New Light on Three Official Documents from the Shōsō-in

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The documents in the Shōsō-in are extremely important for understanding Japanese history in the 8th century. But these priceless documents are stored in the Imperial treasure house, and most scholars cannot use the original copies for research. Consequently, researchers have relied on the microfilm or photocopies, and those printed in "Dainihon komonjo".

In order to improve this situation, our museum has obtained special permission to make exact, four-color korotype reproductions of these documents. Sixty-four volumes have been completed so far. However, completion of the nearly 800 volumes in the Shōsō-in will require at least half a century.

This paper reports errors in present research that were discovered in the process of reproducing three of the Shōsō-in official documents. Those three documents are (1) the Echizen provincial Guntōchō of 732 (Tempyō 4th year); (2) the Sūō provincial Shōzeichō of 738 (Tempyō 10th year); and (3) the Tōtōmi province, Hamana county Yusochō of 740 (Tempyō 12th year).