-bin*). However, according to the Nishinomiya-Higashi Post Office, as of December 2019, there were 6,890 residences or dwellings registered as posting points in the area. Thus, 6,890 envelopes with two questionnaires each were prepared for distribution, of which 250 envelopes with questionnaires were returned unopened and unanswered. According to the Japan Post staff in charge, this would indicate a certain time-lag between municipal registration and data revision by Japan Post.

The questionnaire had 30 questions, of which 7 items concerned use of Koshien District’s landmark facilities (Koshien Baseball Stadium and the Former Koshien Hotel); 12 items asked about the residents’ assessment of the environment in the community; 8 items requested demographic data without identification of the individual; 1 item requested the assessment of a subscale of emotional attachment to the district; and the final 2 items requested that residents fill out a simple timetable to describe their daily time use and activities. The respondents replied

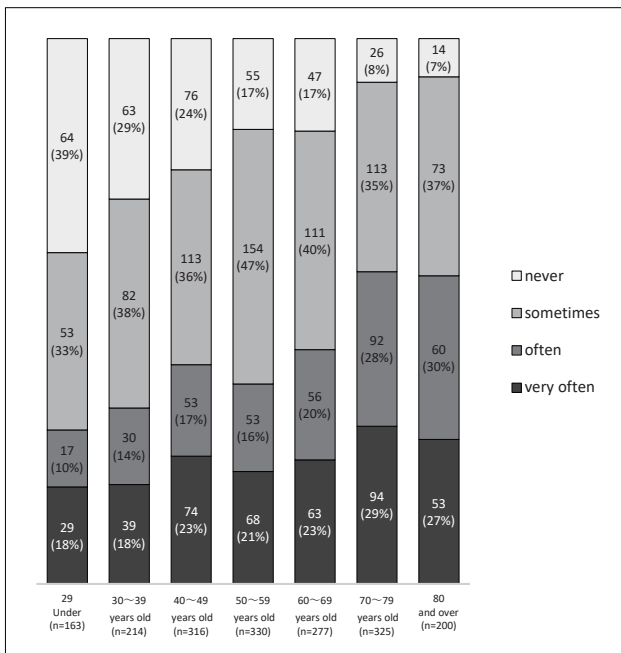


Figure 3. Residents' Media Access to Games at the Koshien Baseball Stadium (Age Group)

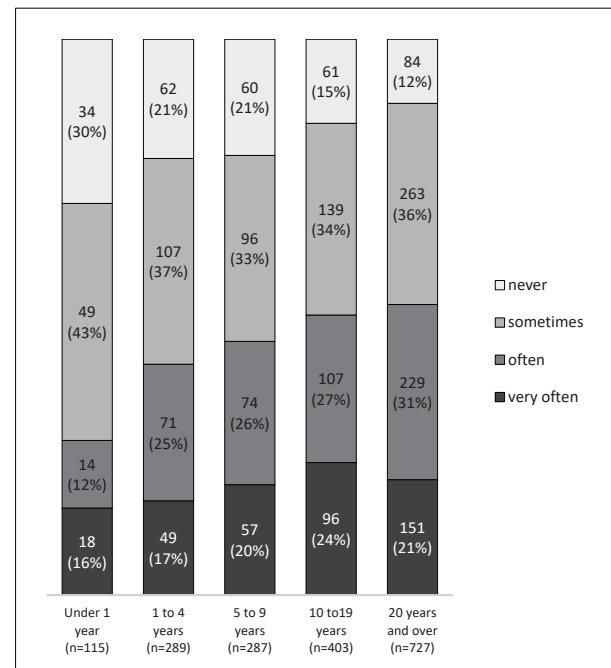


Figure 4. Frequency of Access to Media Topics on Koshien Baseball Stadium (Duration of Residence)

to specific questions by selection from format. Moreover, the questionnaire included 20 fields for free commentary.

## (2) Analysis of Access to Stadium

We studied the data to elucidate the characteristics of each district, to analyze the variables in the residents' assessment of the environment, particularly the geographical spatial relationship to the "sacred site," Koshien Baseball Stadium.

### 1) Spectator Participation at the Stadium

Access to the media, and visits to the stadium were analyzed. The polling results indicate that the longer a respondent lived in Koshien and the older they were, the more likely they would be to visit the stadium often (Figs. 2–4). Polling results for Questions 1–3 are tabulated according to district (Fig. 2), age group (Fig. 3), and duration of residence (Fig. 4). Residents from the districts in immediate proximity of the stadium tended to access both the media coverage and the stadium more often (Fig. 2, 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup> Districts).

Question 1 asked the residents about the frequency of their annual access to the stadium, including for watching baseball games. In all the Koshien districts surveyed, the proportion of those who did not visit the stadium on a regular annual basis was 39.8% (total number replies  $N = 1837$ ); a high percentage of non-visitors had the rather distant 2<sup>nd</sup> (52.1%,  $n = 119$ ), as well as the adjacent 8<sup>th</sup> (53.1%,  $n = 26$ ) Districts. The 8<sup>th</sup> District is just across the road from the stadium, but has relatively few inhabitants ( $N = 235$ , respondents  $n = 49$ ), being the location of commercial facilities such as shopping malls. Surprisingly, the high percentage of non-visitors (i.e., people who do not visit the Koshien Baseball Stadium on a regular basis) seemed to have overall no direct negative impact on the environmental assessment of the residents, as will be shown in the following.

## 2) Pride in the Host Community

Question 4 asked if the residents felt proud of living near the stadium. *Proud* (42.6%,  $n = 782$ ) and *rather proud* (37.4%,  $n = 686$ ) made up 80% together, versus *neither* (17.9%,  $n = 329$ ), *rather not proud* (0.7%,  $n = 13$ ), and *not proud* (1.4%,  $n = 25$ ; total replies,  $N = 1835$ ) The results show that a good majority have pride in their most famous landmark.

The ensuing constant exposure by the media as the sacred site for the high school baseball championship has nurtured familiarity with and attachment to the Koshien District. Naming confirms identification of a landmark as a reference point; acceptance of and familiarity with the landmark name creates attachment and instills pride, felt only of the things with which we claim a bond. Therefore, we consider our Theory 1 (Naming is an act of bonding……Toponyms reinforce the mnemonic for a certain itinerary, enveloping symbolic configurations and bonding around desirable destinations: i.e., sacred sites) about landmark names to be confirmed.

## 3) Need for Green Space

Strong nostalgia and a deep need for urban green are revealed in the responses to Question 18 about proposals for necessary urban development. The most common proposal was that of increasing street trees (50.42%,  $n = 942$ , total number replies,  $N = 1868$ , total number of propositions for urban development,  $N = 3176$ ). In numerous free commentaries from the survey, residents regretted the loss of residences with spacious gardens and greenery, as the majority has been transformed into collective housing and undersized single-family detached housing. We analyze these results as reflecting the nostalgia felt for the vintage founding concept of the Garden City initially proposed by Hanshin Electric Railway in the Meiji era and for the primeval pine forests wooding the sandy beds of the alluvia along the Mukogawa River. Here the absence of the sycamores lining the avenue, recently (in 2008) cut down to make way for cable culverts, plays a role. This was an effort to beautify the promenade that did not resonate well with the residents, all the more because the avenue was under prefectural and not municipal supervision. The desire for green space is felt strongest in the 2<sup>nd</sup> District (64.8%,  $n = 122$ ), and the lowest in the 7<sup>th</sup> District (46.1%,  $n = 336$ ).

As a newsletter from a recently held workshop on a street tree project for Koshien Avenue shows, there were multiple references from the residents about the need to resuscitate the remembered scenes from childhood (“*gen-fukei*,” *Koshien Avenue Tree Workshop Newsletter No.4 2022*<sup>38</sup>). The impression is that not only the elderly residents but also the younger residents share this nostalgia, suggesting the transmission of lost vistas and landscapes by local history and oral traditions.

Kiyoko Eito indicates that among the top management of Hanshin Electric Railways, the “Suburban Life” was used as an ideal for promoting development in the rural area between Osaka and Kobe; in their organ and monthly bulletin *Kougai-seikatu* (Suburban Life), begun in 1908, Hanshin Electric Railways recommended an elevated suburban lifestyle for habitation and recreation purposes, following a healthy and active life in scenic vistas, away from the population density of industrialized areas (Eito 2008<sup>39</sup>).



#### 4) Recognition of Landmarks in the District

Interest in landscape among the residents is polled in Question 14: *interested* (48.0%) and *rather interested* (36.3%,  $N = 1820$ ). Very high scenic ratings for Koshien Baseball Stadium (first built in 1924) are given by respondents (Question 15: *contributes to landscape* 53%, *rather contributes to landscape* 32%; total number of replies,  $N = 1824$ ), but not so high ones for the other landmark, the Former Koshien Hotel, built in 1935 (“Question 16: *contributes to landscape* 39%, *rather contributes to landscape* 22%; total number of replies,  $N = 1788$ ). The disintegration and disappearance of the green corridor, plus the conversion of the premises to university facilities and strongly limited access to the public seem to explain the difference in recognition of the vintage art deco hotel, designed by Arata Endo, an apprentice of Frank Lloyd Wright (Morita 2020<sup>40)</sup>, Morita2021<sup>41)</sup>).

In their commentaries to Question 16 (scenic evaluation of the Former Koshien Hotel), the respondents say that they miss the original scenic value of the green expanse of the Former Koshien Hotel’s open terrain, originally complete with pond and dock for jaunts by boat onto the nearby River Mukogawa; instead, this terrain is now cut off from the river and fenced in by iron railings, with the beauty of the art-deco monument half hidden among an array of additional university buildings, broken by the grey monotony of concrete and asphalt pavements.

#### (3) Assessment of Emotional Attachment to Place

Let us consider one particular aspect, Question 28 of the survey, asking the residents in the nine districts about their emotional attachment to their districts and evaluation of the quality of environment. We decided to employ a simple psychometric format in this part of the survey. The validity of the method employed should undergo further examination.

##### 1) Basic Data: Emotional Attachment

Question 28 concerned the inhabitants’ emotional attachment to the Koshien District. The respondents were requested to assess, according to format, evaluating the following Statements 1–11 (Table 1) of emotional attachment to the district, which were assigned values from +2 to –2 points, ranging from *very affirmative, strongly agree* (2 points); *yes, agree* (1 point); *toss-up, neither agree nor disagree* (0 points); *no, disagree* (–1 point); and *very negative, strongly disagree* (–2 points).

For the analysis we employed the software BellCurve for Excel, version 3.21 (Social Survey Research Information Co., Ltd).

With the caveat that the translations from the Japanese into English are intended to be exact but are necessarily approximate in nuance, it is with remarkable consistency that Variables 1 “I feel

Table-1. Statements of Emotional Attachment to Place, List of Abbreviations

1	I feel pride. (Pride)
2	I have my favorite place. (Favorite Hangout)
3	I feel comfortable walking. (Mobility Comfort)
4	I can relax. (Relaxation)
5	I like the atmosphere and the character of the place (Atmosphere)
6	I like the place. (Fondness)
7	I cherish the place. (Delight)
8	I feel that I belong here.
9	I feel attached to the place. (Attachment) (Bonding and Identity)
10	I wouldn’t want the place to change forever. (Antipathy to Change)
11	I would be sad if the place were to disappear. (Loss)

pride where I live” (Pride) and 2 “I have my favorite place where I live” (Favorite Hangout) came at the top of the list in almost every district. Variable 6 “I like the place where I live” (Fondness) has the *lowest* standard deviation and *highest* mean, therefore showing greatest consistency; Variable 10 “I wouldn’t want the place to change forever where I live” (Antipathy to Change) and Variable 11 “I would be sad if the place were to disappear where I live” (Loss) show the highest deviation in almost all the districts. These results would seem to imply that in general, the emotional attachment to a place hinges on bonding and memory as its main polar elements. We suggest that the strength of emotions toward a place such as pride, love, satisfaction, familiarity, identity, beauty, and nostalgia, as shown in this particular psychometric scrutiny, could be derivative positive values generated by the two key elements of bonding and memory. However, we point out that comparisons with other locations are necessary before reaching any decisive conclusions.

## 2) Proximity to Landmark and Identity

Let us re-examine the basic statistical data (Appendix B). The *highest* mean is for Statement 6: “I like this place” ( $M\ 1.24 \pm SD\ 0.68$ ) and the *lowest* mean is for Statement 8: “I feel that I belong here” ( $M\ 0.88 \pm SD\ 0.82$ ), the *highest* standard deviation is for Statement 11 “I would be sad if the place were to disappear” ( $M\ 1.04 \pm SD\ 0.87$ ). Statement 6 “I like this place” was endorsed with the *highest* mean and the *lowest* standard deviation in all the districts.

On the other hand, the statements with the *lowest* mean statements were predominantly, with two exceptions, either Statement 8 “I feel that I belong here” (4<sup>th</sup> District,  $M = 0.75$ ) or Statement 2 “I have my favorite place” (8<sup>th</sup> District,  $M = 0.62$ ). We emphasize that the *highest* standard deviation was for Statement 11 “I would be sad if the place were to disappear,” with Statements 8 “I feel that I belong here” and 2 “I have my favorite place” appearing with the *highest* standard deviation, each in four districts.

Assessed as a whole, the Koshien District is capable of inspiring fondness for the place in the local community, although differing in intensity from district to district (Statement 6 on Fondness, “I like the place where I live” : 2<sup>nd</sup> District  $M = 1.38$ , 8<sup>th</sup> District  $M = 0.92$ ); but as will become clear, these figures seem to show a certain correlation with the assessment of quality of life in the respective district. The community polling in these districts shows residents having slight difficulty locating a favorite spot (Statement 2) or feeling a bond with the place (Statement 8). The tendency, once again, is that the means indicate a higher satisfaction in the districts north of Route 43, with a detectable drop in the districts south of Route 43. That Statements 2, 8, and 11, all fraught with questions of identity and fear of imminent loss, show higher standard deviations suggests that therein lies the weakness of the community: ambivalence toward “bonding” or “identifying with” the landmark and sacred site, Koshien Baseball Stadium, which seems to be stronger with proximity.

We decided to include this question in the survey because the psychometric method in general is widely used in psychological evaluations. We expected the question to be a useful instrument in elucidating the complex motives in the host community’s assessment of the environment. The polling results described definitely suggest a certain tendency; however, these indications must

await further validation through interviews and analyses comparing Koshien with other locations.

### 3) Popularity of the Toponym: Place Name

Question 19 asked the residents if they found that the place name Koshien was appropriate and resonated with them. Taken as a whole, the place name Koshien was immensely popular within the district. The overwhelming majority showed affirmative responses: *yes, agree* 70.1%,  $n = 1267$ ) and *if not anything, rather yes* (21.4%,  $n = 385$ ; total number replies,  $N = 1801$ ). We emphasize that the place name, the stadium's *namesake* Koshien, seems to be rated even *higher* than the landmark itself, i.e., Koshien Baseball Stadium's value as a physical presence, which we had already ascertained was positively viewed by a majority in Question 15, as discussed above.

Kunihiko Iwasaki points out that of all the tasks in the tourism industry, branding place names, linking images, experiences, narratives, and symbols into a configuration of desirables is a primordial chore and the hardest task of all; leading the consumer to spontaneously link a place name to a configuration of symbols, imagery, narratives is essential (2020<sup>42</sup>). The same is true for the host community: It is primal that the symbolic values and place name first of all be consolidated in the region itself, before ever talking of tourism; in this sense, Koshien remains a megahit.

Respondents from the Koshien District frequently commented voluntarily on the reasons for their high approval and pride: Question 7 (requesting that they describe free associations with the place name Koshien), Question 15 (requesting evaluation of the scenic value of the Koshien Baseball Stadium), and Question 19 (requesting evaluation of the place name Koshien) all had entry columns for commentaries on the reasons of their evaluations. The respondents' reasons are very clear: the extremely high level of recognition that the Koshien Baseball Stadium has as the "sacred site" and venue for the National High School Baseball Championship.

### 4) Proximity to the Stadium

As indicated above, there were discrepancies between the assessments of the residents from district to district (Appendix B). We maintain that this might reflect the particular circumstances in each district. Let us look at the mean values of all 11 statements. For instance, the lowest means for the 11 statements were given by residents in the 8<sup>th</sup> District ( $M = 0.81$  points), and the neighboring 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Districts ( $M = 1.00$  and  $1.00$ , respectively). The highest evaluations came from the residents in the 2<sup>nd</sup> District ( $M = 1.17$ ), with the 3<sup>rd</sup> District following close behind ( $M = 1.14$ ). Whether the proximity to the stadium, the higher quota in mass housing, or the lower green space ratio, characteristic of these districts south of the Route 43 with heavy vehicular traffic density, contribute most to residents' comparative dissatisfaction with the quality of their urban environment must await further research.

Questionnaire postings returned by the postal service from these districts because of unknown destinations (462 sheets) might also point to a population outflow caused by dissatisfaction or real estate development. These suggestions must be ascertained through further research and interviews.

### 5) Grievances and Complaints from Daily Life

A quick reference of the number of complaints and grievances (Question 10) felt in each district

shows that the 7<sup>th</sup> (50%,  $n = 155$ ), 8<sup>th</sup> (52.1%,  $n = 48$ ), and 9<sup>th</sup> Districts (41.0%,  $n = 141$ ) exhibit a somewhat higher frequency of grievances than the overall average of 40.7% (total number of replies,  $N = 1679$ ) for the entire area. The residents from districts north of Route 43 (1<sup>st</sup>–6<sup>th</sup> Districts) had problems with mass housing construction projects, while those south of Route 43 (7<sup>th</sup>–9<sup>th</sup> Districts) had problems with the appearance of motorcycle gangs; the frequent appearance of the following keywords in the free commentaries indicate the residents' main preoccupations: "crow" (143 times) and "garbage" (88 times), as crows peck improperly placed garbage before collection and are considered a nuisance, which probably occurs more often in mass-housing areas; "mass housing" (47 times) creates ruptures in the community landscape, escalates anonymity, and lowers the green space ratio; "noise" (39 times) and "motorcycle" (31 times); the troublesome nuisance of the motorcycle gangs, hanging out at local shopping malls and coursing about in the night.

## 5. Results

### (1) Conclusions

Referring to problems confronting sports tourism and sacred site tourism, we began in Chapter 1 to search for elements needed in a productive relationship to mutual advantage between stakeholders, i.e., business enterprises and the host community. We were particularly interested in the role of the host community in generating or affirming a symbolic narrative. As a case study, we scrutinized the situation at the Koshien Baseball Stadium in Nishinomiya, Japan (Chapter 4). The symbolic narrative is anchored in the mythos forged from the boys' High School Baseball Championship and was diffused and revised for almost a century by the media, as explicated superbly by Shimizu (1991). It revitalizes the pride of the host community, and is reflected in the victorious legions of high school baseball players from the Kansai area, where the sacred site Koshien Baseball Stadium radiates with the most potency. "Koshien" is used as a common noun synonymous with contests and tournaments of all kinds. From the free commentaries of the respondents, however, we deduce that despite the residents' high gratification with the landmark, they do not see the need for enriching and extending the already existing myths in order to engage the public in an amplified discourse.

As a theoretical overview, we first of all examined the key concept toponym for its mnemonic function, referencing the disregarded insights on Homeric anagrams by Ferdinand de Saussure (de Saussure 1907/c2013<sup>10</sup>) and consolidating background through Baudrillard's *L'échange symbolique* (1975/1980<sup>12</sup>) and Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (1983/2016<sup>14</sup>).

We proposed the following theories. Theory 1: Tourism begins by identifying, fabricating, i.e., naming a place (landmark) prominent for resource or cognition, claiming it and committing it to memory (Chapter 1(2)–(3), then accumulating and ascertaining that memory in "*imagined communities*" (Chapter 1(2)), conferring it sacral status, generating narratives, and creating symbolic configurations (Chapter 1(3)–(4), Chapter 3(1)–(2)). Theory 2: Life proceeds in a perpetual ebb-and-flow of the sacral and the profane. Theory 2a: Tourism is a ritualized, playful remnant, reminder, and extension of migration and mobility that constitutes a survival strategy and characteristic of the time use and activity of all living beings: We further discussed the topic

of defining travel and travel destinations, such as sacred sites. Our theoretical overview is conducted from an aesthetic viewpoint. Our conviction is that tourist destinations are liminal sites, and that sports and games are a ritualized form of everyday conflict seeking sacral closure, victory or defeat providing the sense of finality through ritual (Theory 2b). We further presented a theoretical framework for the Aesthetics of Everyday Life (Chapter 1(5)–(6), Fig. 1). We found sufficient material in the mass media sustaining the sacral nature of games to stoke its fandom (Chapters 2–3).

Before explicating the results of our questionnaire in the Koshien District, we summarized the history of Japanese baseball and the Koshien Baseball Stadium (Chapter 3). Baseball is regarded as an imported American sport. Newspaper editorials led the way in crafting fandom for sportsmanship infused with samurai spirit. This mass media infusion accelerated with the migration of the rural farming population into the cities as employees and workers, and the dislocated population satisfied their nostalgia of belonging by the new-found fandom in baseball. Interestingly, John Thorn claims the same “bucolic” currents sustained the popularity of baseball in turn-of-the-century America (Thorn 2011<sup>43</sup>).

In Chapter 4, we examined in a case study the results of the questionnaire survey in the Koshien districts (data collected Jan.–Nov. 2020, incorporated Dec. 11, 2020). From 14,054 inhabitants, 1,868 replies were collected. We did not feel the need to “cleanse” the data, but evaluated the replies for each question non-collectively, respecting the need of the respondent to leave questions unanswered and with the belief that this non-collective approach did not encroach on the reliability of the data as a whole. Polling showed pride in the host community (80%,  $n = 1468$ ); a need for green space ( $n = 942$ , 50.42%; total number of replies,  $N = 1868$ ; total number of propositions for urban development,  $N = 3176$ ); the recognition of the landmark Koshien Baseball Stadium (85%; total number of replies,  $N = 1824$ ) and place name Koshien (92.5%,  $n = 1652$ ) was overwhelming.

As for assessment of the quality of the urban environment in the host community, we obtained basic data from residents about 11 statements on emotional attachment to place on a 5-point psychometric scale (Table 1, Appendix A). Statement 6 “Fondness” was endorsed with the maximum average and minimum deviation ( $M = 1.24 \pm SD = 0.68$ ). The maximum standard deviation had the statement 11 “Loss,” with Statements 8 “Bonding and Identity” and 2 “Favorite Hangout” appearing with maximum standard deviation in four districts each.

That Statements 2, 8, and 11, all concerning identity and attachment, show the highest standard deviation seems to reveal a certain frailness in the community identity: an ambivalence toward “identifying with” the landmark and sacred site, Koshien Baseball Stadium, which appears to become stronger with proximity.

Judging from the free commentaries of the respondents, members of the host community who were not stakeholders (i.e., interested parties of the Koshien Baseball Stadium) themselves remained cool toward and felt excluded from the generation of symbolic narrative. As Barthes would say, myth had already become nature. They were very glad to avail themselves of the Baseball Stadium’s fame, but wary of any further negative effects on the environment.



## (2) Discussion

Our survey suggests that settlement and tourism (migration) are interchangeable, switchable elements that share common values, because both settlement and tourism are offshoots of that fundamental strategy of humans for survival, e.g., *mobility*. We requested that the respondents chart their daily routine for weekdays and holidays. The residents' timetables show recurrent patterns of time and space use circulating around the landmark (Koshien Baseball Stadium): They report roughly four 6-hour daily cycles pursuing necessary activities, obligatory activities, and free-time activities. These activities reflect the needs of individual metabolism and always involve movement and consumption. The residents of the host community might rest at home, walk the dog, go to work, go shopping, or visit the stadium as a spectator; they might also be a stakeholder engaged in enterprises in the district, or might undertake journeys to outlying cities like Osaka on business or for pleasure. Thus, tourism or settlement, migration or nomadism is a different mode of exercising mobility with excursions from the home base to acquire the things that are necessary for survival: a search for and consumption of resources, material and spiritual, made possible by different degrees of claim to place. *Place bonding, in all its nuances, is the sensitive point where tourists and the host community intersect* (Chapter 4(1)–(7)).

Hanshin Electric Railway Company built Koshien Baseball Stadium in 1924 both as an asset to their railway constellation and for real estate development in the region. In order to enhance harmonious interaction and sense of identity and bonding on all sides, stakeholders, and the host community, we have two propositions that we consider essential:

- 1) The reinforcement and extension of the green corridor, that is, aestheticizing and spacing out the landscape toward the seaboard in order to enhance the sanctuary status of the stadium and maintain a buffer zone.
- 2) Exploring new ways for further reinforcement of the bond with the host community by mediating participation with the sacred site and its sports ritual.

## (3) Limitations

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic 3 years ago has placed severe limitations on the progress of our research, especially regarding the arrangement of workshops, interviews, and other personal exchange. In this regard, we are awaiting verification by conducting, as soon as possible, interviews in the host community. In addition, comparisons with host communities of other sacred sites would be highly desirable.

As for the assessment of the quality of the urban environment in the host community, we obtained basic data from residents about 11 statements on emotional attachment to place with a 5-point psychometric scale (Table 1, Appendix A). For comparison, we consider researching either 1) another sacred site, such as the districts near the very popular Nishinomiya Shrine, further to the west in Nishinomiya, which has flourished with the Hanshin Electric Railway; or 2) the neighborhood of one of the several baseball stadiums in Nishinomiya, which is municipal and less publicized, embracing a residential area.

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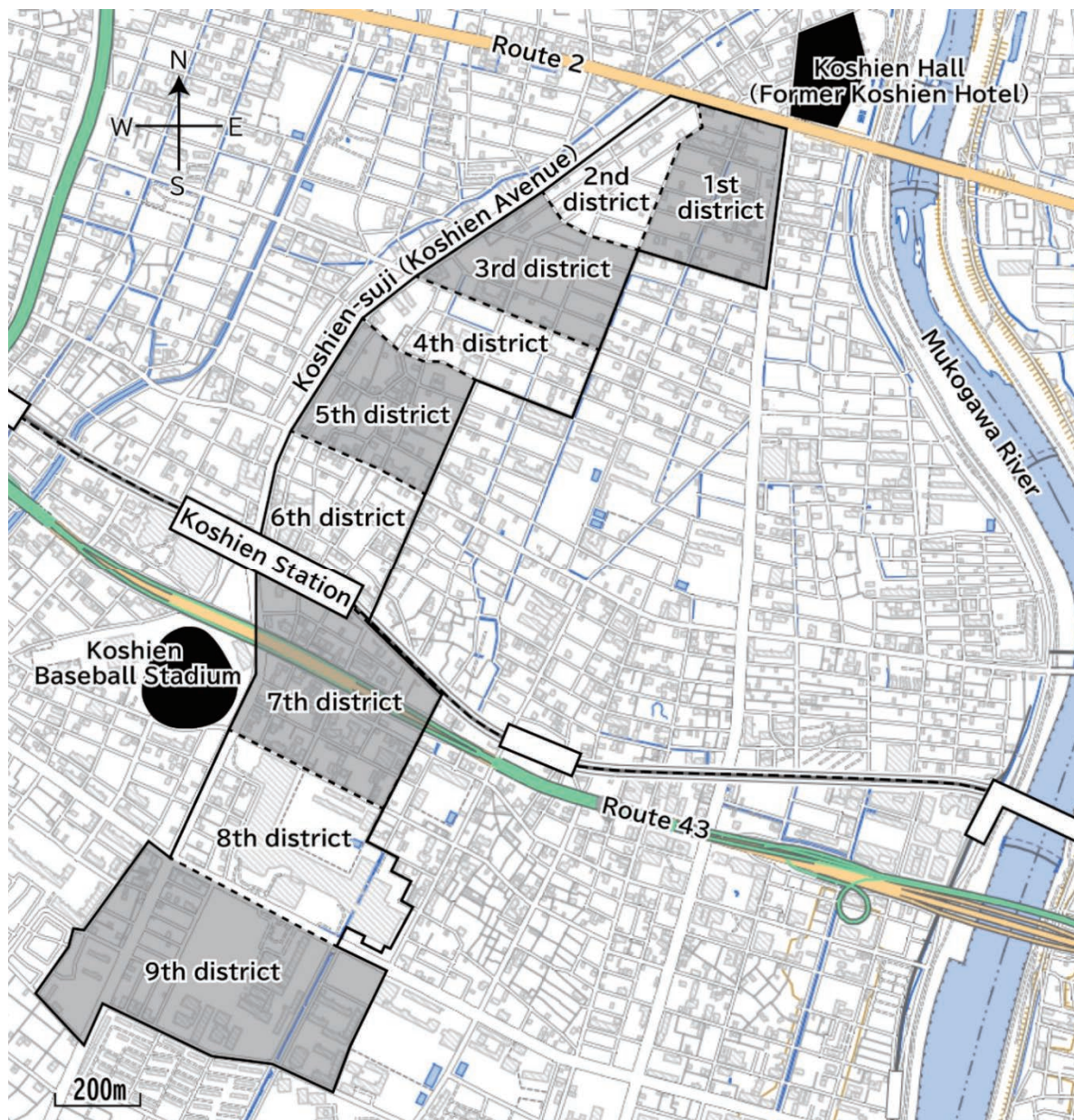
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#### Appendix-A

##### *Koshien Districts Surveyed*

Map based on data from Geospatial Information Authority of Japan Website

(<https://maps.gsi.go.jp/vector/#14.303/34.72289/135.369314/&ls=vpale&disp=1&d=1>)





Appendix B:

*Evaluations of 11 Statements on Emotional Attachment*

*Residents from Nine Koshien Districts, December 2020*

	1.Pride		2. Favorite Hangout		3. Mobility Comfort		4. Relaxation		5. Atmos- phere		6. Fondness	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Total	1.09	0.76	0.89	0.85	1.04	0.74	0.94	0.77	1.14	0.70	1.24	0.68
1st District	1.09	0.74	0.89	0.85	0.98	0.83	1.02	0.75	1.21	0.69	1.27	0.67
2nd District	1.18	0.71	0.86	0.85	1.20	0.69	1.09	0.70	1.25	0.67	1.38	0.64
3rd District	1.17	0.68	0.91	0.82	1.24	0.63	1.08	0.71	1.30	0.62	1.34	0.61
4th District	1.12	0.74	0.81	0.82	1.07	0.70	0.92	0.79	1.13	0.67	1.26	0.66
5th District	1.16	0.71	0.93	0.86	1.10	0.71	1.00	0.69	1.20	0.68	1.27	0.67
6th District	1.12	0.76	0.87	0.86	1.07	0.74	0.95	0.76	1.15	0.70	1.28	0.67
7th District	1.05	0.80	0.91	0.86	0.98	0.79	0.86	0.85	1.09	0.75	1.18	0.72
8th District	0.88	0.85	0.62	0.90	0.88	0.72	0.85	0.85	0.84	0.71	0.92	0.72
9th District	1.01	0.78	0.94	0.83	0.96	0.74	0.86	0.75	1.05	0.71	1.17	0.69

	7.Delight		8.Bonding and Identity		9.Attachment		10.Antipathy to Change		11.Loss	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Total	1.10	0.73	0.88	0.82	1.11	0.78	1.01	0.85	1.04	0.87
1st District	1.15	0.71	0.82	0.86	1.17	0.74	1.05	0.85	1.02	0.83
2nd District	1.23	0.67	1.09	0.75	1.29	0.71	1.18	0.79	1.10	0.82
3rd District	1.23	0.67	0.92	0.82	1.18	0.72	1.10	0.83	1.07	0.89
4th District	1.07	0.77	0.75	0.88	1.04	0.86	0.94	0.84	0.99	0.85
5th District	1.13	0.73	0.99	0.72	1.18	0.71	1.05	0.84	1.10	0.87
6th District	1.09	0.72	0.93	0.75	1.12	0.76	1.00	0.83	0.98	0.88
7th District	1.05	0.79	0.87	0.86	1.07	0.82	0.95	0.90	1.03	0.92
8th District	0.78	0.84	0.76	0.89	0.82	0.87	0.71	0.84	0.80	0.88
9th District	1.07	0.70	0.84	0.82	1.06	0.78	0.99	0.83	1.06	0.83