

# *Shikinaisha* Authentication: Textual Sources and Oral Traditions

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## 1. Introduction

Shrines mentioned in the ancient compilation of legal procedures, the *Engishiki* 延喜式 (Procedures of the Engi Era, drafted 927, promulgated 967), are known as *shikinaisha* 式内社, literally, “shrines included in the Procedures”. At one time this designation was highly esteemed as distinguishing an old-established shrine, by both the (national) shrine administration and individual shrines. Today however it is not unusual for shrines to lay claim to being *shikinaisha* based simply on tradition and lore, and there are also cases where there are disputing claimants (known as *ronsha* 論社) to the designation. We cannot regard this simply as an ephemeral phenomenon in a local context.

Here I would like to take as an example a shrine in Saitama Prefecture to discuss how *shikinaisha* lore formed and the important role of a family of village shrine in that formation. My particular interest is the development of the theory of book culture, and I would like to take this opportunity to add my own thoughts about recent research trends regarding written works and publications. Discussion about the culture of the written language emerged out of Japanese historical studies in the 1980s. One attraction of the idea of a culture of writing is that it provides a broad frame of reference, spanning both authoritative knowledge and the detailed lore of villages.<sup>1</sup> There is no need to point out further that in fact the advances of research into books in recent years were specifically connected with the orality of the time.<sup>2</sup> My intention here is to discuss the culture of books from this perspective. Through the example of the conduct of one reader, I hope to throw light on the connection between the development of the culture of books and the conditions surrounding the growth of lore

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Tsukamoto Manabu, “Minzoku no henka to kenryoku, kinsei Nihon no iryō ni okeru”. In Fukui Norihiko ed. *Shirizuru Puragu o nuku 5, rekishi no metodorojii*, Shinhyōron, 1984; Tsukamoto Manabu, “Rekishi to minzoku to no kyōdō no gaku no kadai”, *Kokuritsu rekishi minzoku hakubutsukan kenkyū hōkoku* 27 (1990), Tsukamoto Manabu, “Minzokuchi to moji bunka, hitotsu no kokoromi”. *Tokai to inaka – Nihon bunka gaishi*, Hyōbonsha, 1991.

<sup>2</sup> Wakao Masaki, ‘*Taiheiki yomi*’ no jidai – kinsei seiji shisōshi no kōsō. Heibonsha, 1999, pp. 296-97, 331-33; Wakao Masaki, “Nihon kinsei ni okeru gunsho no rekishiteki ichi”, *Gunki to katarimono* 39 (2003); Tsunakawa Ayumi, “Suika Shintō no shuppan – Atobe Yoshiakira o chūshin ni”, *Hitotsubashi ronsō* 134: 4 (2005); Sugi Takeshi, “Shoseki to fōkuroa – kinsei no hitobito no suiseikan o megutte”, *Hitotsubashi ronsō* 134: 4 (2005).

and legend in a village setting, especially paying attention to separating out oral (from written) phenomena.

The shrine I am taking as my example is Nakahikawa Shrine 中氷川神社 (Tokorozawa-shi, Saitama Prefecture). It stands at the foot of the northern side of the Sayama hills. “Nakahikawa Shrine” appears in the *Engishiki* as one of 44 shrines in the province of Musashi and one of five shrines in the district of Iruma.<sup>3</sup> Hikawa Shrines are thickly spread around Saitama Prefecture, centring on the Hikawa Shrine 氷川神社 in Ōmiya (Saitama-shi).<sup>4</sup> The Hikawa Shrine in Ōmiya, the Okuhikawa Shrine 奥氷川神社 in Oku-Tama (Nishitama-gun, Tokyo), and Nakahikawa Shrine are called the “Three Hikawa Shrines of Musashi”. The Nakahikawa Shrine is thus generally believed to be a shrine with a venerable history. Today two shrines have this name, and each claims to be the authentic *shikinaisha*. One is located at Mikajima 三ヶ島 and the other at Yamaguchi 山口, both in Tokorozawa.

## 2. Traditions of Historical Authentication of *Shikinaisha*

There are 2861 shrines listed in the Register of Deities (*Jinmyōchō* 神名帳), Books Nine and Ten of the *Engishiki*. These were the official shrines that received offerings from the court, either through the Jingikan or through provincial governors.<sup>5</sup> By the medieval period many of these ancient shrines had sunk into obscurity, but during the Edo period (1600-1867) there was a groundswell of sentiment seeking to reassess them. One such trend was the production of evidential studies (*kōshōsho* 考証書) by scholars of National Learning (*kokugaku* 国学). They were particularly active in identifying enshrined kami and shrine locations, and in doing so raised consciousness about whether particular local shrines were *shikinaisha* or not.

The first work to research the *shikinaisha* was Yoshida Kanetomo’s 吉田兼俱 *Engishiki jinmyōchō tōchū* 延喜式神名帳頭註 (with a postscript dated 1503), and in the course of the Edo period similar works appeared one after the other,<sup>6</sup> including *Jinmyōchō kōshō* 神名帳考証 (1807) by Ban Nobutomo 伴信友 (1773-1846). In the latter half of the nineteenth century, *Jinja kakuroku* 神社覈録 (1870) by Suzuka Tsuratane 鈴鹿連胤 (1795-1870) and *Jingi shiryō* 神祇志料 (1873) by Kurita Hiroshi 栗田寛 (1835-1899) were generally agreed to be excellent examples of the genre. Their distinctive format listed *shikinaisha* countrywide comprehensively and included large numbers of quotations from previous works. It is interesting that the

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<sup>3</sup> *Engishiki (jō)*. Edited with notes by Torao Toshiya. Vol. 11, Shintō taikai, koten-hen. Shintō taikai hensankai, 1991, p. 336

<sup>4</sup> For a representative view, see Nishitsunoi Masayoshi, “Musashi no kuni Shikinaisha kō”, *Kokugakuin zasshi* 60, 8 (1959).

<sup>5</sup> Nishimuta Takao, *Engishiki jinmyōchō no kenkyū*, Kokusho kankōkai, 1996.

<sup>6</sup> For the popularity of evidential studies and the intellectual background, see Inoue Tomokatsu, “Jūnanaseikichū ~ jūhachi seiki shoki ni okeru shikinaisha kenkyū – sono shutai to shisō”, *Nihon shisōshi kenkyūkai kaihō* 20 (2003).

**Table 1** Works quoted in the *Shikinaisha chōsa hōkoku* concerning shrines claiming shikinaisha status

District ( <i>gun</i> )	Osato-gun	Chichibu-gun	Kami-gun	Ha(ta)ra-gun	Obusuma-gun	Saitama-gun	Iruma-gun	Yokomi-gun	Adachi-gun	Tama-gun	Tsuzuki-gun	Ebara-gun
Titles of works / Shrine names	Takagi Jinja	Muku Jinja	Imakiaosakainamiitegami Jinja Imakiaosakainamiarimitama Jinja Imakiaoyasakainami Jinja	Nireyama Jinja Shirakami Jinja Inanohime Jinja	Izumo no Iwai Jinja Miyame Jinja	Kuni Ichigi Jinja Nakahikawa Jinja	Izumo Iwai Jinja Yokomi Jinja	Takehime Jinja Adachi Jinja Aoi Jinja Torakashiwa Jinja	Omato notsunoten Jinja Ono Jinja Akiru Jinja Sugiyama Jinja Hieda Jinja			
Number of claimants	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	3	4	2	2	4
<i>Shinpen Musashi Fūdoki kō</i>	○	○		○	○		○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Jinja kakuroku</i>	○			○	○		○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Tokusen jinmyōchō</i>	○			○	○		○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Dainihonshi jingi shi</i>	○	○		○	○		○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Musashi no kuni shikinai shijūshiza jinja mikotozuke</i>	○	○		○	○		○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Jinmyōchō kōshō (Ban Nobutomo)</i>	○	○	○	○	○		○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Dai Nihon chimei jisho</i>	○	○		○	○		○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Nihon chiri shiryō</i>	○	○		○	○		○	○	○	○	○	○
<i>Junrei kyūjinshi ki</i>							○					○
<i>Musashi shikisha kō</i>	○	○		○	○							○
<i>Jingi shiryō</i>		○		○	○		○					○
<i>Saitama-ken shi</i>						○						○
<i>Musashi enro</i>	○	○		○	○							○
<i>Musashi no kuni gunsonshi</i>												○
<i>Edo meisho zue</i>			○	○	○							
<i>Bukanki</i>												○
<i>Ōta-shi shikisha saikenroku</i>												○
<i>Shijinshakakki</i>								○	○	○	○	
<i>Shijinja meiroku</i>	○							○	○	○	○	
<i>Chōfu nikki</i>	○							○	○	○	○	
<i>Musashi no chimei kō</i>			○									
<i>Musashi no banashi</i>							○					
<i>Ōsato-gun jinja shi</i>					○							
<i>Kita Musashi meiseki shi</i>												○
<i>Saitama shidan</i>							○					
<i>Jinmyōchō kōshō (Watae Enkyō)</i>								○				
<i>Musashi sōjashi</i>		○	○									
<i>Musashi no kuni shikinaisha no rekishi chiri</i>												○
<i>Musashi no kosha</i>												○
<i>Yamabuki nikki</i>										○	○	

\* Compiled from claimant shrines listed in *Shikinaisha chōsa hōkoku*, Vol. 11, Tōkaidō 6, ed. Shikinaisha kenkyūkai (Kokugakuin daigaku shuppanbu, 1976): pp. 93-333. Works quoted concerning evidence for multiple claimant shrines marked O. Works are listed in *kana* order, and may be abbreviated.

same features appeared in postwar works as well. For instance, the voluminous *Shikinaisha chōsa hōkoku* 式内社調査報告, a recent (1976) study, contains quotations from an enormous number of works from the Edo period down to modern times (Table 1). It is not too much to say that the frequency of quotations marks a work as a representative *shikinaisha* evidential study. This may be regarded as a long-time tradition in works that deal with the historical verification of *shikinaisha*.

There are also a group of studies dedicated to *shikinaisha* in a specific area. For example, a good number concern Musashi Province, and would appear to have created their own kind of tradition, as the appearance of the postwar “Musashi no kuni Shikinaisha kō” 武蔵国式内社<sup>7</sup> and *Musashi no kuni shikinaisha no rekishi chiri* 武蔵国式内社の歴史地理<sup>8</sup> attests. Table 2 lists specialist works about *shikinaisha* in Musashi that appeared down to the prewar period.<sup>9</sup> There may too be additional works that exist only in manuscript.

The works listed in the Table are not homogenous in character. For example, No. 1, *Musashi no kuni chū Engishikinai jinja kō* 武蔵国中延喜式内神社考(1848) is a single-volume edition of the Musashi section of the earlier, comprehensive *Junrei kyū jinshi ki* 巡礼旧神祠記 (Miyata Yasuyoshi 宮田泰好; preface dated 1764). On the other hand, No. 2, *Musashi no kuni shikinaisha shūsetsu* 武蔵国式内社集説 (ca. 1912) consists of excerpts about each shrine taken from a large number of evidential studies, giving it the appearance of a thoroughgoing anthology of documentary evidence. There are also unique works like No. 11, *Musashi no kuni shijūshisha chinza shō* 武蔵国四十四社鎮座称 (u.d.), which looks over all the relevant *shikinaisha*. Manuscripts such as No. 3, *Musashi no kuni shijūshizasha michinori mikotozuke* 武蔵国四十四座社道法命附 (u.d.) and others like it, are detailed studies with pilgrim guide characteristics. For the time being, the various subheadings used in the Table may serve to suggest how these diverse works might be classified. Although they may differ subtly, a number of shared key terms, such as “Musashi no kuni” (Musashi Province), “Engishikinai” (in the *Engishiki*) and “shijūshiza” (44 shrines), indicate certain nodes that bring together information about a topic of common interest. In fact, we may be witnessing here the emergence of a certain type of local phenomenon, that is, the forty-four Musasho *shikinaisha*.

Of special note are the works presumed to have been written as pilgrim guides. The Chichibu-born Shinto scholar Saitō Yoshihiko 齋藤義彦 (1785-1841) is known to have authored such a work. Though it was never printed,<sup>10</sup> manuscript versions are

<sup>7</sup> Nishitsunoi Masayoshi, “Musashi no kuni Shikinaishi kō”, *Kokugakuin zasshi* 60, 8 (1959).

<sup>8</sup> Hishinuma Isamu, *Musashi no kuni shikinaisha no rekishi chiri*. Hishinuma Isamu chosho kankōkai, 1966.

<sup>9</sup> This table omits, for reasons of convenience, excerpted sections from earlier evidential studies dealing with Japan as a whole, and similar MS versions of the Register of Deities. If these were included, the number of texts would increase greatly. All the same, the process of authenticating Musashi *shikinaisha* would require also a close examination of important evidential studies on a nation-wide basis.

<sup>10</sup> Kōno Shōzō, “Bakumatsu no Shintōka Saitō Yoshihiko”, *Saitama shidan* 86 (1937). Here the work is listed as “unpublished”.

Table 2 Works Concerning shikinaisha in Musashi Province

No.	Title	Type	Date of compilation	Location	Deity	Priest	Distance	List order	Form	Site variance	Notes and sources
1	<i>Musashi no kumichū Englishikinaï jinja kō</i>	MS	copied 1848	○	○	○	×	according to <i>Englishiki</i>	<i>tate</i>	24	In Bokkaisampitsū 105; excerpt from Musashi section, Junrei kyūjūshi ki. University of Tokyo. Historical geographical Institute, Item No. 4112-82. Another copy of the same name in the Japanese National Archives (Naikaku bunko).
2	<i>Musashi no kuni shikinaisha shū setsu</i>		ca 1910-1920	×	×	×	×	according to <i>Englishiki</i>	--	--	In Inamura Tange, Satama sōsho (Kokusho kankōkai, 1972). A collection of evidential articles in shikinaisha research works. Original text in Kōno Seizō collection. Date of compilation based on bibliographical introduction in above work.
3	<i>Musashi no kuni shijūshizasha michinori mikotozuke</i>	MS	--	○	○	○	○	visiting order	<i>tate</i>	standard	Nishitsunoi-ke archives No. 906
4	<i>Englishiki Jimyōchō iwaku Musashi no kuni shijūshiza shasan michinori ki</i>	MS	--	○	○	○	○	visiting order	<i>yoko hanch ō</i>	0	Nishitsunoi-ke archives No. 1241
5	<i>Musashi no kuni shijūshiza Englishikinaisha michinori mikotozuke</i>	MS	--	○	○	○	○	visiting order	--	0	Inamura Tange, Shintei zōho Satama sōsho Vol. 2 (Kokusho kankōkai, 1970).
6	<i>Musashi shijūshizasha michinori mikotozuke</i>		--	○	○	○	○	visiting order	--	0	Printed as a supplement in Tomita Nagayo ed. <i>Kita Musashi meisekishi</i> (Bunrindō kappansho, 1916). Tomita was a student of Kurokawa Harumura.
7	<i>Musashi no kuni shikinaï shijūshiza jinja mikotozuke michinori zuke</i>	MS	--	○	○	○	○	visiting order	--	3	In Saeke Ariyoshi ed. <i>Jingi zensho</i> Vol. 4 (Shibundō 1971). Original in Kurokawa Mamichi collection. At the end there is an inscription saying it was copied from a manuscript belonging to Tomita Nagayo.
8	<i>Musashi no kuni shikinaï shijūshiza jinja mikoto duke michinori zuke</i>	MS	--	○	○	○	○	visiting order	<i>tate</i>	3	Attached to the MS of <i>Mamiokasha kyūki</i> . In the collection of the National Diet Library (call number 206-59). On the cover slip, besides the title there is a note that it belonged to Kurokawa Harumura. Its contents are identical with the version in the <i>Jingi zensho</i> . It may be the original.
9	<i>Musashi no kuni Englishikinaï junpaiki Jimyōchō</i>	MS	copied 1819	○	×	○	×	visiting order	<i>yoko hanch ō</i>	5	Mikajima-ke archives. On the cover it says: "Musashi no kuni Englishikinaï/ junpaiki / jimyōchō/ Bunsei 2 [1819]. 8". Items copied have been selected. Part is a revision by the claimant shrine.
10	<i>Musashi no kuni shijūshiza sajin</i>	MS	--	○	○	×	×	according to <i>Englishiki</i>	<i>yoku hanch ō</i>	4	Higashitsunoi-ke archives 655. Items copied have been selected.
11	<i>Musashi no kuni shijūshiza chinza shō</i>	MS	--	○	○	×	×	visiting order	single sheet print (?)	3	Appended to the petition (Shikinaishakaku kakutei no negai) January, 1894. Mikajima-ke archives. Perhaps printed by the Omiya Hikawa Shrine (see Figure 1)

**Note:** -- indicates that information is unclear or irrelevant. No. 3 is given as the standard for site variance and the other figures indicate the number of differences (identifications with other villages, the addition or deletion of claimant shrines, etc.). Unimportant differences such as simple errors and characters used are not included.

still to be found in various places. The works listed as Nos. 3 to 10 in Table 2 are similar to it in content. There are only minor differences among the 44 shrines, other than small discrepancies concerning their locations. Some manuscripts differ because of changes that occurred during the copying process, because of added information about shrine location from other sources, and because certain facts were discarded; nevertheless it is certainly possible to see a consistent pedigree.<sup>11</sup> Some of these manuscripts can also be found here and there bound in the form of *yokohancho* (a very small type of notebook). It is not clear exactly when they reached their greatest popularity in this form, but they go back to at least 1819.

There are distinctive features too about their format. Differences occur because of copyist, but they were typically concise, giving information about the shrine's name, the enshrined kami, the location, the person in charge, and the distance to the next shrine, in *ri* 里. For example, the entry for Nakahikawa Shrine lists the enshrined kami as Susano no mikoto, Ōnamuchi no mikoto and Sukunahikona no mikoto, the location as Mikajima, the shrine priest as a member of the Miyano sacerdotal family, and the distance to the next shrine one *ri*.<sup>12</sup> The locations are clear, with almost all shrines being identified in terms of a single location,<sup>13</sup> but no evidence is cited for it, as in the manner of the evidential studies. Thus such works give the impression of being rather perfunctory, of considered as evidential studies, though conversely, such abbreviation may indicate that there was already in their background an accumulation of knowledge about identification, so that they only had to measure up to the existing descriptions about location.

We have yet to consider how the shrines were grouped. Whereas the evidential studies about *shikinaisha* tend to study them according to the shrine order given in the Register of Deities, the texts mentioned here virtually all follow their own order, in all likelihood the order of a pilgrimage itinerary. A simple example of this, in the Musashi case, is to make the Hikawa Shrine in Ōmiya (Adachi-gun) the base and then move on in order to shrines in Saitama-gun, Ōsato-gun, Yokomi-gun, Hiki-gun, Ha(ta)ra-gun, Obusuma-gun, Naka-gun, Kami-gun, Kodama-gun, Chichibu-gun, Iruma-gun, Tama-gun, Tsutsuki-gun, Ehara-gun, and then back to Saitama-gun. In short, it was a set course moving anti-clockwise around Musashi province.<sup>14</sup> Putting

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<sup>11</sup> For example, about half the manuscripts (Nos. 3, 4, 5, 6) do not give the location of Iwai Shrine (Ebara-gun) and about half do (Nos. 7, 8, 9, 1, 11). There is a possibility that in the case of No. 11 it was originally omitted but supplemented as circumstances demanded. In Nos. 7 and 8 two other shrines were shown, but in different places (Adachi Shrine in Adachi-gun; Imaki Aoyasaka Inami Shrine, Kami-gun). No. 9 adds information about the shrine of the copyist (Nakahikawa Shrine, Iruma-gun), and adds three shrines claiming to be *shikinaisha* (Kohaku Jinja, Tama-gun; Aoi Shrine, Tama-gun; Izumo Iwai Shrine, Iruma-gun). No. 10 omits one shrine (Sakitama Shrine, Saitama-gun), and excludes two others claiming to be *shikinaisha* (Hieda Shrine, Ehara-gun; Yokomi Shrine, Yokomi-gun). This same kind of abbreviation is found in No. 11.

<sup>12</sup> This quotation is according to *Musashi no kuni shikinai shijūshiza jinja mikotozuke michinorizuke* (No. 7) in Saeki Ariyoshi ed, and ann., *Jingi zensho* (Shibunkaku, 1971), Vol. 4, p. 345.

<sup>13</sup> Exceptionally, two positions were recorded in the case of Hieda Shrine (Ehara-gun) and Yokomi Shrine (Yokomi-gun). Also as we have seen above, the location of Iwai Shrine (Ehara-gun) was omitted in a number of MS.

<sup>14</sup> The order that appears in the Register of Deities is Ehara, Tsutsuki, Tama, Adachi, Yokomi, Iruma, Saitama, Obusama, Ha(ta)ra, Kami, Chichibu, Kodama, Ōsato, Hiki and Naka.

aside the question whether or not people actually carried these books when they traveled, it is indisputable they were compact in shape, had an easy-to-understand format, and provided practical routes. All these were prerequisites for *shikinaisha* pilgrimage.

There was even further diversity in these kinds of pamphlet. A good example is *Musashi no kuni shijūshisha chinzashō* (No. 11). Figure 1 shows its layout: a framework of nine rows and five columns, with information about the name of the shrine (in large type), its location (on the top right) and its enshrined kami (on the bottom left). It is noticeable that location order of the 44 shrines corresponds with the pilgrimage guide manuscripts,<sup>15</sup> not with that listed in the Register of Deities. Though there are some differences (e.g. starting and finishing points are in Tama district, and the Hikawa Shrine in Ōmiya occupies the position of greatest prominence in the middle of the top row), the order of districts itself is virtually the same. We must say though that the genealogy of the works is not clear. The materials referred to here are no more than copies made for a particular purpose and we have insufficient knowledge about the particulars of how they came into being. An inscription on just one of the copies, that the publisher was “Musashi no kuni Ichi no miya” (The First Shrine of Musashi Province, i.e. Hikawa Shrine in Ōmiya) makes it a possibility that the *Musashi no kuni shijūshisha chinzashō* was published by the Ōmiya Hikawa Shrine with the intention of making the pilgrimage guides more visually appealing.<sup>16</sup>

### 3. The Dissemination of Book Culture

#### i. Writings concerning the question of *Shikinaisha* authentication

Let us now turn our attention to those who read the textual material. As we have seen, the name of Nakahikawa Shrine appears in the *Engishiki*, and two shrines have this name today, one at Mikajima and the other at Yamaguchi (Tokorozawa, Saitama prefecture). Evidential studies from the Edo period on have considered both shrines to be strong *shikinaisha* claimants (customarily called *ronsha*),<sup>17</sup> and even today the question remains undecided. Here I will take up one such claimant shrine – the

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<sup>15</sup> The order of entries about shrine location here is virtually the same as that found in MSs 3-10. For exceptions, see Note 11. Compared with No. 1, which is clearly of a completely different character as an evidential study from Nos. 3-10, less than half the identifications of shrine location correspond.

<sup>16</sup> If we combine the examples of pilgrimage guides in the possession of the two Tsunoi families (Higashi and Nishi) connected with the Ōmiya Hikawa Shrine (Table 2, Nos. 3, 4, 10), we may be permitted to suppose the participation of the sacerdotal lineages of the shrine in the publication of the *Musashi no kuni shijūshisha chinzashō*.

<sup>17</sup> The definition of *ronsha* taken here is according to the *Shintō daijiten* (compact edition), Miyachi Naoichi and Saeki Ariyoshi gen. eds. (Rinsen shoten, 1986), pp. 648-49 and the *Shintō jiten*, Anzu Motohiko and Umeda Yoshihiko gen. eds. (Hori shoten, 1968), p. 356. Obviously the term *ronsha* itself presupposes the existence of a concern about *shikinaisha* both on the part of writers of the evidential studies and of the shrines themselves. There are still insufficient case studies about the circumstances under which this type of question surfaced (for example, whether the evidential studies raised the question first, or the shrines).

<b>Musashi no kuni shijūshisha chinza shō</b>						
Tama-gun Mitakesan <b>Ōmatonotsuno Tenjin Shrine</b> (three deities)	Adachi-gun Urawa-shuku <b>Tsuki Shrine</b> (one deity)	Yokomi-gun Tako-mura <b>Yokomi Shrine</b> (two deities)	Obusuma-gun Hachigata-mura <b>Inanohime Shrine</b> (three deities)	Chichibu-gun Ōmiya <b>Chichibu Shrine</b> (three deities)		
Tama-gun Itsukaichi-mura <b>Akiru Shrine</b> (one deity)	Adachi-gun Uetaya-mura <b>Adachi Shrine</b> (one deity)	Yokomi-gun Tako-mura <b>Takebuhiko Shrine</b> (one deity)	Naka-gun Hiroki-mura <b>Mika Shrine</b> (one deity)	Iruma-gun Kotesashi-mura <b>Iwai Shrine</b> (one deity)		
Tama-gun Fuda-mura <b>Fudate Shrine</b> (one deity)	Adachi-gun Kami Shinzu-mura <b>Takehime Shrine</b> (one deity)	Hiki-gun Ine-mura <b>Ikonohayamitamahime Shrine</b> (one deity)	Kami-gun Shichihongi-mura <b>Imakiaoyasaka-inamiararitama Shrine</b> (two deities)	Iruma-gun Kitanō Kotesashigahara <b>Mononobetenjin Shrine</b> (one deity)		
Tama-gun Honshuku-mura <b>Ono Shrine</b> (one deity)	Saitama-gun Kisai-machi <b>Tamashiki Shrine</b> (two deities)	Ha(ta)ra-gun Nakanara-mura <b>Nara Shrine</b> (one deity)	Kami-gun Shichihongi-mura <b>Imakiaoyasaka-inamikegami Shrine</b> (one deity)	Iruma-gun Kitano Kotesakihar <b>Kunichigi Shrine</b> (one deity)		
Adachi-gun Ōmiya <b>Hikawa Shrine</b> (three deities)	Saitama-gun Kisai-machi <b>Miyame Shrine</b> (two deities)	Ha(ta)ra-gun Tōhō-mura <b>Shirakami Shrine</b> (three deities)	Kami-gun Shichihongi-mura <b>Imakiaoyasaka-inami Shrine</b> (one deity)	Iruma-gun Mikajima-mura <b>Nakahikawa Shrine</b> (three deities)		
Tama-gun Yanokuchi-mura <b>Anazawa Tenjin Shrine</b> (one deity)	Saitama-gun Negoya-mura <b>Sakitama Shrine</b> (two deities)	Ha(ta)ra-gun Yokaichi-mura <b>Nireyama Shrine</b> (three deities)	Kami-gun Nagahama Shimogō <b>Nagahatabe Shrine</b> (one deity)	Tama-gun Tonogaya-mura <b>Azusamitenjin Shrine</b> (one deity)		
Tsuzuki-gun Yoshida-mura <b>Sugiyama Shrine</b> (one deity)	Saitama-gun Sakitamama-mura <b>Sakitama Shrine</b> (two deities)	Ha(ta)ra-gun Mikashiri-mura <b>Tanaka Shrine</b> (two deities)	Kodama-gun Kanasan-mura <b>Kanasana Shrine</b> (three deities)	Tama-gun Nekafu-mura <b>Torakashima Shrine</b> (one deity)		
Ebara-gun Suzugamori <b>Iwai Shrine</b> (five deities)	Ōsato-gun Kumagaya-shuku <b>Takagi Shrine</b> (one deity)	Obusuma-gun Akahama-mura <b>Izumonoiwai Shrine</b> (three deities)	Chichibu-gun Yoshida-mura <b>Muku Shrine</b> (five deities)	Tama-gun Sawai Sōtakesan <b>Aoi Shrine</b> (one deity)		
Edo Shiba Mita <b>Hieda Shrine</b> (five deities)	Yokomi-gun Kuroiwa-mura <b>Iwai Shrine</b> (two deities)	Obusuma-gun Tomita-mura <b>Obusuma Shrine</b> (one deity)	Iruma-gun Hirose-mura <b>Hirose Shrine</b> (two deities)	*1 <b>Protective deities, maior and minor.</b> *2		

\*1 Peace to the realm, tranquillity to the land. \*2 Wind and rain in season, successful harvest of the fi

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**Figure 1.** The 44 Shrines in Musashi no kuni shijūshisha chinza shō

\* Attached to the petition of January 1894 (Mikajima-ke archives).

\*Names of the deities have been abbreviated to maintain clarity of layout.

Nakahikawa Shrine in Mikajima.<sup>18</sup> The shrine priest is a descendent of the Mikajima family and takes great pride in his family's close connection with the shrine since the Edo period.

Today the shrine uses the *shikinaisha* designation of Nakahikawa, but it is also known as Nagamiya 長宮, and both names were in use in the Edo period.<sup>19</sup> The shrine priests began to assert the shrine's preeminence by using the designation Nakahikawa Shrine from around the 1830s, to the extent that by the 1870s "Nagamiya" had completely disappeared as a formal designation. This reflects the gradual deepening of awareness about *shikinaisha* that occurred in the course of the nineteenth century. Now "Nakahikawa Shrine" has become established in the popular mind and its identity as a *shikinaisha* is widely accepted. Many opportunities are afforded for people to hear about the shrine's venerable, thousand-year-old history and the origins of its name. Nevertheless, documents written by village officials in the Edo period invariably referred to the shrine as "Nagamiya" and even today many people speak of the shrine affectionately in this way. This situation suggests that shrine priests in the Meiji period (1868-1912) and later emphasized the superiority of the designation "Nakahikawa Shrine" and that this usage gradually spread among the people in the area.

Though I have intimated that an increased interest in *shikinaisha* was a late Edo period phenomenon, it only caught on at the Yamaguchi and Mikajima shrines during the Meiji period, and in particular at the time when the *ronsha* issue surfaced between the two shrines. In 1894, the Mikajima shrine priest petitioned the prefecture to make a judgement on the issue, in a document called the *Shikinaishakaku kakuteinegai* 式内社格確定願.<sup>20</sup> Documents related to the official response can be found in the Saitama Prefectural Administrative Archive. This documentation allows us to trace the course of developments in the shrine's attempt to become an authenticated *shikinaisha*.

The primary object of the Mikajima petition concerning which shrine was the *shikinaisha* was, naturally, to depress the claims of the other shrine of the same name and to stress the petitioner's own legitimacy. The petition began by stating its objective briefly, and then cited corroborating documentation supporting the claim at great length. In all, 26 documents were attached, all materials concerning the shrine's

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<sup>18</sup> I will refer to the shrines simply as Mikajima Nakahikawa Shrine and Yamaguchi Nakahikawa Shrine. In the Edo period the location of the Nakahikawa Shrine was designated as Mikajima village, Iruma district. In 1889 three neighboring villages were amalgamated and the shrine's address then became Ōaza Mikajima in Mikajima village. Today its location is Mikajima 5 chōme, Tokorozawa.

<sup>19</sup> I have traced the circumstances of the shrine name in detail in "Shikinaisha denshō no keisei to chiiki shinshoku – denshōshi ni okeru moji to saikaku", *Nihon minzokugaku* 246 (2006), pp. 40-44.

<sup>20</sup> *Shikinaishakaku kakuteinegai*, January 1894 (Mikajima-ke archive). There is also a note in the Mikajima branch administrative office archive (*Shaji shonegai todokesho tojikomi*, 1894). Mikajima branch administrative office archive No. 1503. The document was sent under three signatures – the shrine priest, the parishioners' representative and the village head, and it had the seal of the village head. It was addressed to the prefectural governor. As we shall see below, the first response was from the district. However the circumstances are not clear. It appears, according to another document (Saitama Prefectural Administrative Archive Meiji 820-14), that the Yamaguchi shrine also sent a similar petition around the same time. However the document itself has not come down to us so the details are unclear.

history. The petition took great pains to prove that the shrine was “old”, providing for example rafters inscriptions from shrine buildings (which recorded the history of the construction, the date, and the names of the builder, carpenters, etc.), as well as inscriptions on *kakebotoke* 懸仏 (round metal plaques with images of kami or Buddhist deities), *shinkyū* 神球 (sacred jewels) and other shrine treasures. Among the historical documents were official rulings about Shinto (Shinto *saikyojō* 裁許状), as well as large numbers of excerpts from gazetteers and *shikinaisha* evidential studies.

Table 3 contains a list of the references used in the *Shikinaishakaku kakuteinegai* (No. 1) and the titles cited in a collection of excerpts thought to have been made about the same time (No. 2). We find here titles of works from the shrine priest’s own collection as well as from books that he had borrowed.<sup>21</sup> We can also see here the names of the main works on *shikinaisha* research that appear in Table 1. A writer seeking above all else plain proof that a shrine was a *shikinaisha* must have relied greatly on those evidential studies that seemed to state unequivocally that his own shrine was categorized as a *shikinaisha*. Incidentally, even in the recent past we can find evidence that one way a shrine tried to “prove” its status was by the number of writings that back the claim; the Mikajima shrine, for example, has put out a pamphlet for parishioners, which lists up a great many book titles in the form of excerpts from the *Shikinaisha chōsa hōkoku*.

When we add the information from Table 3 a further interesting feature arises: quotations from evidential studies frequently take various viewpoints, not necessarily that of the Mikajima shrine. Thus we have what we might call a “quotation battle”. For example, “Sonsha Nakahikawa Jinja chōsa yōkō” 村社中氷川神社調査要項 (No. 3) contains the names of researchers attached to the Shrine Priests’ Association of Saitama Prefecture; and when during the Taishō era (1912-1926) the Yamaguchi Nakahikawa Shrine applied for promotion in rank to district shrine (*gōsha* 郷社), there was concern that the Yamaguchi shrine be confirmed as the *shikinaisha*.<sup>22</sup> A few of the quotation sources overlap with the 1894 petition (No. 1), but it was the *Tokusen jinmyōchō* 特選神名牒, that I refer to below, that was particularly emphasized, since its tenor supported the Yamaguchi side.

In fact, the *Tokusen jinmyōchō* (Kyōbushō ed., 1876) provided the only evidence for unequivocally taking the Yamaguchi side and rejecting that of the Mikajima shrine, both in the Edo and modern periods. It headed the named works mentioned in the *Kensha Nakahikawa Jinja ryakushi* 県社中氷川神社略史 (No. 4), a publication put out by the priest of the Yamaguchi shrine. Unsurprisingly, this work was not mentioned at all in any of the writings coming from the Mikajima side, whereas a number of books that the Mikajima shrine relied on were listed in the Yamaguchi publication. However they were not quoted and seem to have been included rather for

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<sup>21</sup> A memo has been preserved which lists the titles of books the shrine priest had borrowed: for example, “*Jingishiryō*, Kurita Hiroshi, fourth rank, Shūshikan.” (u.d. *Meisaisho*, Mikajima-ke archive).

<sup>22</sup> At that time, the Yamaguchi shrine was vigorously carrying out a promotion campaign. In September 1920 it was elevated to a district shrine, and in November 1937 to a prefectural shrine (*Jinja meisaichō* (u.d.), Saitama Prefectural Administrative Archive 16907-321). The Mikajima shrine remained a village shrine, and its petition for *shikinaisha* status contained no mention at all of any request for promotion.

**Table3** Works Concerning shikinaisha in Musashi Province

No.	Position	Date, title	Source of quotes	Notes
1	Mikajima	January 1894 Shikinaishakaku kakuteinegai	<i>Engishiki jinmyōchō tōchū</i>	Written by the priest of the Mikajima Nakahikawa Shrine. Of the 26 attachments, part was quotations. Similar documentary compilations date from this time (see No. 2). Mikajima-ke archives.
			<i>Engijinmyōshiki hihoko</i>	
			<i>Junrei kyūjinshi ki</i>	
			<i>Musashi enro</i>	
			<i>Shinpen Musashi fudokikō</i>	
			<i>Jingi shiryō</i>	
2	Mikajima	u.d. Shikinaisha kankeisho nukigaaki	<i>Junrei kyūjinshi ki</i>	Written by the priest of the Mikajima Nakahikawa Shrine. There were five attachments, all quotations. Mikajima-ke archives.
			<i>Jinmyōchō kōshō</i> (Ban Nobutomo)	
			<i>Jingi shiryō</i>	
			<i>Mumei Musashi shiryō</i>	
			<i>Kōsei jinmyōshiki</i>	
3	Yamaguchi	March 1919 “Sonsha Nakahikawa Jinja chōsa yōkō”	<i>Shinpen Musashi fudokikō</i>	Composed by Nukaga Hironao, Kanasana Miyamori and Kōno Seizō of the Saitama Shrine Priests Association supporting the petition by the Yamaguchi Nakahikawa Shrine to be elevated to rank of district shrine. Saitama-ken gyōsei bunsho shajibu, dai 1177.
			<i>Jinmyōchō kōshō</i> (Ban Nobutomo)	
			<i>Jinja kakuroku</i>	
			<i>Junrei kyūjinshi ki</i>	
			<i>Musashi no kuni shikinaishi shijūshiza jinja mikotozuke</i>	
4	Yamaguchi	April 1938 Kensha Nakahikawa Jinja ryakushi	<i>Tokusen jinmyōchō</i>	Written by the priest of the Yamaguchi Nakahikawa Shrine. Published by the office of the shrine. Quoted as “theories and writings about the kami of this shrine by renowned scholars”. Works under <i>Nihon shoki tsūyaku</i> mentioned by title only. Contained in Tokorozawa-shi shi hensan iinkai ed. Tokorozawa-shi shi, Shaji (Tokorozawa-shi, 1984), pp. 245-250.
			“Musashi no kuni no shikinaisha ni kansuru ichi kōsatsu”	
			“Musashi kokuzō to munesashi kokuzō”	
			<i>Nihon kokushi shiryō sōsho musashi</i>	
			“Hikawa Jinja chinza to saijin to ni kansuru ichi kōsatsu”	
			<i>Nihon shoki tsūshaku; Dai Nihonshi; Jingi shiryō; Jinja kakuroku; Shinpen Musashi fudoki kō; Musashino banashi; Musashi no kuni Engishiki michinori mikotozuke; Moshio gusa; Musashino asobigusa; Saitamaken-shi; Irumagun-shi.</i>	
5	Yamaguchi	January 1940 “Nakahikawa Jinja no shōkaku ni tsuite”	<i>Shinpen Musashi fudokikō</i>	In Saitama shidan 11: 3. Written by Ogawa Fukio. Record of a conversation held by the research group of the shrine to commemorate the raising of the Yamaguchi Nakahikawa Shrine to rank of prefectural shrine.
			<i>Musashi no kuni Engishiki michinori mikotozuke</i>	
			<i>Jinja kakuroku</i>	
			<i>Jingi shiryō</i>	
			<i>Tokusen jinmyōchō</i>	
6	Judgement suspended	September 1976 Shikinaisha chōsa hōkoku Vol. 11	<i>Jinja kakuroku</i>	Book of citations about the Nakahikawa Shrine from the Shikinaisha chōsa hōkoku. Compiled by Itō Hayato. Ed. Shikinaisha kenkyūkai, published by Kōgakkan daigaku shuppanbu. See Table 1 for the other shrines in Musashi.
			<i>Jingi shiryō</i>	
			<i>Tokusen jinmyōchō</i>	
			<i>Dai Nihonshi jingishi</i>	
			<i>Shinpen Musashi fudokikō</i>	
			<i>Musashi no kuni shikinaishi shijūshiza jinja mikotozuke</i>	
<i>Junrei kyūjinsha ki</i>				
			<i>Saitama shidan 11: 3</i>	

form's sake. Thus while the two shrines shared common ground in the works listed, selection came with what was actually quoted. Comparing the works quoted in the evidential study published in *Saitama shidan* (No. 5) and in the considerably later *Shikinaisha chōsa hōkoku* (No. 6), their homogeneity seems clear.

What I have been able to show is first, that access existed, from a fair number of viewpoints, to fairly homogenous evidential studies, and second, that they were chosen selectively and used arbitrarily as the situation required. It is at this stage that the contours of the chain of “evidence” concerning *shikinaisha* become increasingly ambiguous. We cannot draw any conclusion through the high culture of books alone.

## ii. The image of the *Engishiki*

There is one other point that must not be overlooked, and that is that the idea of the *shikinaisha* was itself based on the premise of an existing work, since the term *shikinaisha* literally means “a shrine mentioned in the [*Engi*]shiki”. Post-seventeenth century attention given to such shrines was thus actually sustained by the *Engishiki* itself. According to Nishimuta Takao, the *Engishiki* demonstrates that a demand for a separate register listing the names of shrines and kami existed.<sup>23</sup> There are also quite a large number of instances where copies of the “Register of Kami Names” were copied independently of the *Engishiki* and compilations made of extracts from it.<sup>24</sup>

As we have seen in Table 2, the evidential studies that were limited to a single province may possibly have fulfilled longings in the reader for some kind of work to rely on. For example, one of the writings most prized by the priests of the shrine we are investigating was the *Musashi no kuni shijūshisha chinzashō*; it was assiduously copied in its entirety to accompany the petition of 1894, and was also quoted a number of times in the main text. And, as I pointed out above, it was also important as a pilgrimage guide. But from the point of view of those who read and used it, it could as well be considered a signifier of recognition by the powerful shrine that published it (in this case, the Ōmiya Hikawa Shrine).

Another point I would like to stress is that the significance of such a work even influenced what was repeated orally when it became naturalized as lore. When writing down oral testimony about *shikinaisha*, I often heard people say clearly that “A shrine is classed a *shikinaisha* because it is the shrine of a kami that was registered a thousand years ago, and only shrines that have been recorded in a register are counted as *shikinai*”, and that “The *Engishiki* is a register of shrines that existed a thousand years ago”. Certainly there is no doubt that the “Register of Deities” in the *Engishiki* is an old record, but does it accord with historical fact? At any rate, the “Register of Deities” throws out an image that must be satisfactorily explained, however far the distance between the text itself and ordinary people.

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<sup>23</sup> Nishimuta, Takao, *Engishiki jinmyōchō no kenkyū*. Tokyo: Kokusho kankōkai, 1996, pp. 311-12. Nishimuta also reports on the attitude taken to Shinto texts, from reverence of the Register itself to its ritual chanting (p. 222).

<sup>24</sup> For example, in the Nishi Tsunoi-ke archive, there is a unique manuscript that lists all the *shikinaisha* in the land in syllabic (*kana*) order (u.d. “Shikinaisha meichō”, Nishi Tsunoi-ke archive 1419).

In attitudes to *shikinaisha* since the seventeenth century we can detect a book culture that singles out the “Register of Deities” from the *Engishiki*. Such an underlying structure can apply also on the level of local tradition and lore. Here we can even discern the existence of a consciousness of the written word that has become acclimated to the extent it has taken an oral form. More broadly, the culture of books surrounding the *shikinaisha* can be studied in conjunction with the twin development of attitudes surrounding the “Register of Deities” in the *Engishiki* itself and the traditions found in the evidential studies.

#### 4. Evolution of Lore and The “Oral Traditions of Old People”

##### i. New tales about sacred trees

Let us return our attention to the shrines we are examining. We can confirm that traditions and lore concerning *shikinaisha* there are connected to various written works, and we can trace the source of their spread to the families of shrine priests during the Meiji period. The shrine priests are portrayed as people who armed themselves with the written word and were associated with a book culture that gave an elevated position to the tradition of evidential studies. But at village level, they had to show a different face when attempting to make “*shikinaisha*” a household word.

In fact, today the forms people use to describe the origins of the shrine’s name and its history originates largely in the language used by shrine priests in the Meiji period. For example, people regard the Nakahikawa Shrine as having a more than thousand-year-old history, but this contention first appeared in the 1894 petition to have the shrine acknowledged as a *shikinaisha*. The name “Nakahikawa” (literally, “middle Hikawa”) is said to derive from Mikajima being situated between the Hikawa Shrines of Ōmiya and Oku-Tama. This explanation too has its origins in one of the many stories about the shrine’s history propounded by the shrine priests. This in turn indicates that the activities of the shrine priests were located within the lore and tradition of the village.<sup>25</sup>

How then did the priests actually approach the gap beyond which lay village lore and tradition? The short memo quoted below, made by a shrine priest concerning a sacred zelkova tree in the shrine precincts, presents one aspect of this question.

##### Document 1<sup>26</sup>

It has been passed down from ancient times that a blue snake and a white snake live in the hollow of this sacred tree. Normally there is no sign of them, but when a great catastrophe is about to happen, they are said to appear. Recently, in May 1875, iron workers were gathered at the shrine to make an iron mirror to

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<sup>25</sup> See my “Shikinaisha denshō no keisei to chiiki shinshoku – denshōshi ni okeru moji to saikaku”, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-55. As I said there, we must be aware that the shrine priests changed existing lore and traditions in their efforts to bring the shrine’s *shikinaisha* status to the fore. I would however like to take this opportunity to add the point that, though they suppressed local traditions, they also operated within them.

<sup>26</sup> u.d. “(Shinboku densetsu no oboe)”. Mikajima-ke archive No. 183.

be the *shintai* (object of worship within which the kami resides). It was finally finished, and the day before the ceremony to install it, the blue snake and the white snake both appeared, apparently very happy about the event. Seeing this, parishioners, including village officials, were very frightened. In June the same year, a man called Shōemon, whose turn it was to sweep the shrine grounds, wanted to use a small rotted branch of this tree that had broken off for firewood. He placed it against the eaves to dry. The priest saw what he had done and explained to him the divine will, and his wrongdoing. The man then chopped a yew with a saw. Then a blue snake darted out of the cleft and gave him a great shock, and he seemed to faint. The priest immediately apologized to the divine and recited a *norito*. The man made a complete recovery. Again, a man of the samurai class from Kanagawa prefecture called Miyazaki Yoshitoki visited this shrine to practice sermon-making, and around dawn on September 4<sup>th</sup> the same year he saw the head of a white snake appear out of a hole at the root of the sacred tree. He said how unusual this was and he determined to spread it among people in an adage.

The account concerns events that occurred around 1875-76, and probably the memo was made soon afterwards. The sacred tree was blow down in a storm after the Second World War and now just a small amount of the stump remains in the same position. It had been a very large tree, eight metres around the thickest part of the trunk, and very unusual at the time. The memo about the strange events about the snakes living in it appears to bear the signs of a newly-created story, a fabrication about the snakes' appearance being an embodiment of divine punishment and the priest's ability to cure the man. It is interesting that the memo begins with the words "it has been passed down since ancient times". This is a format taken when adding a modern version. That is, the phrase is used to dramatize and amplify the legend itself, while at the same time giving it a sort of objectivity.

## ii. Relativising legend

The emotional attachment of the priest of the time to the sacred tree was extraordinary. For example, in the 1894 petition it was the first thing he mentioned when referring to the "thousand-year" history of the *shikinaisha*, confirming that the tree was a thousand years old as the basis for his case that the shrine was a *shikinaisha*.

### Document 2<sup>27</sup>

. . . . In the first place, for a *shiki(nai)sha* to be selected during the Engi era, approximately one thousand years must have passed. How can we verify whether this is true or not? As appears on a separate sheet, this shrine has a treasured jewel dated Chōkyū 2 (1041), ridge tags from the Shōchō (1428-29) and Tenbun (1532-55) eras, and a hanging kami image, all of which have "Nittō-gun" (that is, Irima-gun) inscribed on them. We must also consider well that at ancient shrines, a sacred tree was the site of festivals to placate the kami. It is very difficult to describe such a tree in words, but many old shrines have

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<sup>27</sup> *Shikinaishakaku kakuteinegai*, January 1894 (Mikajima-ke archive).

them. Considering this, the sacred tree at this shrine was investigated and recorded in the *Musashi fudoki*, during the Tokugawa rule, as being more than five hundred years old. When villagers and woodcutters look at it today, they see an enormous tree and judge from the grain that it is around one thousand years old. The prefecture has already in recent years conducted a survey and judged this [estimate] to be true. . . .

### Document 3<sup>28</sup>

At a place around one *jō* [ca 3 m.] northwest of the shrine there is a large old zelkova tree. It is regarded as a sacred tree. The side facing the shrine towards the southeast has largely rotted. . . . The tree was already in this state seventy or eighty years ago according to the testimony of the oldest inhabitants, but there is no means of knowing when the rot first set in. After it became one-sided, there was no attempt to enlarge the area around it, because it had already braved the snows and frosts of over a thousand years. It is special to this shrine because of its age.

As the opening lines of Document 2 say, the shrine had only the tree as testament that it was more than a thousand years old. This time-span sits well with the compilation date of the *Engishiki*. This in itself is obviously based on literary knowledge. As proof of the shrine's age, the document cites a sacred jewel, ridge tags and a *kakebotoke*, all carrying early inscriptions. What is interesting in terms of the argument is that a thousand-year-old sacred tree, which "is very difficult to describe in words", is given equal importance to these artifacts. Furthermore, the testimony of "villagers and woodcutters" is offered regarding its age. In Document 3 as well, in a similar context, we find the testimony is based on the words of the "oldest inhabitants". We can surmise that the writer feels a sense of closeness to the "villagers and woodcutters" and the "oldest inhabitants".

Of course, as Document 2 shows, as far as the shrine priest was concerned, the memories passed down by elderly villagers were no more than one form of proof among many others. This is clear from a passage that appears in the petition and in other places: "To provide proof [for the *shikinaisha* claim) there is: the place name Naka-mura (centre village), the wooden name-board, the sacred tree that is more than five hundred years old, the ridge tags dating from the Shōchō and Tenbun eras, a document of prohibition (*seisatsu* 制札) dating from the Eiroku era [1558-1570], bronze hanging plaques with kami images, the written testimony of secular scholars, documents published from this province's Ichinomiya, *the lore of elderly villagers* (my italics), and old records of local families. All these transmit the truth without error." The "lore of elderly villagers" is objectivised and relativised by making it one of many forms of proof. Here the writer has taken a fine line in setting apart what cannot be identified in terms of writing, as the "lore of elderly villagers", without attempting to detach it completely as evidence.

Having looked at an actual example of oral testimony ("legend") in this way, let us now turn our gaze to another passage, which also appears in the petition. It concerns the origins of the shrine name "Nakahikawa".

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<sup>28</sup> March 1896 "(Jinja meisaichō tsuika)". Mikajima-ke archive.

Document 4<sup>29</sup>

. . . [There are a number of traditions concerning] the designation of this shrine as Nakahikawa. It is said that it means “Hikawa in central Musashi” or that it is called “central” Hikawa because it lies between the Hikawa Shrine in Ōmiya in the Adachi district and the Hikawa Shrine in the Tama district. Also, the name of the area continuing on from the shrine precincts is Nakamura and the area around the shrine “Nakajima” (centre island). There are also several families called Nakauji. In particular, the main family, Shōemon, is said to have as an ancestor Naka chikugo no kami Sukenobu, the lord of Furuoya in this district. His son was called Sukeshige, the name on the ridge tag of this shrine. From the time of Sukeshige to the present Atsuemon, [the family] has been the main sponsor of the shrine festival. These things are contained the survey of the family’s genealogy in the *Shinpen Musashi Fudoki*, compiled under the former Tokugawa rule. Further, this shrine has long been called Nagamiya, which is considered to be “Nakamiya”. The shrine is written as “Nakamiya” on the aforementioned prohibition board dated Eiroku 9 (1566), and this is an abbreviation of Nakahikawa no miya (shrine). We see the connection between “naga” and “naka” in a note in the *Manyōshū* and in a passage in the *Tale of Genji*. . .

I have already mentioned that people knew of the shrine’s origins by way of the statements of the shrine priest. What draws our attention in the above extract is the use of the phrase “it is said” and similar expressions. So far we have seen such expressions used when talking about the snakes in the sacred tree and the tree’s age, relating to more or less real objects. Here, though, the situation is slightly different. This is because awareness of the *Engishiki* had at this time begun to spread from among shrine priests to people in their environs, and so a discussion of the origins of *shikinaisha* should not have needed the addition of detailed oral traditions.<sup>30</sup> Thus the expression certainly refers not so much to current local lore *per se* as to the careful consideration of the priest of the time. All the same, it demonstrates a manner of writing that fictionalizes tradition rather than taking the form of an evidential study relying on demonstrable historical fact. Taken together, Documents 1 and 4 show how shrine priests lived in one respect within traditional village lore.

## iii. “The oral traditions of elderly residents”

Finally I would like to return to the question of rivalry among claimant shrines. By examining the exchanges with the prefecture and district following the submission of the petition from the Mikajima shrine, we can see how the attitudes of shrines connected by tradition with *shikinaisha* were reflected in the stance of the authorities of the time. There were exchanges about the aforementioned appeal for authentication with district and prefectural authorities several times between

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<sup>29</sup> *Shikinaishakaku kakuteinegai*, January 1894 (Mikajima-ke archive).

<sup>30</sup> We have the observation of a gazetteer writer from a slightly later date (*Mikajima-mura kyūseki meisshō shirabe*, June 1912 [Mikajima elementary school archive No. 119]) that “today most villagers call [the shrine] Nagamiya”. This tells us that changes in the shrine name came very gradually.

February and May, 1894, before the petition was passed on to the Ministry of Home Affairs in May. In July, the shrine was told it should “rely on former custom”, and a month later the priest received notification that the petition had been rejected.<sup>31</sup> This was the result of the decision taken by the prefectural and district authorities, rather than the Ministry itself, since it was the Ministry’s established policy not to interfere with judgements about claimant shrines.<sup>32</sup>

Document 5<sup>33</sup>

Inquiry into the decision about the *shikinai* shrine

Requests for a decision about *shikinaisha* authentication have been received from Nakahikawa Shrine, village shrine in Yamaguchi-mura, Iruma-gun and Nakahikawa Shrine, village shrine in Mikajima-mura, Iruma-gun, and are attached. . . Recently further requests to this effect have been received from both shrines. *However, not only is it hard to ascertain any positive proof whether or not the shrines are shikinaisha, but because of the difficulty of sorting out oral tradition, it is hard to conduct any accurate investigation and a report has been made to that effect* (my italics). Therefore, though more than twenty years have passed since the submission of detailed shrine reports at government order, the two shrines in question should be instructed to consider [the question] according to existing reports and records of shrine origins. The petitions and attached documentation will be examined further.

May 17, 1894

(signed) Prefectural Governor

To: Minister of Home Affairs

This report was sent from the prefecture to the Ministry of Home Affairs. Clearly the prefecture was fairly half-hearted about adjudicating *shikinaisha* status, but what draws our attention is the use in the document of the word “oral tradition” (*kōhi* 口碑). We find here and there in other places too a mode of expression that suggests that in the final analysis the petition has been based on “oral tradition” rather than firm evidence. For example, the first report (made in February) from the district to the prefecture had said, “There is no doubt that both are old shrines, but there are no documents which prove that they are the *shikinaisha*. They seek to elucidate [the matter] by *relying on the oral traditions of elderly residents* (my italics)”. Similarly in a letter in which the district authorities explained again their position (April), we see “Neither shrine provides accurate proof but simply relies on the oral traditions of

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<sup>31</sup> The course of events has been traced through “Iruma-gun no Hikawa Jinja shikinaigai kakuninnegai ni kansuru ken” (Saitama Prefectural Administrative Archive, Meiji 820-14) and “(Shikinaishakaku kakuteinegai kyakka tsūchi)” of August 1894 (Mikajima-ke archive).

<sup>32</sup> Umeda Yoshihiko, “Meiji irai jinja gyōsei ni okeru kosha sonchō no toriatsukai hōshin”, in *Jingi seidoshi no kisoteki kenkyū* (Yoshikawa kōbunkan, 1964), pp. 560-561.

<sup>33</sup> “Iruma-gun no Hikawa Jinja shikinaigai kakuninnegai ni kansuru ken”, May 1894. Saitama Prefectural Administrative Archive, Meiji 820-14.

elderly residents”. “Oral traditions” seems to be a stereotypical expression used negatively to give something a bad name.<sup>34</sup>

There is no doubt that a large amount of writing actually went into the petition, so to say that it “simply relies on the oral traditions of elderly residents” seems to be a kind of last-ditch expedient by the authorities. As we have seen, the shrine priest argued on the basis of documentary information, distinguishing the “lore and traditions of elderly villagers” from it, standing in a position between the two. Whereas the authorities accorded information based on written sources as superior to oral tradition, the shrine priest actually lived within the “lore and traditions of elderly villagers” and these were as much a matter of reality to him as purely written resources. From the point of view of the history of village lore, the attitudes of such priests were very important in how they accepted the various traditions surrounding the *shikinaisha*.

## 5. Conclusion

My primary concern in this article has been the spread of book culture related to *shikinaisha*. This was a multi-faceted development in the tradition of the evidential studies of *shikinaisha*, which basically revolved around the Register of Deities. As far as the reader was concerned, one outcome of evidential studies was perhaps the reissue of shrine registers – metaphorically, the regeneration of the Register of Deities – and the linking of the Register to a certain type of image related to written sources. In this sense, the book culture that embraced the *shikinaisha* had the power to evoke a large number of images and responses.

My second concern has been to look at the connection between book culture and the oral traditions of villages. However much oral tradition was armed with the written language, in the end it was inevitably cold-shouldered by the high culture of books. I have focused on a particular reader and writer, who, though he can be considered to have been part of the traditions of book culture, had, in choosing to live within the contemporary lore of his village, acquired an outlook that sought to relativise it. An extreme expression of this position was the sacred tree, which he embellished both with book-based knowledge and local lore. Such mixing of documents and lore can thus be found at the leading edge of the diverse development of book culture.

\* 渡部圭一「式内社・論社問題における書物と「口碑」」『書物・出版と社会変容』2, 2007.1, pp. 61-81 [<http://hdl.handle.net/10086/16597>]

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<sup>34</sup> But we need to look much more widely at examples of the use of this expression in official documents.