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研究課題：日本中世の社会と国家の再検討—八幡信仰を中心に

(Reconsideration of Medieval Japanese Society and State: Focusing on the Hachiman Cult)

専門分野：日本史、日本思想史 (Japanese History, History of Japanese Thought)

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私は、日本中世思想史、特に宗教機関・権力者・庶民の関係に強い関心を持つ歴史学者です。本研究は、以下の三つの柱を中心に展開しています。

- 八幡信仰を中心とする日本思想史
- 庶民による歴史叙述および賤民が遺した史料の研究
- モンゴル襲来後の日本における歴史意識・思想・社会構造の変容

私の自眉プロジェクトの研究では、中世日本において庶民から権力者に至るまで幅広い崇敬を集めた八幡信仰を研究対象とし、中世社会の特質を明らかにすることを目指します。そこで、権力者が記した史料のみに依拠するのではなく、中世国家を下から支えた人々の立場からも、八幡信仰の展開とその社会的役割を検討します。特に、これまで未調査のまま蔵に眠っている、賤視された人々が作成した史料を分析することで、石清水八幡宮に帰属した身分の低い人々の中世社会において果たした役割や位置付けを明らかにしたいと思います。

また、社会的全体性や多様性に焦点を当てたアナール学派のアプローチを日本中世史の再検討に応用することで、日本中世の社会構造、宗教制度、政治など、幅広いテーマを検討します。

Discriminated Outcasts, or People of Special Skills?

My current research focuses on documents issued by religious institutions, as well as narratives – sometimes fabricated – created by outcasts themselves to assert their privileges and rights. Analyzing these historical narratives from multiple perspectives, including social structures, religious organizations, ideologies, and legal history, forms the cornerstone of my methodology.

My work builds on the debate initiated by Japanese scholars

I am a historian specializing in Japanese medieval history and religious thought, with a particular interest in the dynamic interactions between religious institutions, political authorities, and ordinary people. My research revolves around three key pillars:

- The history of Japanese religious thought, with an emphasis on the Hachiman cult;
- Historical narratives and documents created by non-elites;
- The transformation of Japanese historical consciousness, thought, and social structure after the Mongol invasions of 1274 and 1281.

My current research focuses on the Hachiman cult and its role in medieval Japanese society. I examine not only official documents compiled by Iwashimizu Shrine, the main shrine dedicated to Hachiman deity, but also texts and narratives created by ordinary people and marginalized social groups. These groups played a crucial role in the evolution of the Hachiman cult yet are often overlooked in standard historical accounts. The methods of the Annales School, which shifted historical focus away from powerful individuals to broader social structures and overlooked communities, have had a profound influence on my work. By applying these approaches to the reconsideration of medieval Japanese history, I explore a wide range of topics, including social structures, ideologies, religious institutions, and legal history.

Kuroda Toshio and Amino Yoshihiko: Who were the marginalized people known as *hinin* (“non-persons”) in medieval Japan? Were they simply discriminated outcasts, or were they individuals with specialized ritual and performance skills? Why were they excluded from society and subjected to discrimination?

Recently discovered documents from the Katsura outcast village (Kyoto) may provide new evidence for Amino’s theory that medieval outcasts – particularly those employed as servants by temples and shrines – were recognized as a “people

of skills.”

A Vanished Outcast Village on the Bank of Katsura River

Some documents I recently discovered at the Kyoto City Library of Historical Documents shed light on traces of a long-lost Katsura outcast village (*shukumura*). This village cannot be found on modern maps of Kyoto. Situated on the eastern bank of the Katsura River – opposite the site of Katsura Imperial Villa – it possibly existed from the late medieval period until 1877, when it was assimilated into a nearby Senshōji village.

Many questions about this village remain unanswered: Why did it disappear? Why was it neglected by society? What were the original occupations of its inhabitants? This research project seeks to explore these questions. One thing is certain so far – the documents, addressed to the landowner and Edo officials, were created by the villagers to assert and protect their privileges and rights.

“Divine People of Bows and Arrows”

One such document is a petition addressed to the village’s landowner, the Katsura-no Miya royal family. The petitioners sought to replace *shuku* (夙, meaning “outcasts”) with *shukuin* (宿院, meaning “lodging”), arguing that their ancestors were not outcasts but “divine people of bows and arrows” (*kyūsen jinin*). According to the document, they had long served at *Shukuin*, a temple on the grounds of Iwashimizu Shrine, where deities were housed during certain ceremonies and rituals. The villagers claimed that in the 15th century, Iwashimizu Shrine granted them the name *Shukuin* (宿院, “lodging”), but over time, the final character *in* (院) was lost, leaving only *shuku* (宿). This led to confusion with *shuku* (夙), a term associated with polluted outcast communities.

Reconsidering Japanese History from an Alternative Perspective

The investigation of these documents has the potential to transform our understanding of Japanese history by offering perspectives from marginalized social groups. Standard historical narratives, often written by elites, have tended to overlook or diminish the roles of less powerful social groups.

Historical documents created by outcasts and other marginalized people are relatively rare, making their study particularly challenging. However, they offer a unique opportunity to

reconstruct history from the viewpoint of those whose voices have long been ignored.

References

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