

How to Analyze Historical Documents of Local Calendar Craftsmen and Local Onmyōji in the Early Modern Period: A Case Study of the Yoshikawa Family in Nara

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The purpose of this paper is to present a new perspective on the studies on historical documents and materials of local calendar craftsmen and local Onmyōji, based on the summary of previous research using the Yoshikawa Family Documents and the deciphering of “Koyomi-Gakari-Kiroku”, which is one of these documents and have been drew attention by many researchers.

The Yoshikawa Family Documents is a very rich collection related to the creation and distribution of calendars and the activity of Onmyōji in Nara. However, in previous studies, researchers have focused only on themes concerning their own interests and have paid little attention to the whole group of the archives and materials of Yoshikawa Family. Therefore, the members of our collaborative research focused on the overall picture of the Yoshikawa Family Documents and deciphered several noteworthy documents including “Koyomi-Gakari-Kiroku”.

“Koyomi-Gakari-Kiroku” is the document with a lot of information on the creation and distribution of local calendars, recorded from 1854 to 1869 by the calendar craftsmen (many of them are also Onmyōji) of Ingyo-Machi, Nara. However, previous researches using it analyzed only some of the articles, such as usual schedule of the creation and distribution of “Nara-Goyomi”, the local calendars created in Nara.

Therefore, we check the overall structure of “Koyomi-Gakari-Kiroku” and analyze it in detail. Then, we consider the subjects which have not received enough attention in previous studies, such as responses to unusual situations by the calendar craftsmen of Ingyo-Machi and their awareness of archiving.

Key Words: Local Calendar Craftsmen, Local Onmyōji, Yoshikawa Family Documents, the Creation and Distribution of Calendars, Studies on Historical Documents and Materials