Form of Farm Lands in Akaya Village in the Early Modern Times

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In order to reconstruct the village of Ōta-no-shō in the middle ages, survey on the state of irrigation and farm land was conducted, selecting Akaya village taking into account the factors that the land registers in the early modern times are maintained and this place is where Ōta-no-shō existed. Existence of Akaya was confirmed at time of the foundation of Ōta-no-shiō in 1166 and the permit for development was granted to Jitō(地頭) in 1198. In the early modern times, the village had annual land payment of 689 koku(石), the area of 79 cho, population of 519.

Akaya Village is located on the valleys eroded by the Akaya River that runs in the center of the valleys. Akaya Village depends on the 19 dams provided in the river and the spring water from the valleys for the irrigation. The valleys located in the upper stream had stronger right for water in accordance with the general practices and it is assumed that it was an old development. However, the farm lands “Kyūden” that can be assumed to be supplied to Kumon(公文) are located in the plain in the downstream and several dams are concentrated in such location. Places where the place names from the middle ages can often be found are the valleys that are independent from the river.

As expected, many of the lands that were developed in the beginning of the early modern times are mainly located in the valleys in the upper stream and the number of developed lands somewhat decreases in the plain along the river and they look unsettled. There are two types in the development of valleys; one is ascending from the river to the valley dendritically and the other is descending from the ridge to the valley. The places names from the middle ages can often be found in those valleys below the ridge of the mountains. Changes of the classifications of the farm lands were made quite often. It may be because conversions from the dry field to the paddy field were made. In other words, the development course into the inner valleys can be elucidated by tracing the process, wasteland → dry field → paddy field.