

Introduction of Research Project

iDarwin volume 0, pp. 19-23

Published on March 4, AS 0020 (2020 AD)

Introduction of Yaponesian Genome Project

Yaponesian Genome Project Managing Group (Saitou Naruya, Shinoda Ken-ichi, Suzuki Hitoshi, Fujio Shin-Ichiro, Endo Mitsuaki, Kibe Nobuko, and Osada Naoki)

< Managing Group Office >

Population Genetics Laboratory

National Institute of Genetics

1111 Yata, Mishima, 411-8540, Japan

email: yaponesia_genome@nig.ac.jp

We started five-year project “Deciphering Origin and Establishment of Yaponesian mainly based on Genome Sequences”, or nick-named as “Yaponesia Genome” under MEXT Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research on Innovative Areas from FY2018 (ref. 1). We aim to establish new research area by integrating biological studies and humanity and social science studies.

Saitou Naruya, Editor-in-Chief of **iDarwin**, is Leader of this Project. Yaponesian means people on Japanese Archipelago, or Yaponesia. Writer Shimao Toshio (ref. 2) proposed “Japonesia” in 1960s. He fused two Latin words, Japo (Japan) and nesia (islands) to create Japonesia. We changed its Alphabetical spelling to Yaponesia. Saitou stands in front of Shimao and his wife Miho’s memorial at Kakeroma Island in photo shown at page 7, volume 0 of **iDarwin**.

Main questions of this project are origin and formation of people who live on Japanese Archipelago (Yaponesia). Research group A01 (P.I. is Saitou Naruya) are determining full genome sequences of more than thousand modern individuals, while research group A02 (P.I. is Shinoda Ken-ichi) is determining genome sequences of more than 100 ancient individuals. Research group A03 (P.I. is Suzuki Hitoshi) is determining genome sequences of animals and plants moved to Yaponesia with humans. We try to decipher genomic history of people on Yaponesia through analyses of these newly determined genome sequences with other available ones. Research group B01 (P.I. is Fujio Shin-ichiro) is conducting archeological studies focused on radiocarbon dating, while research group B02 (P.I. is Endo Mitsuaki) are conducting linguistic studies involving dialects of Japanese and Ryukyuan languages as well as many languages spoken by people who live near Yaponesia. Research group B03 (P.I. is Osada Naoki) estimates demographic changes through genome data collaborated with A01-A03 groups. These six research groups were established in FY 2018, and 17 small groups, classified into A04 and B04 groups, started from FY 2019 for two years. See Table 1 for researchers involved in Yaponesia Genome Project.

Please visit our Project Homepage (ref. 1) for details.

Table 1 Member list of eight research groups

Research Group A01 (FY2018-2022)

Saitou Naruya*, Inoue Ituro, Yoshiura Koichiro, Timothy A. Jinam, Matsunami Masatoshi, Kamatani Yoichiro**

Research Group A02 (FY2018-2022)

Shinoda Ken-ichi*, Adachi Noboru, Sato Takehiro, Kakuda Tsuneo, and Kanzawa-Kiriyama Hideaki

Research Group A03 (FY2018-2022)

Suzuki Hitoshi*, Masuda Ryuichi, Endo Toshinori, Itoh Tsuyoshi

Research Group B01 (FY2018-2022)

Fujio Shin-ichiro*, Kinoshita Naoko, Seike Akira, Yamada Yasuhiro, Hamada Tatsuhiko, Sakamoto Minoru**, Takigami Mai**

Research Group B02 (FY2018-2022)

Endo Mitsuaki*, Karimata Shigehisa, Kibe Nobuko, Nakagawa Hiroshi, Kazama Shinjiro

Research Group B03 (FY2018-2022)

Osada Naoki*, Fujimoto Akihiro, Gojobori Jun, Kawai Yosuke, Nakagome Shigeki**

Research Group A04 (FY2019-2020)

Satomura Kazuhiro, Ohashi Jun, Nakayama Ichidai, Terai Yohei, Hosomichi Kazuyoshi, Sato Yoichi, Hanada Kosuke,
Kimura Ryosuke, Oota Hiroki, Imanishi Tadashi, Naito Ken

Research Group B04 (FY2019-2020)

Kawada Masakado, Nishiuchi Isamu, Funabashi Kyoko, Takenaka Masami, Aso Reiko, Hayashi Yuka

*P.I. **Research Associate

It should be noted that Ueda Shintaroh, Core Editor of **iDarwin**, is one of advisory board members of this Yaponesia Genome Project.

Figure 1 Yaponesia Genome Project Logo. It was designed by Mr. Koyama Makoto during his attendance to Astale Total Art & Design Institute 2018 summer school at Mishima City, Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan. Design inside circle represents Mt. Fuji and Suruga Bay waves, that are both symbols of Shizuoka Prefecture. But it also symbolizes common ancestor, divergences, and gene flow.



Figure 2 Title Logo of “Yaponesian” (ISSN 2434-2955), quarterly magazine of Yaponesia Genome Project (so far only written in Japanese). It was designed by Ms Kuriyama Aki during her attendance to Astale Total Art & Design Institute 2018 summer school at Mishima City, Shizuoka Prefecture, Japan. Large and small red dots apparently signify Japan.



References

Ref. 1: <http://www.yaponesian.jp>

Ref. 2: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toshio_Shimao

Yaponesia Genome Project Managing Team member photos
(taken from “Yaponesian” issue zero of volume zero)

From left to right: Saitou, Shinoda, Suzuki, Fujio, Endo, Kibe, and Osada



Publication history of this article

March 4, AS 0020: this article was published in iDarwin.

May 14, AS 0022: Following revision of the publication style of iDarwin (see [Saitou \[0022\]](#)), last names were no longer capitalized. Some additional editorial changes were also made.