

Methodology for Analyzing the Genealogy of Ancient Japanese Clans

Masanobu SUZUKI

Abstract

The genealogies of ancient Japanese clans were created to declare their political positions and claim legitimacy for their service to the great kings in the Yamato sovereignty. Their genealogies, which include a great deal of semi-fictional content, and they are closely related to the “logic of rule”. In other words, they are representations of the view of the world created by the ancient clans and used to support each other. By analyzing the genealogies, we can understand the actual situations of the ancient clans that we were not able to illuminate by using well-known historical materials. In addition, we can reveal the formation process of ancient Japan. However, these points are not well known to Japanese researchers, much less to foreign researchers. Furthermore, until now, the history of genealogical studies was compiled as necessary in case studies, or classified from a researcher's own particular viewpoint. Therefore, in this article, I have presented previous research in chronological order and by various categories, confirmed each category's respective significance, and advocated three methodologies for analyzing the genealogies. These will help us progress beyond previous studies.

1 Introduction

The ancient Japanese clans made many genealogies for themselves⁽¹⁾. The purpose was not simply for them to record their ancestors. It was also to declare their political positions and claim legitimacy for their service to the great kings in the Yamato sovereignty. Genealogies also fulfilled practical purposes. Therefore, various things are included in their genealogies; when their ancestors served the Yamato sovereignty, what kinds of roles they played, how the prevailing head of their clans was connected to their ancestors, and which god they were related to through great royal families.

Their genealogies, which include a great deal of semi-fictional content, are closely related to “logic of rule”. In other words, they are representations of the view of the world created by the ancient clans and used to support each other. By analyzing them, we can better understand the actual situations of the ancient clans that we were not able to illuminate through such well-known historical materials as *Kojiki* (古事記) and *Nihon-shoki* (日本書紀). In addition, we can begin to explain the formation process of ancient Japan. Furthermore, by applying the conclusions, we can identify

the characteristics of genealogy in the field of the paleography.

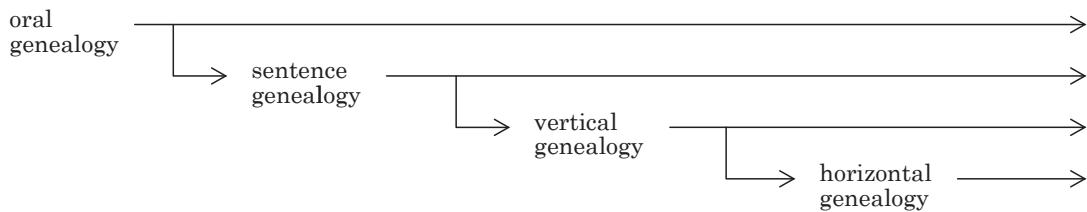
However, these points are not well known to Japanese researchers, much less to foreign researchers. Therefore, in this article, I have presented the previous research on genealogy and advocated three methodologies for analyzing genealogy to progress beyond the previous research.

2 History of Research on Genealogy

Modern research on the genealogy of ancient Japanese clans can be divided broadly into three stages. The first stage was from the 1930s to the 1940s. The second stage was from the 1950s to the 1970s. The third stage was from the 1980s to the first decade of the 21st century.

2-1 First Stage

The best-known researcher in the first stage was Akira Ōta (太田亮. Ōta 1920, 1930, 1934, 1936, 1939, 1941, 1967). He comprehensively investigated clans from ancient to modern times all over Japan and wrote *Dictionary of Family Names and Lineage* (姓氏家系辞書) (one volume) and *Encyclopedia of Family Names and Lineage* (姓氏家系大事典) (three vol-



【Figure 1】 Change process in the form of the genealogy

umes). In those books, he explained the origin, system, and geographical distribution of the clans.

Then he analyzed genealogies from ancient to modern times and found that the form of genealogy changed over the course of history. In concrete terms, the first form to appear was “oral genealogy” (口承系譜), followed by “sentence genealogy” (文章系譜), “vertical genealogy” (豎系図), and finally “horizontal genealogy” (横系図). These are depicted in Figure 1.

“Oral genealogy” is passed on verbally from one person to another. “Sentence genealogy” is literally written in a sentence. “Vertical genealogy” consists of joined papers and is written in a vertical direction. It also links the names of people in a line. “Horizontal genealogy” consists of joined papers and is written in a horizontal direction. It links the names of people in a line as well.

To help clarify the discussion, what follows are some examples of each form.

僕者、大物主大神、娶_二陶津耳命之女活玉依毘売_一生子、名櫛御方命之子、飯肩巢見命之子、建甕槌命之子、僕意富多多泥古白。(『古事記』崇神段)⁽²⁾

This is an example of “oral genealogy.” In this chapter, Emperor Sujin (崇神天皇) asked Ōtataneko (意富多多泥古) a question about his origin, and Ōtataneko explained the genealogy of his clan orally. This indicated that genealogy was passed on verbally before being written down.

伊久牟尼利比古大王兒伊波都久和希、兒伊波智和希、兒伊波己里和氣、兒麻和加介、兒阿加波智君、兒乎波智君。(『积日本紀』所引「上宮記」逸文)⁽³⁾

This is an example of “sentence genealogy.” It involves changing a conversation into a sentence.

Figure 2 is an example of “vertical genealogy.” It

is schematized in accordance with the family relationships that are written down in “sentence genealogy.”

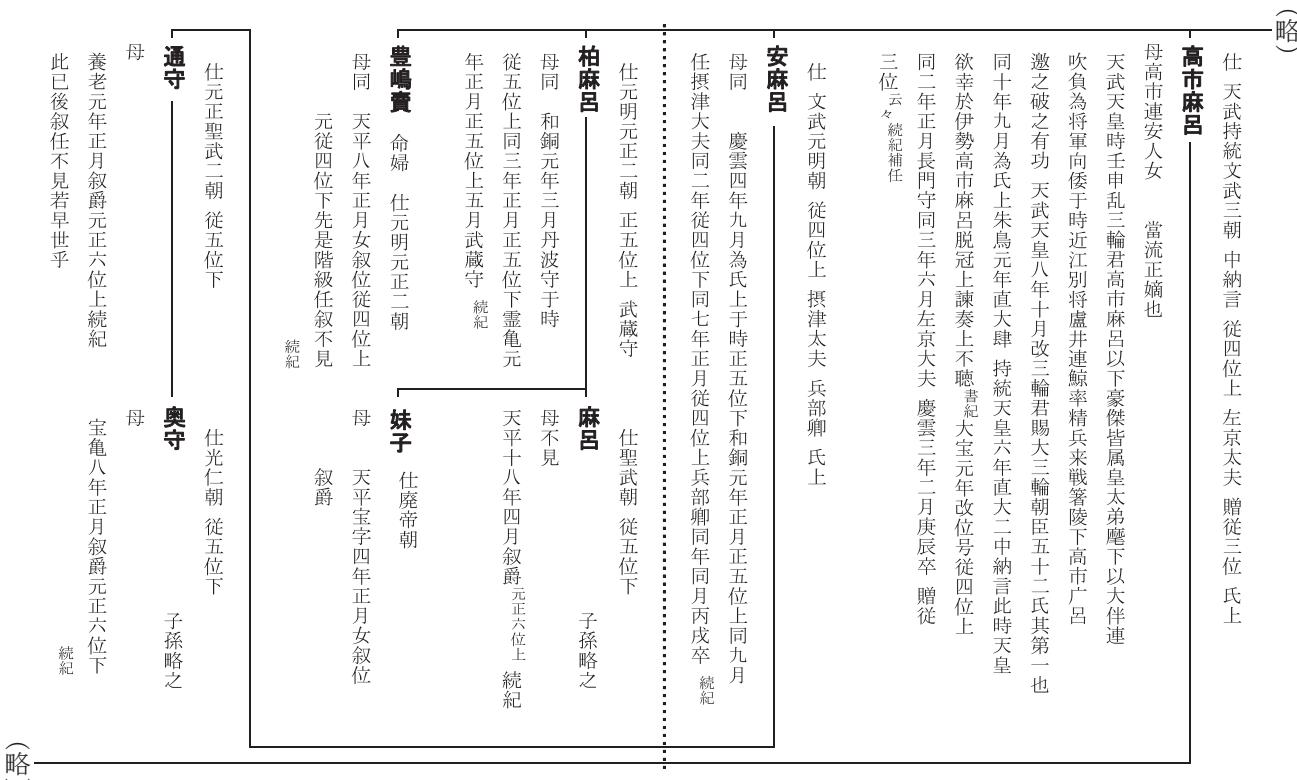
Figure 3 is an example of “horizontal genealogy.” In other words, it is a family pedigree. It is believed that “vertical genealogy” turned into “horizontal genealogy” to address the inconvenience of reading a scroll lengthwise⁽⁴⁾.

Previous research held that the form of genealogy changed in the following order: “oral genealogy,” “sentence genealogy,” “vertical genealogy,” and “horizontal genealogy.” This explanation would suggest that the old form was no longer made after a new form appeared. However, actually the old form continued to be produced as necessary, even as a new form emerged⁽⁵⁾. Thus, the process of change in the form of genealogy can be explained as shown in Figure 1.

Another memorable achievement of Ōta is that he advocated “genealogy science” and sought to systematize the study of genealogy. He established an academic society of genealogy and published the organs of this society, the journals *Genealogy and Biography* (系譜と伝記) and *National History and Genealogy* (国史と系譜)⁽⁶⁾. Many people contributed articles to those journals. It is clear that people in this period were growing more interested in genealogy.

However, as Arikiyo Saeki (佐伯有清) has argued, the study of genealogy was still not systematized in Japan (Saeki 1975: p.21). As Saeki pointed out, Ōta’s attempt was not successful enough. There were various reasons for

【Figure 2】
The Genealogy of the Amabe-ujii



【Figure 3】 The genealogy of the Ohmiwa-aji

this. The biggest reason was that, in historical studies, genealogy was considered an unreliable reference material. As it was made for the purpose of worshiping ancestors and family lineages, it was believed to include a great deal of fiction. Reflecting on these circumstances, Satoshi Ōhira (大平聰) has suggested that the reason only a few researchers have studied genealogy as a field in itself is because methods of checking reliability had not been established (Ōhira 2002: p.90). Certainly, it is up to the researcher as to whether they use genealogy in a study.

This negative evaluation of genealogy comes from the way historical materials are treated in modern times. As is known, modern historians sharply distinguish between primary historical sources and secondary historical sources. A primary historical source is a firsthand source written during the time being studied. A secondary historical source is written based on primary sources. Historians have believed they could ensure the objectivity of history by reading historical materials that had high historical value and that were evaluated rigorously.

According to this methodology, genealogies could not be treated in the same way as other historical materials. Many people thought that genealogies were

only a tool for looking for ancestors and were not usable as a historical material for studies.

2-2 Second Stage

The most notable researchers in the second stage are Takashi Tanaka (田中卓. Tanaka 1986a, 1986b) and Arikiyo Saeki (Saeki 1962, 1963, 1975, 1981–83, 1984, 1985, 2001). In this period, there was a debate over the credibility of “Taika-no-Kaishin-no-Mikotonori” (大化改新詔). It was called the “Gun-Pyō debate” (郡評論争). The studies on the genealogy of ancient Japanese clans in the second stage were influenced by this debate. As mentioned above, by that time genealogy was considered to be a tool for searching for family origins. However, thereafter genealogy began to attract attention, because some genealogies had a description of “Hyō” (評).

Takashi Tanaka was a pioneer in this field. He introduced many genealogies to the historical discipline. He insisted on the importance of genealogy in the study of history. In addition, he investigated many genealogies in detail and summed them up in text form. These included “The Genealogy of Wake-aji” (和氣氏系図), “The Genealogy of Wanibe-aji” (和珥部氏系図), “The Genealogy of Aso-aji” (阿蘇氏系図),

“The Genealogy of Ihokibe-iji” (伊福部臣吉志), “The Genealogy of Tajima-iji” (尾張宿禰田島家家譜), “The Genealogy of Furuya-iji” (古屋家家譜), “The Surviving Fragment of Jōgū-ki” (上宮記逸文), “The Genealogy of the Amabe-iji” (海部氏系図), “Awaga-Daimyōjin-Ganki” (粟鹿大明神元記), and “Tenson-Hongi” (天孫本紀). Many researchers benefited from his research.

Another scholar, Arikiyo Saeki, wrote a series of books titled *The Study of Shinsen-Shōjiroku* (新撰姓氏録の研究). These are enduring masterpieces in the study of genealogy. In these books, he collected documents about all ancient clans comprehensively and compared them. Then he discussed the earliest ancestors, the origins, and the official duties of the ancient clans in detail. He developed the study of genealogies that were already known, as well as discovering unknown genealogies.

He places great importance on genealogy as material for historical study and tried to explain its contents and value. Specifically, from the point of view of bibliography, he analyzed the process by which it was discovered and transmitted, the correlation of manuscripts, transcriptions and editions of texts, the credibility of the contents, and the author and the year of creation. Moreover, he clarified the characteristics of the clan and the historical background. This technique had a great impact on the researchers of the following generation. In other words, in the wake of his research, almost all researchers adopted or imitated his technique. I am no exception to this rule. Because he established the standard methodology of analyzing genealogy, his works are highly esteemed even today.

Furthermore, in this period, many fascinating studies on genealogy were published. These include “The Genealogy of Kamo-iji” (下鴨系図) by Mitsusada Inoue (井上光貞. Inoue 1962), “Awaga-Daimyōjin-Ganki” by Kyōzō Koresawa (是澤恭三. Koresawa 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958) and “The Genealogy of Amabe-iji” by Shirō Gotō (後藤四郎. Gotō 1972, 1975). In those circumstances, the evaluation of genealogy began to change.

As mentioned above, it is important to study history using historical materials that have a high level of credibility in modern times. Therefore, mainstream history was political history and national history, because many historical materials in these fields sur-

vived. By contrast, social history and family history,—studies of the social relationships of human beings—began to attract attention from the late 1970s in Japan. In the field of bibliography, genealogy, which was rarely used before then, came to be used constructively. As Toru Sasaki (佐々木哲) commented, “Genealogy was made in history, so if we do not use genealogy, we will miss some of the historical facts. However, if we use genealogy, we will be able to catch them” (Sasaki 2007: p.12).

In this way, as the value of genealogy was re-evaluated to focus on historical facts that were overlooked in previous research, researchers recognized genealogy as a valuable material for historical studies. Thanks to this trend, case studies on genealogy increased at this time. Therefore, in the second period, genealogy, until then only a tool for searching for origins, took a big leap forward in being acknowledged as material for historical study.

2-3 Third Stage

In the third stage, a series of studies on genealogy by Mutsuko Mizoguchi (溝口睦子. Mizoguchi 1982, 1987, 2003, 2004) and Akiko Yoshie (義江明子. Yoshie 1986, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2011) are worthy of mention. Just before the study entered a new phase, the inscription of the iron sword was discovered at the old tomb of Inariyama, one of the old tombs of Sakitama, in Saitama Prefecture.

It was found in Gyōda City, Saitama Prefecture, in 1978. Both sides of the iron sword have a gold inscription with a total of 115 characters. The front side has 57 characters, and the back side has 58 characters. An analysis indicates that it was the oldest genealogy in Japan, describing eight generations from Ōbiko (意富比姥) to Owake (乎獲居). It is called “The Genealogy of Inariyama-tekken” (稻荷山鉄剣銘系譜). This iron sword had a great influence on the historical society (Niino 1979: pp.35-40). In particular, it proved to be an impetus to the study of genealogy. In the analysis, the inscription was compared with many genealogies already known up to that time in great detail. It brought about the systematization of the study of genealogy.

In her studies of “Awaga-Daimyōjin-Ganki,” “The Genealogy of Furuya-iji,” and “Shinsen-Shōjiroku” (新撰姓氏録), Mutsuko Mizoguchi pointed out a similarity among the genealogies of the ancient Japanese

clans. Specifically, these genealogies all have a fictitious blood relationship linking the mythological founder with a real person. Furthermore, the genealogy has a “multilayered structure” (重層的構造)⁽⁷⁾ that is constructed using parts shared with other clans as well as an original part. In the case of “Awaga-Daimyōjin-Ganki,” it is depicted in Figure 4. This is divided into five parts below.

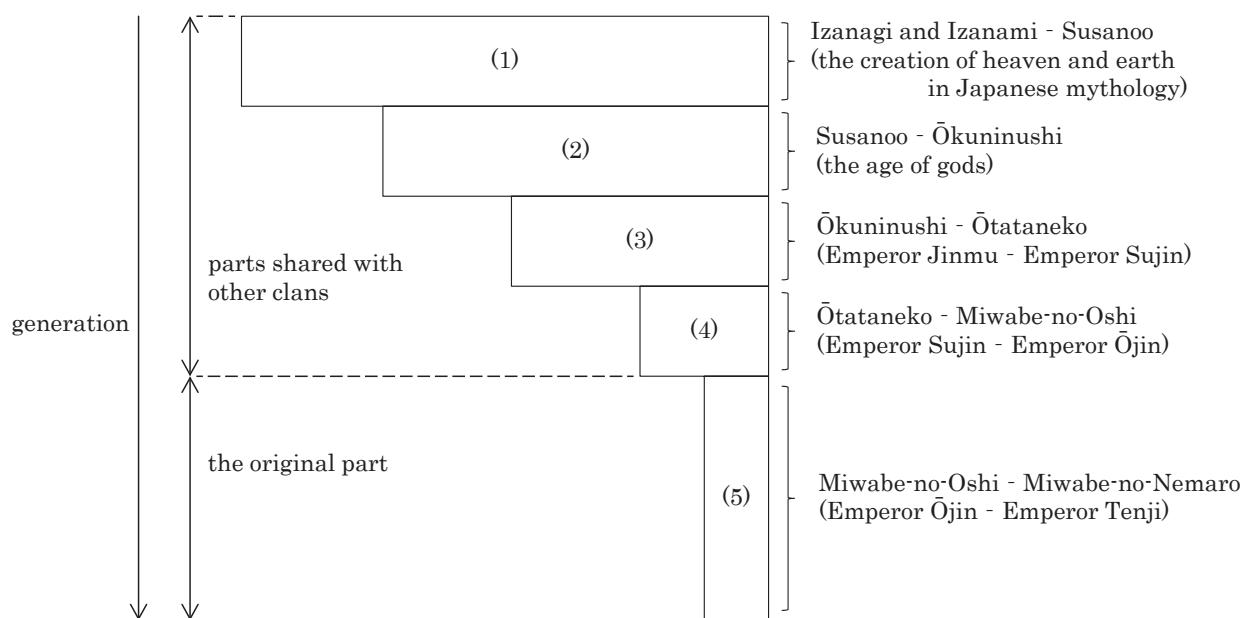
- (1) Izanagi (伊弉諾命) and Izanami (伊弉冉命)—Susanoo (素戔鳴命)
{the creation of heaven and earth (天地開闢) in Japanese mythology}
- (2) Susanoo—Ōkuninushi (大国主命)
{the age of gods}
- (3) Ōkuninushi—Ōtataneko (意富多多泥古)
{Emperor Jinmu (神武天皇)—Emperor Sujin (崇神天皇)}
- (4) Ōtataneko—Miwabe-no-Oshi (神部忍)
{Emperor Sujin—Emperor Ōjin (応神天皇)}
- (5) Miwabe-no-Oshi—Miwabe-no-Nemaro (神部根闇)
{Emperor Ōjin—Emperor Tenji (天智天皇)}

In addition, she defined them as follows. Number (5) is the original genealogy only found in the Miwabe-iji (神部氏) had. Number (4) is the common genealogy among Miwabe-iji and Miwahitobe-iji (神人部氏) that is distributed throughout Japan. Number (3) is the common genealogy among Ōmiwa-iji (大神氏), Kamo-iji (賀茂氏), and Munakata-iji (宗像氏). Number (2) is the common genealogy among the clans

called “Izumo-line.” Number (1) is the content that is written down in Japanese mythology. Then she clearly pointed out a “multilayered structure” that, according to her study, is common to all genealogies of ancient Japanese clans. She tried to elucidate what a genealogy is, when a genealogy was made, which genealogies are credible, and what constitutes a historical fact. Her technique resembles that of Arikiyo Saeki. She based her approach on Saeki’s study and developed it further, extracting a “multilayered structure” from the genealogy of the ancient clans. Her works have had a substantial impact.

Akiko Yoshie analyzed a genealogy from a different viewpoint from conventional studies. As mentioned above, Akira Ōta found that the forms of genealogy have changed through history. At the time, Naokazu Miyaji (宮地直一. Miyaji 1922, 1923a, 1923b) and Yoshiho Ishimura (石村吉甫. Ishimura 1939) paid attention to this point as well. However, Yoshie said that they only explained the technical aspects and that the form of genealogy is a mirror of the times. She regarded genealogies as valuable materials for the study of history, and she insisted that a study of the form was important.

To determine how perceptions changed regarding genealogy, the constitution of society, and blood relationships, she analyzed descriptions about brothers, the word that means “marriage” (娶生), and the words meaning that the given person serves the emperor (奉事文言). As a result, she classified genealogies into



【Figure 4】 The multilayered structure of genealogy

three kinds: “the genealogy of political positions” (地位繼承次第)⁽⁸⁾, “the genealogy of marriages” (娶生系譜), and “the genealogy of the paternal line” (父系出自系譜). Then she tried to interpret the fate of the clan and the genealogy in the process of change. It is as follows.

- “The genealogy of political positions” indicates the succession order of the political positions of the ancient clan. Examples include “the genealogy of Inariyama-tekken” and “the genealogy of the Amabe-*uchi*.” These use the word “child” (児・子). The word does not simply indicate a child but actually means a successor to a political position. They also include the words indicating that the given person serves the emperor. In this type of genealogy, mythological ancestors are linked directly to real people. They were created from the late fifth century to the mid-ninth century.
- “The genealogy of marriages” indicates relationships of the paternal line and the maternal line. An example is “the genealogy of Tenjukoku-Shūchō” (天寿国繡帳銘系譜). It uses the word “娶生.” This word means that a man married a woman and had a child. In addition, this type of genealogy has descriptions of brothers. Some mythological ancestors are linked to real people in an inverse triangle form. They indicate not only a personal political position but also an alliance of two clans. This type was made from the early sixth century to the end of the seventh century.
- “The genealogy of the paternal line” indicates the blood relationships of the paternal line. They include a description of brothers and use the words that indicate that prevailing head of their clan serves the emperor. A single mythological ancestor is linked to real people in the form of a triangle. This was done by combining an aspect of “the genealogy of political positions” with that of “the genealogy of marriages.” This type began to be made in the eighth century and became popular in the ninth century. In the Middle Ages, it changed into a family tree.
- Genealogy changed from “the genealogy of political positions” and “the genealogy of marriages” to “the genealogy of the paternal line.”

Formerly, the word “child” could mean both a successor to a political position and a child. However, over time, the word came to be used only for a child. From the end of the eighth century to the early ninth century, groups were formed by paternal line, and “the genealogy of the paternal line” was created.

The biggest characteristic of her study is that she set objective criteria for the evaluation of genealogy. Specifically, the criteria were “format” (形式), “form” (形態), and “type” (類型). Collectively, they are called “style” (様式). She proposed a methodology to analyze genealogy in a comprehensive way. The purpose of her study was to investigate the formation process of social groups such as *uchi* (氏) or *ie* (家). At this point, her study was different from previous studies of clans and genealogies in that, for her, genealogy is not an end but a means. However, as a result, she has developed a new viewpoint concerning the study of genealogy.

In the third stage, based on the previous studies in the second stage, researchers compared many genealogies and pointed out commonalities and differences. In a word, in this stage the studies on genealogy were systematized.

3 Methodology for Analyzing Genealogy

In the discussion above, I presented the history of research on genealogy in modern times. I have categorized it into three stages. In the first stage, social interest in genealogy increased. In the second stage, the case studies of genealogy accumulated. In the third stage, studies on genealogy were systematized.

Particularly in the second stage, Saeki established the standard technique of the study. He tried to elucidate the actual situation of the ancient Japanese clans by closely examining the credibility of the genealogy. Then in the third stage, Mizoguchi pointed out the “multilayered structure,” and Yoshie categorized genealogies into three types: “the genealogy of political positions,” “the genealogy of marriages,” and “the genealogy of the paternal line.” From now on, based on these studies, we need to advance case study and synthetic study in parallel. Therefore, I try to show three methodologies as follows.

3-1 Re-examination of the Concept of “Genealogy of Political Positions”

To progress beyond the previous research, we must look at genealogies not examined in previous research. To make Yoshie's argument concerning the “style” of genealogy, she used the following criteria.

①The original manuscripts have been preserved to the present day.

- The Genealogy of Inariyama-tekken
- The Genealogy of Yamanoa-no-Ue Stone Monument (山ノ上碑系譜)
- The Genealogy of Amabe-iji
- The Genealogy of Wake-iji

②The original manuscripts have not been preserved to the present day, but the original form is kept precisely.

- The Surviving Fragment of Jōgū-ki
- The Genealogy of Tenjukoku-Shūchō

③The original manuscripts have not been preserved to the present day, and the original form was later rearranged but has been partially preserved.

- The Genealogy of Ihokibe-iji
- Awaga-Daimyōjin-Ganki
- The Genealogy of Kamo-iji
- The Genealogy of Izumo-iji (出雲国造系図)

Yoshie then analyzed only these genealogies from the viewpoint of “style.” However, concerning the characteristics of historical materials, she adopted many opinions from previous research, such as when genealogies were made and how they survived until the present day. She chose the criteria with which to analyze their “style.” If it is not suitable for the analysis of the “style,” it may be omitted from consideration, even if it is a genealogy whose content goes back to ancient times. Concerning this, Ōhira said that her analysis of genealogy was very narrowly defined. It is highly debatable whether her theory is universal. In addition, it is necessary to verify whether her theory applies to genealogy not analyzed in previous research (Ōhira 2002: pp.94-95).

One of the historical materials that corresponds to this is “the chronological succession of Kii-iji” (紀伊国造次第. Teranishi 2003, Suzuki 2012). Kii-iji (紀氏) served the Yamato sovereignty and was appointed as Kii-no-Kuni-no-Miyatsuko (紀伊国造). Kuni-no-Miyatsuko (国造) was a local government official of the Yamato sovereignty from the sixth to the seventh century. They were hereditary priestly families of

Hinokuma jingū Shrine and Kunikakasu jingū Shrine. According to the opening section of “the chronological succession of Kii-iji”, the original form was made before 874. Because it was damaged, it was copied in that year. The people of Kii-iji added something in writing and handed it down to later generations; then they copied it again during the Tenshō era (1573-1591). Concerning this genealogy, Yoshie believed it was “horizontal genealogy” as well as “the genealogy of the paternal line.” It was made in the medieval or afterwards. The oldest part of it is believed to be “the genealogy of political positions” (Yoshie 2000: pp.233-234). She made no further mention of it. However, I believe it should be included in number ③: the original manuscripts have not been preserved to the present day, and the original form was later rearranged but has been partially preserved because it was made in ancient times.

Even apart from this, according to my research, “the genealogy of senior priest of Ise-jingū Grand Shrine” (伊勢天照皇太神宮禰宜譜図帳), which was submitted to the Department of Divinities in 907, is included in number ③, too. It lists Shintō priests of the Ise-jingū Grand Shrine and seems to be a “genealogy of political positions” as well as the “chronological succession of Kii-iji.” However, the word “child” is not used, and all those listed in it achieve a political position. These characteristics are different than those of “the genealogy of political positions” such as “The genealogy of Inariyama-tekken” and “The genealogy of Amabe-iji.” By comparing these genealogies, which were created in the late ninth century, we will be able to re-examine the concept of “the genealogy of political positions.”

3-2 Re-examination of “Multilayered Structure” of Genealogy

Next, it is necessary to re-examine the “multilayered structure” of genealogy pointed out by Mizoguchi. By focusing on a number of clans that lived in different areas in ancient Japan, we can grasp the characteristics of its structure more definitely. Formerly, Mizoguchi said that the basic system of the blood relationship of clans was formed before the Taika Reforms (大化改新), at about the same time as the Yamato sovereignty was established. In addition, she estimated that the powerful clans started to create genealogies around the late fifth century, during the

reign of Emperor Yūryaku (雄略天皇).

Kimio Kumagai (熊谷公男) rated Mizoguchi's works highly, but he criticized the following points. In Mizoguchi's study, the process of change of genealogy was virtually unmentioned. One function of genealogy is to justify the political position of the clans. If the political position of the clans changes, the genealogy must also change. Otherwise, it would have no meaning. He then insisted that genealogy must have changed according to changes in the clans' political position (Kumagai 1984: p.120). Yoshie criticized Mizoguchi in the same way. Yoshie said that the system of blood relationship did not inherently exist. In addition, the system was formed later, including various contradictions by connecting various genealogies (Yoshie 1986: p.311). Afterwards Mizoguchi clarified her opinions. She insisted that she did not say that the system of blood relationship continued unchanged from the fifth to the ninth century. She argued again that the system of blood relationship changed with the times (Mizoguchi 2003: p.97).

In conclusion, she emphasized "invariability" (不变性). This means that genealogy began to be created in the fifth century, and its structure remained until the ninth century. In contrast, Kumagai and Yoshie have emphasized "variability" (可変性)⁽⁹⁾. This means that the system of blood relationship was rearranged according to the historical background. Based on the above, I think that genealogy has both elements of "invariability" and "variability"; therefore, these characteristics are the essence of genealogy.

However, the relationship of these two attributes is a bit uncertain. If a genealogy expresses the actual political relations of a clan, the genealogy must be widely approved and then fixed in its final form. However, a genealogy expresses the relations of clans at a certain point in time. If the political position of the clans changes, a discrepancy occurs between the relationships in the genealogy and those in reality. Kumagai imagined such a situation, and he pointed out that even if the political relations ended, only a genealogy could be left in some cases (Kumagai 1984: p.149). In future research, we need to analyze the relationship between "invariability" and "variability" based on concrete examples.

3-3 Examination of the Process by which Genealogy was Preserved

It is necessary to examine how genealogy was preserved to the present day, since genealogy (or rather, a prototype of it) was made even in ancient times. As I indicated in the title of this article, my specialty is ancient Japanese history. However, genealogy is studied not only by researchers of ancient history but also by those of medieval and early modern history. There has also been comparative study of genealogies carried out in Japanese and foreign genealogy also went forward (Historical Science Society of Japan 2002). The genealogies that were made in other times and places have many points in common with genealogies in ancient Japan, as well as having characteristics of their own. In the future, we will need a meaningful comparative study of genealogies as material for comparative cultural history.

To begin with, the transition from the ancient period to medieval Japan is important. In this regard, based on the study of "style," Yoshie pointed out that the study of genealogy in the field of post-medieval history includes two branches (Yoshie 2000: p.244).

One is "the study of family" (家族論). For example, Yoshihiko Amino (網野善彦) analyzed marital relationships and descriptions of women in genealogies and clarified the differences between eastern and western Japan (Amino 1996, 1999, 2000). Kenji Iinuma (飯沼賢司) explained the transition process of blood consciousness from the viewpoint of "lineage" (血) and "rights" (職) (Iinuma 1993, 1995). Mikiya Aoyama (青山幹哉) explained that process from the viewpoint of "succession" (相伝) and "origin" (出自) (Aoyama 1993, 1998, 1999, 2004).

The other branch is "the study of symbols" (記号論). For example, Hideo Kuroda (黒田日出男) proposed methodology to read a work of genealogy as a sign and a symbol, based on the kind of genealogy (Kuroda 1989, 1999, 2000). Junko Nishiguchi (西口順子) argued that genealogy had developed from "the pictorial genealogy of adherents of a religious sect" (門徒絵系図) to "a family register of deaths" (過去帳) (Nishiguchi 1993).

These studies give many suggestions for reconsidering the genealogy of ancient Japan. Particularly noteworthy is a study by Aoyama. It was based on "The Genealogy of Yamada-ujii" (山田世譜), which was handed down to the Yamada-ujii as the samurai of

Owari Domain. He pointed out that the genealogy was added to several times during the Muromachi period and the Edo period, resulting in a mixture of intentions of the original author and the person who supplemented it are mixed (Aoyama 1999: p.4). By introducing this viewpoint into a study of ancient history, I believe that we will come to a clearer understanding of the developments from ancient times to the Middle Ages⁽¹⁰⁾.

It is extremely rare that the original historical materials made in ancient times have been handed down to the present day. The majority of historical materials used in the study of ancient history were copied after the Middle Ages. We have used the oldest extant manuscripts in these and extracted information about ancient times. In this process, many researchers were interested in what the historical materials said. The manuscripts themselves were not considered, or were considered only as a supplement. However, there are many clans that have multiple versions of their genealogy. Manuscripts produced in later times are of course products of a historical context. Through them, it is possible for us to decipher how posterity understood ancient genealogies and how they reconstructed the history of their own ancestors.

4 Conclusion

In this article, I laid out the history of the study of the genealogy of ancient Japanese clans. To progress beyond the existing studies, I have advocated three methodologies to analyze genealogy.

The first method is to re-examine the concept of “the genealogy of political positions”, by comparing genealogy not analyzed in previous research. The second method is to re-examine the “multilayered structure” of genealogy, by analyzing the relationship between “invariability” and “variability” based on concrete examples. The third method is to examine how genealogy of ancient Japanese clan was preserved to the present day, by introducing a viewpoint that a genealogy is revised and reconstructed with the times.

Up to now, the history of the study of genealogy was mentioned as necessary in case studies or was classified from a particular viewpoint such as “style.” Therefore, I placed the previous research in chronological order and in proper categories, confirmed the significance of each category, and pointed out the directions and possibilities in which research could

develop in the future.

Henceforth, based on this article, I will continue to build a new framework of study through the joint use of three methodologies. I have already started developing that framework in my books (Suzuki 2012, 2014).

Additional Information

The outline of this article first appeared in my book, *Nihon kodai ujizoku keifu no kisoteki kenkyū*, 『日本古代氏族系譜の基礎的研究』 [Basic Study on Genealogy of Ancient Japanese Clans], Tokyodō-shuppan, Tokyo, Japan, 2012. In writing this article, I rearranged and reconstituted the beginning of that book and then translated the resulting text into English.

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Notes

- (1) In this article, “genealogy” means historical materials describing any kind of succession relationships. Examples include political positions, family head positions, and blood relationships. In addition, there are two translations of the word “genealogy” in Japanese. One is *keifu* (系譜), and the other is *keizu* (系図). In previous research, *keifu* means historical materials describing succession relationships in general, while *keizu* specifically involves linking the name of people in a line. In this article, since both are addressed, I use the word “genealogy” for both *keifu* and *keizu* unless otherwise mentioned.
- (2) *Nihon Koten Bungaku Taikei* (日本古典文学大系) vol.1, Iwanami-shoten, Tokyo, Japan, 1958, p.180.
- (3) *Shintei Zōho Kokushi Taikei* (新訂増補国史大系) vol.8, Yoshikawa-kōbunkan, Tokyo, Japan, 1965, p.172.
- (4) In addition, there is a wheel (round) genealogy. In some cases, “vertical genealogy,” “horizontal genealogy,” and “wheel (round) genealogy” are all designated as “lined genealogy.”
- (5) Akiko Yoshie said that “vertical genealogy” turns into “horizontal genealogy” depending on the era (Yoshie 2000). However, for example, “The Genealogy of Kii-ujii” (紀伊国造系図) was written in a vertical direction. On the other hand, it has some characteristics in common with “horizontal genealogy.” Therefore, I believe that “vertical genealogy” continued to be made even after “horizontal genealogy” was introduced.
- (6) *Genealogy and Biography* was published from 1921 to 1927. *National History and Genealogy* was published from 1927 to 1928. These studies were republished in 1988 by Kondō-shuppansha as *Genealogy and Biography. National History and Genealogy*, parts 1–3.
- (7) Mizoguchi later changed “multilayered structure” to “homologous structure” (Mizoguchi 2003). However, I use “multilayered structure” in this article, because I place importance on the multilayered characteristics.

- (8) Initially Yoshie referred to “single line genealogy” (Yoshie 1986). Later on, she refers to “the genealogy of political positions” (Yoshie 2000). In this article, I adopt the latter term.
- (9) Yoshie focused on the “plasticity” that a genealogy has (Yoshie 2009). However, I call it “variability,” in contrast with “invariability.”
- (10) The studies of Mizoguchi and Yoshie adopted such a viewpoint as well (Mizoguchi 1982, Yoshie 2000). However, the viewpoint of this article is different from theirs. I try to take a long-term view from ancient times to the present and investigate all the genealogies of one clan.

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