The Mataga Clans of Nagano-no-sho in Iwami Province:
The Landscape of their Bases, their Subsistence, and their Dispute

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Nagano-no-sho in Iwami Province covered a vast territory in the Sanin Region, and a variety of bases for rural feudal lords had been formed there as appropriate to each surrounding terrain—mountain, plain, river, or sea. Their actions can be traced from historical documents and regional resources. However, compared to research accumulated on Masuda-no-sho, which includes the Miyake Odoi Site, and the Masuda Clan, this is a field which had not been given full attention. A study of Nagano-no-sho must be an integral part of gaining a concrete image of regional society in medieval Sanin Region.

Accordingly, this report takes as a case the Mataga Clan, an offshoot of the Uchida Clan, a gokenin (vassal) who migrated west and established his base in Toyoda-go in Nagano-no-sho in Iwami Province. Through document and field investigations, this report furthers the study of the three topics of (1) reconstruction of lineage, (2) comparative identification of the location of the feudal lord base and restoration of the base’s landscape and subsistence environment, and (3) the form of cohesion between the rural feudal lord families involved in the dispute over mountains and plains and the transformation of its order.

As a result, (1) the lineage of the Mataga Clan had split into the two lines of the Kamimataga Clan and the Shimomataga Clan during Kamakura Period, and as a result of the field investigation, (2) the residences of the feudal lords were comparatively identified, on a narrow strip of land at an end of a hilly area for the former, and on an eroded valley on a shore of a river for the latter. The subsistence environment for the latter was a superior one among the Mataga clans despite being an offshoot, including retaining their rights to use an extensive area of mountains and plains while participating in distribution using the river. (3) Toward the end of Kamakura Period, the heir apparent Uchida Clan and both Mataga clans were intermittently at odds in a three-sided dispute over mountains and plains. Behind this was the threat to survival, of fields being burnt and small villages being established by rural residents in Karikura, and the dispute over mountains and plains between the feudal lords rose to the surface over the rights which newly emerged. This three-sided dispute over mountains and plains resulted in abandoning the principle of shared use of the mountains and plains which had been conventionally maintained among the feudal lords and in dividing Karikura into separate possessions.
In other words, this greatly affected the form of cohesion between rural feudal lords who had adopted the principle of shared use of forest resources and the order and norms of their families.

The writer has previously introduced as a viewpoint in analyzing the bases for rural feudal lords the vantage point of “the place of daily life” and presented the importance of the process in which society in its actual state (the “substance”) and the rule of the feudal lord and its social system (the “veneer”) cross swords. The case in this report can be pronounced as a case in which activities of residents, interests emerging in the mountains of society in its actual state, truly affected the form of cohesion between feudal lords who had shared their rights to use mountains and plains, as well as their order and norms. It is also an excellent material which structurally indicates the mechanism of how disputes arose over mountains and plains between rural feudal lords. How did such changes in “the place of daily life” lead to the civil war between the Northern and Southern Dynasties, the unprecedented nation-wide civil war? Keeping such issues in mind, this report presents research of individual feudal lords of Nagano-no-sho in Iwami Province in the Sanin Region.

Key Words: Nagano-no-sho in Iwami Province, Mataga Clan, landscape restoration, subsistence environment, dispute over mountains and plains