
Historical Materials on Onmyōdō Rituals in the Nara Koyomishi Yoshikawa Family Documents

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Despite advancements in early modern studies of *onmyōji* and Onmyōdō organizations, research into Onmyōdō practice is lacking. The focus of ritual research has primarily been on the late Heian period (794–1185), considered Onmyōdō's peak. Middle ages and beyond studies typically discuss the imperial court and shogunate rituals, or their joint prayers during the Muromachi period (1336–1573), barely examining regional *onmyōji* ritual materials. This study aims to illuminate early modern Nara region's Onmyōdō rituals, using materials from the Nara Koyomishi Yoshikawa Family Documents, housed at the National Museum of Japanese History.

The Yoshikawa Family Documents preserve not only historical records of the Nanto calendar's distribution but also day-to-day activities and rituals of *onmyōji*. The ritual materials, which include ritual texts, ritual procedures, and talismans, cover a wide range of deities and prayer content and were probably actually used in the early modern Nara area. This study categorizes these materials by ritual type and compares them to imperial court-adjacent ritual forms (Tsuchimikado house). There are rituals in these documents, some of which are clearly of Tsuchimikado family origin, that mirror or resemble those ritual forms. These documents proved involvement in imperial court rituals and helped assert authority and legitimacy within *onmyōji* groups.

On the other hand, numerous ritual documents indicate not mere adoption from the Tsuchimikado house but active selection and modification by Nanto *onmyōji*. This includes kagura and ritual texts imbued with medieval mythology, ones influenced by apocryphal scriptures and Taoist texts, and ones on rituals like the *kyūshōshinsai* (honring nine Onmyōdō deities), which, though based on the Onmyōdō five elements theory (*gogyōsetsu*) and I Ching, possess unique aspects. Hence, the Tsuchimikado-origin rituals' influence on the Nanto *onmyōji* ritual system remained restricted. Also, unique rituals different in name, deities, and phrasing from Tsuchimikado rituals highlight regional differences in Onmyōdō practices.

Key words: Onmyōdō, ritual texts, Onmyōdō ritual, Yoshikawa Family Documents, Nara