

Restoring historicity to Shinto:

The case of Ise

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A new direction in Shinto studies?

- From essentialist abstractions to historical context
- From tradition to agency
- Conceptualization and Shintoization

John Nelson, *Enduring identities* (2000)

Scott Schnell, *The rousing drum* (1999)

Sarah Thal, *Rearranging the landscape of the gods* (2005)

Barbara Ambros, *Emplacing a pilgrimage* (2008)

John Breen & Mark Teeuwen, *A new history of Shinto*
(2010)

Why Ise?

Unique policy of ritual isolation from Buddhism; never under Buddhist dominance

Pioneer and main focus of Shinto's early conceptualization

Shintoization occurred by assimilation to Ise

Dramatic effects of “agency” obscured



Chapter 1

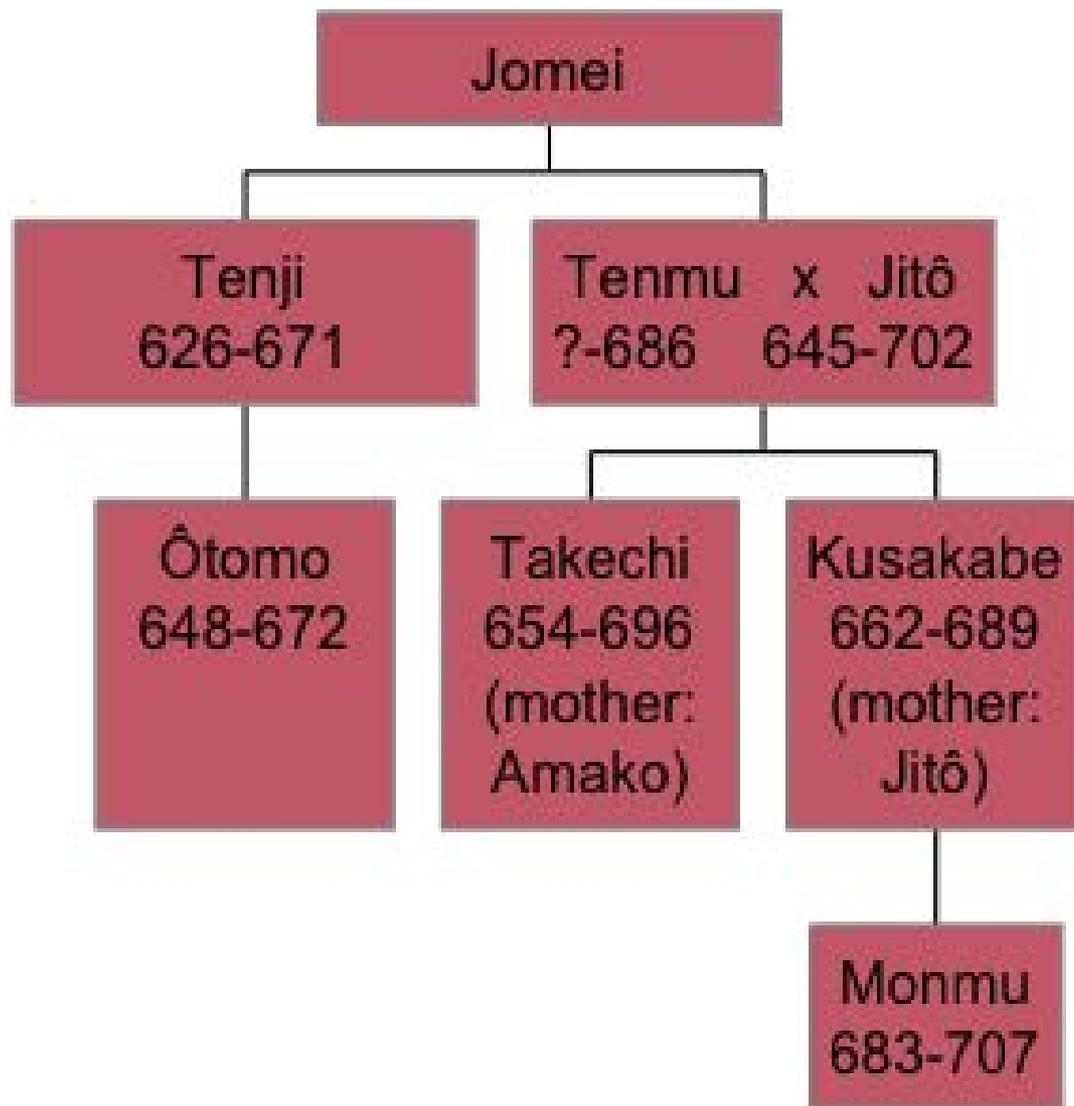
673-701: Ise's creation by the court

Emperor Tenmu's Ise: epidemics and centralization

Empress Jitō's Ise: sun goddess and her grandson

Sujin myth:

- > Amaterasu as one among 3 kami (Amaterasu, Yamato Ōkunitama, Ōmononushi) who cause epidemics, all served by maidens. *All male?*
- > Amaterasu removed from the palace to Ise.
- > Taming allows Sujin to order the kami and instigate *jingi* cult.



Chapter 2

804: A new imperial line on Ise

804 *Enryaku gishikichō* (Ise protocols)
submitted to Emperor Kanmu

2 major changes in contrast to 700:

- Edge against Buddhism
- Admixture of Confucian rites

Historical context: Dōkyō affair; dynastic change;
move of capital to Heian/Kyoto against Buddhist
wishes

Chapter 3

11th century: Agency on the move

- Breakdown Ritsuryō
- 1031 oracle scandal
- Change of guard in Ise:

Saigūryō/provincial governor > Ōnakatomi
(*saishu, daijingūji*) > 2 priesthoods (*negi-chō*)

1031 oracle incident

“I am Aramatsuri no Miya, the first among the auxiliary halls of the Imperial Great Shrine. On orders of the Great Shrine, I grant this Abstinence Princess an oracle. The reason for this is as follows. The head of the Saigūryō, [Fujiwara no] Sukemichi, his wife Fujiwara no Kokikoso, and their followers have over a number of years uttered clever but crazy words, saying: *The two Great Shrines have flown over to take possession of us, man and wife [...]*. They utter words under the cover of acting like shamans, and claim that these are miracles wrought by the two shrines...”

Saigūryō 齋宮寮: Bureau of the Abstinence Princess



Tenshō Daijin giki 天照太神儀軌

- Ise as the palace of King Enma (Skt. Yama) and his retinue
- associated with the Pole Star and the Big Dipper; Yakushi; Kannon
- mid-12th century?



Chapter 4

Kamakura: Pioneering “Shinto”

Ise is no longer “solidly imperial”:

- > Estate grants to Ise priesthoods by Kantō warriors, including Minamoto no Yoritomo
- > Jōkyū no Ran (1221): shrines support shogunate against Go-Toba, according to *Azuma kagami*
- > Saigūryō, and even Ōnakatomi offices decline

Ise in the *shōgyō* 聖教 of Dharma lineages

1180: Tōdaiji burnt down in Genpei war



From 1270s: Mongol crisis



Mandalisation



Ise as “Shinto”

1280s: Outer Shrine pioneers “Shinto” teaching

1320: 神道門風 (Watarai Ieyuki, *Ruiju jingi hongen*)

Key concept: Ise as a manifestation of Palace of Dainichi,
site of primordial non-duality; “return to origin”

“Imperial” 皇:

“the name of the great emptiness without
characteristics”

“the Dharma-body”

“the primordial, original deity of single *qi* 一氣”

Ōhashi *misono* document (1185)

Ōhashi “garden estate” should be spared
imposition of a *jitō* steward, because it is
primordial kami land from the Age of the Gods

神代幽玄之神領

The age of *tokusei* 徳政

- “Virtuous government”: reverting *shōen* estates into public land; cancelling debts; restoring temple and shrine rituals, buildings, land holdings
- Mongol invasions, Halley’s comet, power shifts in Kamakura become occasions for *tokusei*
- 1285, 1301: *Ise mikuriya shinryō kōgyō hō*

伊勢御厨神領興行法

Shintoization

Ise was a pioneer in the conceptualization of Shinto; Shintoization by assimilation to Ise followed

Conceptualization marked by concrete shifts in Ise's historical development

Need to recover the historicity of "timeless" Shinto, through close attention to shifting agency

