Problems Concerning the Farm Lands on the
Flat Areas in Ōta-no-shō

Kawashima Shigehiro

Ōta-no-shō celebrates 80 years of research history this year since Shigeta
Teiichi published "Ōta-no-shō in Bingo County". In this research history, no
one will raise a question in the argument that the discussion is being made
mainly on the village structure in the middle ages. In this paper, the author
pigeonholed the various opinions on the research history concerning the paddy
farm lands on the flat areas, selecting the field at Nishi Uehara, Kōzan-chō,
Sera-gun, Hiroshima Prefecture, the place where Ōta-no-shō existed, conducted
the field surveys and obtained the following conclusions.

(1) Even if the existence of the irrigation channel called "large ditch" (Ōmizo)
can be confirmed retroactively up to the middle ages, the irrigated area is
narrow, only enough to cover the shortage of the valley water at the time
of drought, and the meaning of the irrigation channel is not very significant.

(2) As for a view that acknowledges the enforcement of rice field grid system,
i.e., a view that acknowledges the paddy farm lands on the plain since the
ancient times, the expressions of "jō and tsubo" (jōri field system) that appear
in the historical records may be the "lot number indications" as can be seen
in other manors.

Thus, the ground of those who criticize the theory of "scattered small village"
may not be firm enough.