

GENEALOGY OF THE SURNAME 'SO' (from Kengi, the founder):

NOTES AND TRANSLATION - THE OKUSHIMA LINEAGE

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Genealogy of the Surname 'So' (**Founding Family** Okushima)

Translation with Notes

By Yabu Kenjiro

PREFACE

For two days from November 27th to 29th, 1976 the author made a complete copy from microfilm of the *honke* (main family) genealogies kept in the Naha Historical Collections Room (in Yogi Park at the time). Three years later, I was able to **consult** the Japanese version as well and made a complete copy of the notes and translations. Every spring, around **Seimei** Festival time, I made several clean copies and distributed them to relatives and other interested persons. It **consists of Chinese text transliterated into Japanese**, based on the original family genealogies, with translations and notes. Aside from certain important characters, the Tōyō Kanji were used in this text, but not completely uniformly. Over the last ten years, I have received help from many quarters. Your names have been recorded in the Afterword at the end of this volume. I wish to offer my heartfelt thanks. Family genealogy is not just a matter of **personal interest**, but is also of general interest and value as historical materials. I would be greatly indebted if this became a reference work for many of you, and especially for any criticism or corrections that may be offered.

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Explanatory notes: The entire text of the "Surname 'So' Genealogy (from Kengi, the founder): Notes and Translation--The Okushima Lineage" has been transliterated from Chinese to Japanese with notes attached. Text in () appear in the original. Text in [] are translations and annotations. Longer notes are reproduced as individual items at the end. Misprints were corrected without further noting the fact. In some cases, commonly used kanji were changed to standard Tōyō kanji. Since this was not done systematically, the original genealogical record may be checked as needed.

PREFACE TO THE 'SO' SURNAME GENEALOGY[1], Founder of the Okushima Lineage by
Yabu Kenshirō, translator and annotator

[INSERT TRANSLATION BASED ON YOKO'S TRANSLATE OF VOLUME 1. HERE ARE TRANSLATED
ONLY NOTES STARTING ON P. i-B]

[Note 1]. The form of the character for "So" ___ is also written ___ with the
left and right radicals under the crown switched around and read as So and
yomigaeru. They are the same characters (??). A character with different
forms. Cf. illeg., "Keizu e no tabi" (Guide to Genealogy), *Okinawa Times*, Apr
23, 1985, "Kara shishi" (Chinese lion figure).

[Note 2]. "Koko ni" is an introductory word. It has no particular meaning.
Placed at the beginning of the text, it gives it an elevated tone. Cf. the
opening words of the Preface to *Chūzansei Kan: 1650 nen Soshō Kenja*
(Reflections from the Age of Chuzan: ?? the Sage in 1650). (Etsu? Ryūkyū Koku
Chūzan Ō mi/Shi? [King of Chuzan in the Land of the Ryukyus]).

[Note 3]. "Sen" = ancestor (*sosen*) or predecessor (*sendai*) is here a
reference to the father. Cf. section on "First Generation: Kengi (Kunigami
Pēkumī)" in the genealogical record. To confuse the reference to the father
Kurautchi in "So-sei kaden nikki" (Genealogy of the So Family) [records of the
Tanahara family], where the words "*chichi wa Kurautchi Sobe Shidū*" (father,
Kurautchi Sobe Shidū) appear, with the reference to Kengi Pēkumī, first
generation, which are written as if they were one and the same person, is
probably an error. The matter is clarified by referring to the *Yabu kafu*
(Yabu Genealogy) under the heading: "In the possession of Yabu Kenshō of the
Yaeyama line. Annotation containing an elucidation of the original genealogy
by Sargeant Kentsū Yabu, twelfth descendant of the main family (*hanke*), the

Yabu of Shuri. Sometime before 1937." While I consider the "So-sei kaden nikki" (Genealogy of the So Family) [*So-sei genso yuraiki* (Ancestral History of the So Family)] to be quite a valuable source material, it contains errors just in terms of deciphering the genealogy. Rather than pointing them out one by one, please compare with the original translations and annotations.

[Note 4]. Is "*Yohekisan*" a transliteration for "Iheya"? Like the royal lineage of Shō En, Izena Island is the birthplace of the So family. The name Izena, however, rarely appears in either the genealogy or the historical annals. The general term "Iheya Island" is used (in sailing terms, only one tacking is needed for the two islands).

[Note 5]. *Kurautchi*. Yabu Ken'yū of the Okushima lineage of the founding family: "'Karautchi' has to do with 'being the head of the storehouse'; in other words, the finance minister. 'Sobe Shīdu' is 'Lord of Sobe' in Naha." There is a note in already mentioned *Yabu kafu* (Yabu Genealogy): "At the time Tomari Minato served as trading port to foreign countries, and he served as its director. Hence, the designation 'Karautchi'." In *Ryūkyū koku/kuni yuraiki* (History of the Ryukyu Kingdom) Volume 2. "**Kanshaku resshin**" (Offices, Titles, Ranks, and Insignia), there is a reference to "Sōbe [same as 'Sobe', probably a case of phonetic equivalents] Shīdu": "83. The *monyaku?* (four men), in former ages, ruled over the four districts (*chō*) of Naha. Until about the middle, there were four divisions: Sōbe Shīdu, ruling over Izumizaki-son; Lord of Nishi, ruling over Naha Nishi-son; Lord of Higashi, ruling over Naha Higashi-son; and Lord of Wakasa, ruling over Wakasachō/son. They had no fixed term of office. They are listed in order of their rank, from lower to higher: from Wakasa-dono to Higashi-dono, then next Nishi-dono, and then Sōbe Shīdu. From the rank of Sōbe Shīdu, the candidate retires and

receives the rank of *ūgan* (i.e., rank of *pēchin*, from Full Third Rank [*seisanhin?*] to Junior Seventh Rank [*jūshichihin?*]). Now, they serve without order of rank and for fixed terms of service." From this we now know that in former times there were four officials called *monyaku?*, who ruled over the four districts of Naha, and that the Sobe Shīdu was the highest ranked among them. From the same *yūraiki* under "MU-U-KON/ima?? Kanshoku Ogura no koto (On the ?? Official Post of Treasury)" [abolished offices], item "123.

Underground Vaults", written in a mixture of Japanese syllabary (*kana*) and Chinese characters (*kanbun*): "Called 'Lord of Ōshima-gura' (now, an ancient ruin in Tomari-chō) because he used to receive the tribute of those islands (the Ōshima [Amami] island group) from the Oku crossing." From the "Tomari-son *yūraiki*" (History of Tomari-son) [*Ryūkyū koku/kuni yūraiki* (History of the Ryukyu Kingdom) Volume 7]: "Tomari Goten. So called, it is said, because the Tomari Goten [palace] was in ancient times the official seat as a result of government service for the reception of boats bearing shipments of taxes, arriving at the port of Tomari from islands of Ōshima, Kikai, Tokunoshima, [Okino]Erabu, and Yoron as well as area of Kunigami and from the west. The present location of the Ameku [Seigen]ji temple once held the Ōshima-gura [depot]." On the basis of this text, it is thought that 'Kurautchi' was the administrator of the Ōshima-gura which was located in Tomari. Thus, we are led to believe that Kurautchi, as stated in the Preface, moved his residence to Tomari-son at the behest of King Shōen. Furthermore, the Preface says: "For reasons unknown, people of that time called him 'Kurautchi'." This may be a figure of speech. The year 1690 (the date of the Preface) was during a violent period of Satsuma dominance, so one may wonder at the boldness of this concrete reference to the previously independent Ryukyuan kingdom, which

directly governed Ōshima.

[Note 6]. *Namban* refers to the country of Siam as in the aforementioned *Yabu kafu* (Yabu Genealogy): "Going as emissary to the country of 'Shamu kuni' [Siam, or modern day Thailand]."

[Note 7]. *Iheyajima no Tama Udun* = Izena Tama Udun, the royal tomb of King Shōen's parents, posthumously enobled as King Shōshoku. A legend has been handed down in the family that Kurautchi was the uncle of King Shōen, in other words, the younger brother of King Shōsoku, but this is not recorded in the Genealogy. See "Jūniban Sosei muntsū no **haijo**" (Twelve Places of Worship of the So Surname Clan) in *So-sei genso yūraiki* (Ancestral History of the So Family): "Sōgenji . . . the father of the first generation of the So family [Kengi] was named Kurautchi and became the uncle of King Shōen." **When** Kurautchi **returned** to his birthplace Izena, he died there from an illness and was buried in the Izena Tama Udun (reinterred in a separate tomb during the **golden era?**, about the middle of the sixteenth century), but this also is not recorded in the Genealogy. Similarly, in the same source, regarding the origin of the name "Kurautchi" (see note 5) the Preface does not tell us what ought to have been recorded. Perhaps it was never recorded. See discussion of the aforementioned "*Yabu kafu* (Kaishaku)" [Yabu Genealogy (Explanation)] [Note 3] and the "Muntsū fudoki <37> So-sei (Okushima-ke)" [Topography of Muntsū <37> So Family (Okushima Lineage)] in the *Okinawa Taimusu*, Evening Edition, 16 December 1982.