Regarding the Katori Sharyo’s Kenchu-cho

SUZUKI Tetsuo

Katori documents from the Middle Ages include six examples of a kenchu-cho (land survey ledger), and these have examined as the basic ledgers for study of the Katori sharyo. However, despite the Katori sharyo’s kenchu-cho and related documents being unusual historical specimens for the Togoku society, they have not received sufficient attention from the viewpoint of the study of historical documents. Based on the findings of surveys focusing on the history of Chiba prefecture, and concentrating mainly on the kenchu-cho of Oei 6 (1399), this paper reexamines the kenchu-cho and related documents from the perspective of their character as a historical record, and from the perspective of the historical significance of the kenchu-cho being made by the Katori sharyo, and examines in depth how the Kenchu-cho and related documents from the Katori sharyo are related to the research theme of "Study of the shoen system in the Muromachi period". This research produced a number of findings, including four particular points.

1) The Oei 6 Katori sharyo kendentori-cho, when considered in terms of the overall composition of the Katori sharyo that can be confirmed from a number of historical records from the Kamakura period, appears to be no more than a ledger limited to only specific shoryo within the sharyo, i.e., those remaining after not being taken into the Onegi-ke shiryo or jitoryo, etc. (or otherwise land that had been sequestered by the jito but had been returned).

2) In consequence, the Oei 6 denchi-cho is a ledger relating to the parts of the Katori sharyo that avoided being incorporated into (or were returned from) the Onegi-ke shiryo or the jitoryo (= bukeryo), or in other words, relating to the kodan (public fields) that supported the framework of the shoen system, and that is the reason why there is virtually no difference in the individual tsubo figures when compared with kenchu-cho documents from the Kamakura period.

3) Until now, it has been thought that in the later Middle Ages, the framework of the shoen system was dismantled, being reconfigured as jisha honjo ichieryou and bukeryo (jitoryo), but in the case of the Katori sharyo, the shoen system-like framework was retained by the reorganization of half the rice-
fields in the sharyo as shinryo.

4) When compared with the Shokei 2 (1333) Hatake Kenchutori-cho, the hatake field figures for the Oei 6 Katori Kamihata Kenchutori-cho show a clear increase, which is related to the different characteristics of rice fields and hatake fields in the Middle Ages. It can be seen that rather than for public rice-fields (= koden), in practice it was for public hatake fields (= kohata) that control was most advanced.