Formation Processes of the Ancient Jingi Rituals System and the Munakata Shrine

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Abstract: This article aims to clarify the history of ancient Okinoshima Island and the Munakata Shrine by examining the positions of the Munakata Shrine in the context of the ancient Jingi rituals (rituals dedicated to Kami of heaven and earth) system. Therefore, in consideration, first of all, of the fact that one of the noteworthy features of the Munakata Shrine based on historical documents is that the Munakata-gun (Munakata ancient district) where it was enshrined was a shingun (a district dedicated to Kami), the author compared the actual situation of rituals with those in other shrines which are associated with shinguns. As a result, it was understood that profound relation with the emperors from before the second half of the 7th century, when the ancient Jingi rituals system was formulated, defines the subsequent special positioning of the Munakata Shrine. Subsequently, there appears to have been a change in the system around the guardian of the Munakata Shrine in the very early Heian Period. However, such change was a part of the nation-wide trend and they were still in a situation to be able to perform independent rituals even after that change.

Keywords: Shingun, Ritsuryō Jingi rituals system, emperor, external exchanges, guardian of the Munakata Shrine

1. Introduction

It was pointed out early at the stage of the archaeological investigation that the ritual artifacts of Okinoshima ritual sites take on the national color. In addition, a detail comparison between the divine treasures during the 5th to 7th centuries and ritual materials seen in the historical documents was made in recent years, which elucidated the continuity of votive offerings from this period to the Jingi rituals (rituals dedicated to Kami of heaven and earth) based on the Ritsuryō. Such a sequence of accomplishments has clarified that the divine treasures of Okinoshima Island were devoted under the influence of a power leading to the imperial court.

In order to develop research concerning rituals of Okinoshima Island, and even those of the Munakata Shrine, it would be an effective method to specify its meanings, origins, and performers by reviewing historical materials. As various restrictions are attached to historical materials, it is not an easy job to review them. However, the author considers that it is able to clarify at least the relative positioning of the Munakata Shrine at the stage in which the Jingi rituals were systematized by the ancient imperial court, and its background, and based on this performance, exhibit the aspect of the rituals.

Therefore, from the historical materials of the period from the reign of the Emperor Mommu to Empress Genshō during which the Ritsuryō Jingi rituals system was developed, and also the period over to the early Heian Period (from the end of the 7th century to the early 9th century), the author would like to consider the aspect of the rituals in the ancient Munakata Shrine.

2. Special Features of a Shingun Munakata-gun Viewed from the Actual Status of the Rituals

(1) Shingun and its peculiarities

The full-fledged development of the Ritsuryō Jingi rituals system is considered to have begun in the reign of the Emperor Temmu (673 to 686) as long as based on historical materials such as the Nihonshoki. A new relation between the imperial court and the Munakata Shrine, an official shrine later placed in the Jimmyō-Chō of Engishiki, is considered to have been built during this period, but few materials referred to
the shrine itself.

First of all, excluding the Ise Grand Shrine and particular shrines located in Kinai (or the five kuni in the immediate vicinity of Kyōto), we can hardly know the actual situation of individual shrines from this period to the Nara Period from historical materials which specifically show the Shinō shrine system, including the six national histories (Rikkokushi). After all, the Munakata Shrine is not an exception to this. However, there is a noteworthy historical material. That is a procedure by the Dajōkan (Council of State), dated on November 16 of the 7th year of Yōrō (723), which is quoted on the Ryō-no-Shūge, the compilation of annotation of the Yōrō Ritsuryō 4).

This procedure by the Dajōkan approved concurrently holding positions of Gunji (administrative officials of gun), including Tairyō as the highest rank, by a family within the third degree of consanguinity 5) at eight guns which are called a “shingun” in seven ancient provinces of Ise, Awa, Shimousa, Hitachi, Izumo, Kii and Chikuzen (The shinguns in those days are presented in the Table 1 below). Each gun is presumed to have been designated as a shingun based on the relation with a shrine in the relevant region. It is needless to say that the Munakata-gun is the shingun of the Munakata Shrine. As long as this procedure by the Dajōkan is concerned, it appears the approval of holding concurrently positions of Gunji started when this procedure was issued. But it is considered that this was individually conducted in reality. The Shoku-nihongi describes that such an approval was issued in the second year of the Emperor Mommu (698) to the Munakata-gun, earlier than other shrines 6). Namely, we can understand that such an exception was a measure taken at a stage prior to the Nara Period.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Gun</th>
<th>Shrine with Close Relations</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2nd year of the Emperor Mommu (698)</td>
<td>Chikuzen</td>
<td>Munakata</td>
<td>Munakata Shrine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th year of the Emperor Mommu (700)</td>
<td>Izumo</td>
<td>Ou</td>
<td>Katori Shrine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st year of the Keiun Era (704)</td>
<td>Kazusa (later Awa)</td>
<td>Awa</td>
<td>Awa Shrine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7th year of the Yōrō Era (723)</td>
<td>Shimousa</td>
<td>Kariori</td>
<td>Katori Shrine</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Hitachi</td>
<td>Kashima</td>
<td>Kashima Shrine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kii</td>
<td>Nagusa</td>
<td>Hinokuma Shrine</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kunikakasu Shrine</td>
</tr>
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The exception on Gunji as described above is shown in a different way also in the kyaku or rule of the 7th year of the Tempyō (天平) Era (735) recorded in “Ruijū-Sandaikyaku.” 7)
concerning the appointment of Gunji also changed during the Heian Period, the Engi-Shikibushiki, established (but not put in force) in the 5th year of Enchō (延長) (927), also made the exception of the appointment of cognominal persons in shingun from the beginning, its particularity having been inherited from the Nara Period 8). From what has been mentioned as above, we can understand that the exception of the concurrent appointment of Gunji in Munakata-gun had been fixed as a regulation for appointing Gunji from the formation period of the Ritsuryō system.

As mentioned earlier, the subject eight guns were referred to as “shinguns” in the procedure by the Daigokan of the 7th year of Yorō and the “Engi-Shikibushiki”. If we read the procedure by the Dajōkan carefully, we will be able to read that the concurrent appointment of Gunji in certain guns of the shinguns was approved. The concurrent appointment of Gunji is not the effect that should naturally appear as a result of the approval of the establishment of the shinguns, and the existence of shinguns where it is not approved can be assumed. However, another shingun cannot be confirmed until the 9th year of Kamyō (寛平) (897) when Iino-gun of Ise province became a new shingun. Consequently, the author will explain the matter focusing on the eight shinguns.

Now we have understood the situation above. After understanding this, what we should pay attention is whether there are other specific measures unique to the shinguns. Various matters have been pointed out about special exceptions of the shinguns. However, there is one thing which we must recognize as the basis for reviewing, which is that almost no measures unique to the shinguns other than the special exceptions related to this concurrent positioning of Gunji are confirmed in other shinguns excluding the two guns of Watarai and Taki where the Ise Grand Shrine is enshrined. What we can confirm is merely an example of exception of the Ceremony of Weeping for the Dead in an Imperial funeral for a case when an ex-emperor or a mother of the emperor passes away 9). The same holds true for Munakata-gun.

Thinking in this way, we will know that understanding the following two points are important matters to clarify the special positioning of the shinguns:

• Reasons for having constructed a system enabling only close family members to hold the political power
• Reasons for positioning the inner gun as a sacred area

Consequently, the author would like to confirm specifically rituals performed in Munakata-gun in the next section. However, if we examine the rituals of the Munakata Shrine individually, we cannot clarify specifically the relationship with the imperial court, in particular. Therefore, the author would like to elucidate noteworthy points in the contemporary rituals by taking many examples of the rituals of the shinguns and generalizing the points selected from thence. The author has put specific items for shrines of which we are able to know its actual situation. However, the shinguns of the Ise Grand Shrine are omitted. We can know the extremely concrete political circumstances in the shinguns such as Gunji’s promotions in rank and sharing of miscellaneous duties with the Daigoji (highest-ranking priest) of the Grand Shrine in case of the Ise Grand Shrine, unlike other shrines. However, the author omitted it because such a situation can be evaluated as particularity of the Ise Grand Shrine on the contrary. Some people view in suspicion the way to regard differently the shinguns of the Ise Grand Shrine and other shinguns 10). Still, the author cannot disregard the fact that the Ise Grand Shrine enshrines the ancestral goddess of the imperial family, Amaterasu-omikami and receives exceptional treatments in the system of the divine ritual of the imperial court. Consequently, the author cannot help but be prudent to apply the situation of the shinguns of the Ise Grand Shrine to other shrines uncritically, and has excluded it for this manuscript.

(2) Rituals in Shinguns

(A) Ou-gun of Izumo Province

Concurrent appointment in Ou-gun is said to have been approved at the same time with Munakata-gun. Such situation seemed to have a close relationship with the Kumano Shrine enshrined in Ou-gun and the Kitsuki Grand Shrine in Izumo-gun. Both of which are positioned as Myōjin Grand Shrines (the highest rank of official shrines) in the Jimmyō-Chō of the Engishiki, and there is no shrine that stands riddled with these in Izumo province. The two shrines are also called the “Great Gods of the Two Shrines（二所大神）”
1) in Izumo province, and it is clear that these two are ranked as the important shrines. However, these shrines were not subject to a preparation of offerings to gods for the Tsukinami-sai (monthly festival) and the Niiname-sai (First Fruit Festival) although as many as 40 shrines located in all parts of the country were subject to the preparation. Thus, these two shrines had some aspects which the author finds it difficult to say that they were extremely important shrines in the provided system of the annual rituals by the imperial court.

However, the descriptions at the end of the “Izumo-no-Kuni Fudoki” compiled in the 5th year of Tempyō (733) show that the Izumo-no-Kuni-no-Miyatsuko, who apparently held concurrently Tairyō of the Ou-gun, had an event to do when he assumed the post; extremely special reporting to the emperor of a sacred congratulatory message（神賀詞奏上）.

According to “Engi-Rinjisaishiki,” its outline is as follows: Izumo-no-Kuni-no-Miyatsuko goes to the royal capital and assumes the position. On this occasion, he is bestowed with a thing called Oisachi-no-mono or an imperial donation. The Kuni–no-Miyatsuko performs his ablutions for one year (more than one year in reality) after returning home. After that, he enters into the royal capital with people devoting to rituals who are called Hahuribe（祝部）, and offers articles for presentation to the outside of the royal capital. After returning home again, the Kuni–no-Miyatsuko performs his ablutions and goes Tōkyō to once again. He reports to the emperor of a sacred congratulatory message in the Jingikan (Council of religious affairs) of the imperial court 12).

The problem here is the starting period of this series of reporting of sacred congratulatory messages. In this regard, the view that it started in the period in which the system of official shrines was established, or during the reign of the Emperor Genshō (715 to 724) would be appropriate 13). In fact, an event to bestow Oisachi-no-mono was performed in the Jingikan and a trial reporting of the congratulatory message was arranged by the Jingikan 14), and the form thereof was systematized as a divine service in the national organization based on the Ritsuryō. Namely, the reporting of the congratulatory message can be positioned within the framework of the national system of official shrines.

Taking into account the period of the systematization of the reporting of the congratulatory message, although the existence of the procedure by the Dajōkan of the 7th year of Yōrō is a measure responding to the development of the national system of official shrines, the framework of the system toward the shinguns, in considering the descriptions of the Shoku-nihongi that the concurrent appointment of Gunji was conducted during the reign of the Emperor Mommu (697 to 707), is considered to have been built in a different dimension of the national system of official shrines. Of course, from a general standpoint, the establishment of the system of reporting divine congratulatory messages as well as the measure to the shinguns is premised on the mounting concern on the origin of gods centering on Ōkuninushi–no-Mikoto. Consequently, it is possible to view the former and the latter in a unified way, but the author would like to get a step closer to comprehend this.

This is because an important thing will be emerged by making a deeper comprehension. If the author describes in specific words the status in which the prerequisite recognition had been established in the imperial court before the reign of the Emperor Genshō, it means that the recognition concerning the transfer of the land（国譲り）by Ōkuninushi–no-Mikoto and the positioning of Amenohohi-no-Mikoto, the remote ancestor of the Izumo-no-Omi who succeeded the Izumo-no-Kuni-no-Miyatsuko, had been established in the imperial court before the reign of the Emperor Genshō. For example, a divine congratulatory message collected in the Engi-Noritoshiki describes the scene in which Ōnamuchi-no-Mikoto（Ōkuninushi-no-Mikoto）and others rest in the Yamato province as “guardian deities near to the emperor.” 15) The message is estimated to have been formed during an age when the imperial palace was located in Asuka or Fujiwara-kyō because of the relationship of the location 16). It is needless to say that the capital of the Emperor Genshō was Heijō-kyō (Nara), away from Asuka or Fujiwara-kyō.

Someone has indicated that there is the consciousness toward the strengthening of the authorities of the emperor toward the curse after the reign of the Emperor Saimei (655 to 661) at the background of the mounting concern on gods of Izumo 17). Thinking in this way, a contact point between the gods of Izumo and the imperial court can be found in the direct relationship between the emperor itself and the gods of Izumo, not in a mechanism of the imperial court and so on. Such a relation before the reign of the Emperor
Genshō, when the reporting of the divine congratulatory message was systematized, provides ample materials to estimate the possibility of the structure in a form different from the Ritsuryō national system of official shrines. We may consider that the concurrent appointment of Gunji in such a situation is the result of emphasizing the belief based on the relation with the emperor.

(B) Awa-gun of Awa province

Awa-gun is thought to be the shingun of the Awa Shrine. The Kogoshīi, compiled in the 2nd year of Daidō (807), describes the Awa Shrine as follows:

阿波忌部所居、便名、安房郡、、天富命、即於、其地、立、太玉命社、、今謂、之安房社、、故、

The description includes the following sentences.

“Amenotomi-no-Mikoto then founded a shrine of Futodama-no-Mikoto in that place. Now it is called the Awa Shrine.”

It states that Amenotomi-no-Mikoto, a grandchild of Amenofutodama-no-Mikoto, enshrined Amenofutodama-no-Mikoto, the ancestor of the Inbe Clan. The author can point out first of all that a major reason for the establishment of the shingun is that the enshrined deity of the Awa Shrine is the ancestor of the Inbe Clan which had official duties to serve the ritual of the Jingikan.

Moreover, there are historical documents on the Takahashi-Ujibumi quoted in the Honchō-Gatsuryō, a book describing the annual events in ancient courts of the middle of the Heian Period. The documents records a story of Iwaka-mutsukari-no-Mikoto who was in charge of the diet for the Emperor Keikiō who visited the Awa-no-Ukishima-no-Miya, indicating that the Takahashi Clan, descendent of Iwaka-mutsukari-no-Mikoto, is a clan qualified for attending the Ōnie or Jinkonjikiki in which the emperor itself devotes the diet to deities and enshrines them.

However, what I would like to emphasize most here is not the main text but the note below which follows the sentence “began to serve purification rites and the Ōnie.”

The outline of the note is “the reason for calling the Awa Grand God as Miketsu-kami (God of Eating) is because he is the god enshrined by the current Daizenshiki or the section in charge of cooking food for the emperor. The Ōtomo-be that are now engaged in setting sacred fire are descendants of Mononobe–no-Toyohi-no-Muraji”.

This portion is merely from a compilation of the 10th century, what is more, a note attached to the quotation thereof. But the description that the god of the Awa Shrine is worshiped as Miketsu-kami of the Daizenshiki in charge of banquets held in the imperial court intrigues the author. In this regard, KAWAJIRI Akio, taking notice of the description of the worshiping the God of Diet by Awa-no-Tojibe in the kyaku of the 3rd year of Tempyō (731) that is collected in “Ruijū-Sandaikyaku”, states that the Awa Grand God was enshrined in the Daizenshiki as is described in this note.

If the author adds more to the above mentioned matters, it is probably assumed that the Awa Grand God was worshiped in Naizenshi or an administrative institution in charge of the emperor’s kitchen, taking into account the indication made by KAWAJIRI and the positioning in the imperial court of the Takahashi Clan worshiping the Awa Grand God as Miketsu-kami. The kyaku of the 3rd year of Tempyō was issued concerning the delivery of a certain goods or food to Naizenshi which conducts cooking for the emperor. At least, we can fully understand from the existence of the Takahashi-Ujibumi the deep relations between the Takahashi Clan, which attended the Ōnie-sai conducted by the emperor itself and inherited the head of Naizenshi, the Buzen (奉善), and the Awa Grand God. Therefore, we can judge that the Awa Shrine is related to the rituals concerning the affairs near to the emperor, as is the case of the God of Izumo referred earlier.
(C) Kashima-gun of Hitachi province

The concurrent appointment was approved in the 7th year of Yorō, slightly late compared to Munakata-gun, Oō-gun and Awa-gun. However, according to “Hitachi-no-Kuni Fudoki,” whose original text is considered to be compiled during the Tempyō Era (729 to 749), Kashima-gun was established as a “shingun” of the Kashima Shrine in the 5th year of Taika (649) during the reign of the Emperor Kōtoku, and the period when it was recognized as a shingun may have been earlier. But the concrete image of the rituals in the Kashima-gun or of the Kashima Shrine from this period over the Nara Period is not clear.

However, when we come to focus on the peculiarity of the rituals, the author cannot neglect the description of the Miko-gami of the Kashima Shrine (child of the god of the Kashima Shrine) seen in “Hitachi-no-Kuni Fudoki.” However, this Miko-gami is not seen in shrines of the shingun, rather seen in other shrines. Also, we cannot tell the relation with the ancestor god or God of Kashima through rituals from “Hitachi-no-Kuni Fudoki.”

However, there is a historical material which enables to guess the existence of the certain relation. That is an article of the 8th year of Jōgan (貞観) (866) recorded in “Nihon Sandai Jitsuroku”.

The description above is a part of the remark of the Guji (chief priest) of the Kashima Shrine which is cited in the book. From this, we can understand that there are 38 shrines of the descendant gods of the Kashima Grand God in Mutsu province, and products of the domains of the Kashima Grand Shrine were offered to these shrines as offerings. From this article, we can comprehend the starting period of the tradition of the the example of the ritual for the Miko-gami in Mutsu province was during the Enryaku (延暦) Era (792 to 806). But taking into account the description of the Miko-gami in “Hitachi-no-Kuni Fudoki” earlier mentioned, it would be appropriate to consider that they developed the ritual for the Miko-gami which was originally performed in Hitachi province also in Mutsu in tandem with the expansion to the eastern countries by the imperial court. It would be needless to say that, at this background, there is the existence of military divine efficacy of the Takemikazuchi-no-Mikoto, the god of the Kashima Shrine which is believed to have played a large role as the god of military when Ōkuninushi-no-Mikoto transferred the national land.

Now, for the rituals of the Miko-gami in Mutsu, products of the domains of the Kashima Shrine were offered, showing the situation that allowed the implementation of the ritual based on the arrangement by the Shrine. And the Miko-gami seems to have been expanded to a wider area in accordance with the expansion of the management of eastern countries. As a reason for this, circumstances peculiar to the Kashima Shrine that worships Takemikazuchi-no-Mikoto who played a large role in the transfer of the country by Ōkuninushi-no-Mikoto are considered. When we consider the form of the rituals and the origin of the god of the Kashima Shrine, we can guess that it was also related to the position of the emperor in particular.

HAYAKAWA Mannen points out that those who had the consanguinity may have assumed the positions of Gunji and the chief priest of the Kashima Shrine since the establishment of Kashima-gun. The Nakatomi Clan, who had administered the rituals in the imperial court before the formation of the Ritsuryō Jingi rituals system, was responsible for the job. Also from these points, it would be possible to understand that the background of the establishment of shinguns was deeply involved with the central which was different from the formation of the Ritsuryō Jingi rituals system in a precise sense.

(D) Katori-gun of Shimousa province / Nagusa-gun of Kii province

Besides, Miko-gami of the Katori Shrine, which is the major shrine of Katori-gun of Shimousa province, is seen in the “Hitachi-no-Kuni Fudoki” and the Jimmyō-Chō of Engishiki like the Kashima Shrine. From this point, the way how the ritual was performed in the Katori Shrine, Katori-gun, may have been
In Nagusa-gun of Kii province, the Hinokuma Shrine and Kuniakasus Shrine that worship Higata-no-Kagami (mirror of shape of the sun) and Hiboko (pike of the sun) which were made in order to model the image of the ancestor goddess of the imperial family Amaterasu-ömikami when she entered into the Amo-no-Iwaya (Cave of Heaven) are enshrined. The origin of these shrines enables us to easily estimate that the relations with the emperors had been recognized extremely deeply.

(3) Features of rituals in a shingun

Although it may not have been well-organized, the author took up for discussion the relations of shrines regarding the shingun in terms of the fields concerning rituals. In either case, we will know that they performed rituals for a deity who was in charge of directly guarding the position of the emperor, or a deity concerning affairs near to the emperor in the age of gods. From this common point, we will know that the imperial court of this period did not aim to grasp uniformly shrines across-the-nation, it gave special treatments for the shrines that had especially deep relations with the emperor, which may maintain the rituals by establishing a sacred area and paying attention so that the administrative organization could be maintained by family members. We understand that such measures had another purpose other than the maintenance of the Ritsuryō Jingi rituals system comprised of Kinen-sai as a core set.

In addition to this, what we can easily understand from the location of a shingun is that each of them was located in a strategic place of traffic, especially, that of the ocean traffic. There is a theory that assumes the necessity of the ocean traffic or military affairs at the back of the establishment of shinguns. Also, someone points out that the axis between east and west is valued in the Jingi rituals, and that in the formation period of the Ritsuryō Jingi rituals system (including that in Nara Period) was the Ise Grand Shrine and Kitsuki Grand Shrine. The author thinks this viewpoint is persuasive to some extent because all the shinguns are located in a place that would not be surprising even if it is selected. However, concerning which places should be appointed as an important place, realistic elements would also be included. There is an example of the Kehi Shrine of Echizen that is located in a key traffic area but a shingun has not been established there. Consequently, the author has pointed out the verification from the common points only, and will not mention any further than that.

(4) Peculiarities of the Munakata Shrine

Taking into account the situations of various shinguns and kinds of ritual artifacts excavated in Munakata Okinoshima Island, it is clear that another framework other than the national system of official shrines was prepared for the rituals in the Munakata Shrine. Namely, a form of more polite rituals, as it were, is considered to have been required of the Munakata Shrine. And that such a relation had been formed before the formation period of the Ritsuryō system can be known to us albeit slightly from historical materials. The following are examples of articles with high probabilities from the Nihonshoki:

- The Emperor Richū revised the crop yield of farmers in Tsukushi province that had been seized by the Kurumamochi-no-Kimi and made an offering to Mihashira–no-Kami (three gods).
- The Emperor Yūryaku planned to send a mission to Munakata-no-Kami and worship it by his own will.

These could be called examples which indicate a close relationship with the emperor. In other words, although the divine treasures of Munakata Okinoshima Island indicate exchanges with the continent, the author cannot help but be cautious to summarize it as the national system of official shrines. It is natural that the ancient external exchanges had an extremely political aspect, which had an impact to the rituals of the imperial court as well. One of the examples would be an institutionalization of a “ritual when a mission is dispatched to a foreign country” which is performed in sending a mission abroad. However, in the ritual of the festival, private offers of the ambassador or those who are ranked lower than it could be offered. The existence of private offers is clearly described in this part only in Engishiki that can be called the basic code of laws of the Ritsuryō Jingi rituals system.

It is not easy to search the background of this fact, but it would be possible to guess the peculiarity of the
ritual performed in diplomacy. Namely, it seemed to be allowed to perform a ritual outside of the system exceptionally for the sake of aiming the safety of a voyage and the success of diplomacy with many uncertain elements. The author thinks we should be cautious to make a logical leap from the existence of the private offers, but it can be interpreted that the situation which allows the ritual outside of the system generated an offering of divine treasures in a way that strongly reflects the emperor’s will. Such a situation will be assumed to be the background of the responses (measures) by the emperor to the Munakata Shrine as referred to in the *Nihonshoki*. When we consider the original type of the description in the *Nihonshoki* which has been earlier mentioned to be a fact that happened in around the 5th century, it corresponds with the age of some divine treasures found in Okinoshima Island.

Munakata-gun that is inextricably linked with the Munakata Shrine was qualified as a shingun in the field of the appointment as Gunji during the reign of the Emperor Mommu. In broader words, this can also be called a portion of the formation of the Ritsuryō Jingi rituals system. However, the positioning of the Munakata Shrine as referred to above should be evaluated to be based on the direct and close relation with the emperor from before the formation of such a system. A comprehensive judgment that a shingun was established exceptionally to a shrine that had been performing rituals outside of the category of the Jingi rituals system defined by the Ritsuryō can be made. And based on such a judgment, we can also understand that there was a relation with the emperor originating in the external relations at the background of the development of the Munakata Shrine with a contact point with the continent.

### 3. Changes in the Munakata Shrine in the Early Heian Period

No institutional change around the Munakata Shrine is seen after the period of the development of the system mentioned in 2 above passed. However, we can understand that the people in Munakata-gun recognized that the rituals were important activity 36). Kazeko (珂是古) of Munakata-gun had an ability to locate the place of a god who causes a curse and to alleviate the god by performing a ritual. Kazeko might be chosen by chance. But it can also be guessed that the people recognized that the important role in performing a ritual could be played by the people of Munakata-gun. It would be no wonder that people surrounding the Munakata-gun expect that the people living in the gun are outstanding in performing rituals because Munakata-gun is a shingun.

A turning point came to the shinguns as referred to as above in the early Heian period, when a large institutional change occurred.

The *Ruijū-Kokushi* carries the following article, mentioning this happened in October, the 17th year of Enryaku (798) 37). The first half of this article states that holding concurrent posts of Kuni-no-Miyatsuko and Gunryō (Gunji) was prohibited, while the latter half mentions that Kokushi (provincial governor) decides an Uneme (采女) (maid-in-waiting at the court) by divination 38). What the author would like to note is the matter written at the first half. That is to say, it referred specifically to the 3rd year of Keiun (706) and the prohibition of the
The significance of this order issued by the Dajōkan is that it showed a disapproval of the concurrent posts of the Guardian of the Munakata Shrine and the Tairyō of Munakata-gun. It is naturally true that the special character of the Munakata Shrine had been lost in that time. But when we read this kyaku, we can understand that the comprehensive appointment policy concerning the guardian and others shown forthrightly in the description of the Ruijū-Kokushi below had an extremely important meaning.

The portion of「神宮司等、一たび任じ身を終ぬ。侮黷りて敬はず、祟咎しばしば臻れり」in the sentences above demonstrates that the imperial court has a realization of the fact that “Lifetime appointment as the guardian makes rituals negligent”. As a measure to admonish an omission of duty of rituals, the imperial court determined a policy to dismiss from office against a crime of people devoting to rituals called Hahuribe, in the 16th year of Enryaku (797) 42). In the 20th year of Enryaku (801), it issued a kyaku that defined the crimes in rituals and the details of purification for the crime 43). Taking into account these matters, we can understand that the imperial court worked out actively measures against the neglect of rituals during the Enryaku Era. One of the reasons for the prohibition of the concurrent posts of the Guardian of the Munakata Shrine and the Tairyō of Munakata-gun is considered to be a necessity to prompt measures against an omission of duty of rituals.

This period faced large changes in the administration of shrines in all parts of the country, including a change in the way to dedicate heihaku (offerings to gods) for the Kinen-sai of all parts of the country. OGURA Shigeji points out that as nation-wide shrines were incorporated into the national system of official shrines in accordance with the development of the control of rural areas on the Ritsuryō system from the middle to the second half of the 8th century, the existing administrative system of shrines had become unable to cope with the situation 43). Taking into account this point, it is primarily considered that the imperial court tightened up on omissions of duty of rituals during the Enryaku Era. One of the reasons for the prohibition of the concurrent posts of the Guardian of the Munakata Shrine and the Tairyō of Munakata-gun is considered to be a necessity to prompt measures against an omission of duty of rituals.

Meanwhile, the imperial court issued a rescript in the 17th year of Enryaku that defined to appoint those who were “famous for being very talented in scholarship and the arts and can endure the duties of governing the gun” as Gunji, which the guardian had held concurrently. 45) Generally speaking, it is possible to understand that the target of the so-called revision of the provincial administration by the Emperor Kammu spread to the shinshoku in shrines and had an influence over the Munakata Shrine as well. However, as for Gunji, the appointment of hereditary clans began to be approved in the Könin Era (810 to 824). But the system of the shinshoku in shrines did not change, including in the Munakata Shrine. The imperial court would have considered that it has worked to some extent.
4. Substantial Management Form of Rituals in the Munakata Shrine

As indicated in the preceding chapter, the system of the shinshoku in shrines as a place to perform rituals for the imperial court, especially, the method to appoint shinshoku was revised primarily in order to prevent an omission of duty of rituals. Subsequently, the kyaku of the 19th year of Enryaku prohibited the Munakata Shrine’s concurrent appointment with Tairyō of gun on an individual basis. The effect to the Munakata Shrine due to such a situation which the author can assume would be, first of all, a decline of the substantial rank of the guardian caused by the establishment of his tenure. Second, the expansion of the influence of Kokushi (provincial governor) who played a large role in the Jingi rituals system during the Heian Period and a relative decline of the influence of Gunji would also be considered. However, how the system of change of the guardians and the prohibition of the concurrent posts of Tairyō of gun actually affected and how they were obeyed are not known. In particular, the system of change of the guardians was applied across the country as the author has previously referred to, and was not exclusively for the Munakata Shrine. In addition, the concurrent posts of the guardian and Tairyō of gun was not clearly guaranteed in the first place for the Munakata Shrine. As is known from the fact that the principle of the concurrent posts with Gunji was not altered, we can say that the Munakata Shrine was given favorable treatment concerning the appointment of the shinshoku. Considering in this way, it is impossible to allege that the Munakata Shrine was forced to face difficulty compared to other shrines due to the change in the appointment of the guardians during the Enryaku Era.

Anyway, historical materials which indicate clearly the status of the administrative management of the Munakata Shrine in the first stage Heian Period are not available. However, it can be guessed that the rituals based on the independent basis for the existence actually continued to be performed. This point will be clarified by focusing on one sentence of the order issued by the Dajōkan in the 2nd year of Ten'ei (979).

This order admitted to establish a Dai-gūji (Senior chief priest) in the Munakata Shrine, and the quotation above is a part of the Ge (a document to superior) by the Munakata-Gūji in the 2nd year of Ten'ei (974), from which this problem was triggered. From this description, we can understand that the guardian was previously the head of miscellaneous matters and conducted fishing and hunting in the sea or mountains. Namely, it can be guessed that the Munakata Shrine in those days built the environment whereby they could be self-sufficient within the shingun or an area related to it. Although this description itself is considered to be a rhetorical embellishment, the very usage of such an expression means much. This is because, for a shrine like the Munakata Shrine that had been given comparatively favorable treatment, the self-sufficient preparation of rituals chiefly by the guardian can be estimated to have been one form for the maintenance of the shrine. Considering such a form, we can assume rituals not entirely based on the rituals of the Ritsuryō system, and it would be a certificate of the fact the shrine itself was a venue for the rituals deeply rooted on the area.

5. Concluding Summary

The author has discussed from several viewpoints that the Munakata Shrine was a place for rituals outside of the framework of the ancient Ritsuryō rituals in a narrow sense. Of course, we can evaluate that the Munakata Shrine was given preferential treatment by the imperial court in terms of ritual and economy, from other viewpoints including the fact that it held a lot of jinfuko (or Kanbe) (households burdening religion related matters) compared with the shrines in the Saikaido (present Kyūshū region). However, it is considered that the shrine was not subject to the administration by the imperial court to detailed and trifling matters, and that there were a lot of phases on its management which required the independent judgments of the shrine. It is naturally applied to all the other shrines, but it can at least be pointed out that the Munakata Shrine with contacts with the continent, in particular, was in a situation where a unique form of rituals was easier to be born, because the environment to accept easily various cultures was maintained there.
Supplementary notes (partially translated):

1) 鏡山猛(1958):「結語」;『沖ノ島―宗像神社沖津宮祭祀遺跡―』 吉川弘文館、p.245
2) 笹生衛(2010):「古墳時代における祭具の再検討―千束台遺跡祭祀遺構の分析と鉄製品の評価を中心に―」;『國學院大學伝統文化リサーチセンター研究紀要』 2、p.106-107
3) Among various views on the landmark of the formation of the Ritsuryō ritual system, the opinion that has pointed out articulately the importance of the reign of the Emperor Temmu collectively is 岡田莊司(1990)「天皇祭祀と国制機構」;『國學院雑誌』91(7)、p.324
4) 『令集解』巻十六選叙令・同司主典条令釈。
5) According to Article 25 in the Yōrō Gisei-ryō (Statutes on Ceremonies and Protocol) on the five degree of consanguinity, the third degree is comprehended to be "曾祖父母、伯叔婦、夫姪、從父兄弟姉妹、異父兄弟姉妹、夫之祖父母、夫之伯叔姑、姪婦、繼父同居、夫前妻妾子". Hereinafter, persons within the third degree of consanguinity will be those based on this article.
6) Article on March 9 of the 2nd year of the Emperor Mommu of the Shoku-nihongi. The sentence is as follows, and the measure taken is the same as the procedure of Dajōkan of the 7th year of Yōrō. 
7) 『類聚三代格』巻七郡司事・弘仁五年三月二十九日太政官符所引天平七年五月二十一日格。
8) 『延喜式』巻十八式部上・郡司条。条文は次の通り。通常の郡における任用条件に変化があるが、神郡を特例として扱う点は天平7年格と変わらない。
9) 『続日本紀』天応元年十二月丁未(23日)条(光仁上皇崩時)、延暦八年十二月丙申(29日)条(皇太后崩時)。
10) 有富由紀子(1991):「神郡についての基礎的考察」;『史論』44、p.80
11) 『出雲國風土記』意字郡出雲神戸。
12) 『延喜式』巻三臨時祭・負幸条、神賀詞条。
13) 岡田莊司(2009):「古代律令神祇祭祀制と杵築大社・神賀詞奏上儀礼」;『延喜式研究』25、p.15
14) 前掲12。
15) 『延喜式』巻八祝詞・出雲国造神賀詞。
16) 武田祐吉(1958):「解題」;『古事記・祝詞』(日本古典文学大系1) 岩波書店、p.373
17) 岡田、前掲13)、p.18
18) 『本朝月令』・六月朔日内膳司供忌火御飯事。
19) It was in the first year of Tempyō-Houji (757) that Awa province was established, separating from Kazusa province for the last time. The Takahashi-Ujibumi is said to have been compiled in the 19th year of Enryaku (800). So there is a discrepancy between the description stating the Awa Grand Shrine is enshrined in Kazusa province and the actual situation. We can consider that only this portion was rewritten, or else, the original text of the Takahashi-Ujibumi was formed before the first year of Tempyō-Houji. Therefore, the author has employed the sentence here.
20) 『類聚三代格』巻十供御事・天平三年九月十二日格。
21) 川尻秋生(1995):「古代安房国の特質―安房大神と膳神―」;『延喜式研究』10、p.12

The author thinks that the description in “Kogoshūi” that specifies the relation between the Inbe Clan and Awa-gun should be positively evaluated, taking into account the existence of the wooden tablet.
(mokkan 木簡) unearthed in the Heijō-kyō (found in the 155th investigation (SD4100), 『平城宮木簡』6–9071), which shows that the Inbe Clan was located in the Shiomi-gō (Shiomi village) in Awa-gun, and the positioning of the shinguns discussed in this manuscript.

22) Concurrent appointment of Gunji in Katori-gun of Shimousa province and Nagusa-gun of Kii province was approved simultaneously with Kashima-gun (Article on November 16 of the 7th year of Yōrō in the Shoku-nihongi). The difference with other guns which were given approval in the reign of the Emperor Mommu cannot help but be unclear. ARITOMI Yukiko thinks that the existence of an inconvenience at the time of change of Gunryō was responsible for the difference of the period. 有富由紀子(1991): 「神郡についての基礎的考察」;『史論』44、p84。

23) 『常陸国風土記』香島郡総記。
24) 『常陸国風土記』行方郡鴨野、男高里、当麻郷。
25) Article on January 20 of the 8th year of Jogan of "Nihon Sandai Jitsuroku" There is a word “以往” in the sentences. The author has interpreted this as “以後 igo (after)” as per the original word meaning here. If the author dares interpret it as “以前 izen (before)”, another meaning of “以往” in those days, it could be thought that the period in which the ritual for Miko-gami based on the products of the domains of the Kashima Shrine to be later mentioned started earlier. But there is no evidence to determine that it means “以前 izen”.

26) The Jimmyō-Chō of Engishiki also records that Mutsu province had eight shrines whose names began with the name of Kashima, of which the Miko Shrine is located in Ojika-gun and Namekata-gun, respectively.
27) 早川万年(1999): 「神郡・神郡司に関する基礎的考察―鹿島の場合に注目しつつ―」;『古代東国と常陸国風土記』 雄山閣出版、p.152
28) 『常陸国風土記』行方郡鴨野、男高里、当麻郷。
29) The Jimmyō-Chō of Engishiki includes the name of the Katori-no-Miko Shrine in Kurihara-gun and that of the Katori-no-Izu-no-Miko Shrine in Ojika-gun, both in Mutsu province.
30) 『日本書紀』神代上・7段(宝鏡出現章)一書の 1。
31) 早川万年(1999): 「神郡・神郡司に関する基礎的考察―鹿島の場合に注目しつつ―」;『古代東国と常陸国風土記』 雄山閣出版、p.152
33) 『日本書紀』厩中天皇五年十月甲子(11 日)条。
34) Article on February 1 of the 9th year of the Emperor Yūryaku of the Nihonshoki. Like the preceding item, there is no expression that decides that the description refers to the Munakata Shrine, but the author has employed this because it has extremely high probability. “Munakata Jinja Shi” (『宗像神社史』;History of the Munakata Shrine) takes up these as articles of the Munakata Shrine, and further, states that the description of offering Ehime (兄媛), a female technician of weaving from Kure (呉) to the Munakata Shrine by Achi-no-Omi and others seen in the article of December of the 41st year of Emperor Ōjin of the Nihonshoki is also based on the Emperor’s will. 宗像神社復興期成会編(1966): 「祭祀伝承」;『宗像神社史』下 宗像神社復興期成会、p.15
35) 『延喜式』巻三臨時祭・遺畨国使祭条。
36) 『肥前国風土記』基肄郡姫社郷。
37) 『類聚国史』巻十九神祇・延暦十七年十月丁亥(12 日)条。
38) 参考までに、采女任用に関する官符は『類聚三代格』にある(巻一神宮司神主禰宜事・延暦十七年十月十一日官符)。
39) Word “Shinshoku (Shintō priest)” is not seen in historical materials of those days, but there are many names of jobs which serve the gods. Therefore, as long as it collectively means such jobs, the author will use the word “Shinshoku” without notice hereinafter.
40) 『類聚三代格』巻七郡司事・延暦二十年五月十四日太政官符。
41) The reason for the prohibition of the concurrent posts of Izumo-no-Kuni-no-Miyatsuko and Tairyō of Ou-gun is delay in official duties. It is different from that of Munakata in a strict meaning.
42) 『類聚国史』巻十九神祇・延暦十六年十月丙寅(14 日)条。
43) 『類聚三代格』巻一科祓事・延暦二十年五月十四日太政官符。
44) 小倉慈司(1994): 「八・九世紀における地方神祇行政の展開」;『史学雑誌』103-3、p.78
45) 『類聚国史』巻十九神祇・延暦十七年三月丙申(16日)条。

46) There is also a view indicating an expansion of the influence of the mechanism of provincial government or the Kokushi in the Munakata Shrine and Munakata-gun and stating that the substance of the Gunji of shingun had disappeared due to the kyaku of the 19th year of Enryaku.

正木喜三郎(1987):「宗像郡司考―特に国衙支配との関聯を中心として―」;『東アジアの考古と歴史』下 同朋舎出版、p.537

47) 『類聚符宣抄』巻一諸神宮司補任・天元二年二月十四日太政官符。

48) “以往 i’ou” has originally the same meaning with “以後 i’go (after).” However, after the quotation, this Ge refers to the trend of the shrine since the Tengyō Rebellion. Consequently, the author interprets “以往 i’ou” as “以前 izen (before)” here.

49) The Munakata Shrine had 74 jinfuko according to the Chō (wooden tag) of the 1st year of Daidō collected in the Volume 10 of “Shinshō-Kyakuchokufu-shō.” Except for an example of the Usa Shrine which had maximum 2,460 jinfuko, it had the largest number of jinfuko in Saikai-do.

50) For example, a firm policy that Kanbe and shinshoku who directly serve shrines should shoulder in principle the cost for repairing/renovation of shrines was adopted in the beginning of Kōnin Era.

加瀬直弥(2005):「十・十一世紀前半の七道諸国における神社修造の実態―国司との関わりを中心に―」;『神道宗教』199・200、p. 95