Current Situation of Widely Spread Cultural Properties and Problems: Taking Cultural Landscapes in Shiga Prefecture as Main Examples

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Recently, the framework of “cultural landscape” was set up as a system of World Heritage. This system lies between a cultural heritage and a natural heritage and also protects a wide area. While the framework is ambiguous, it has the possibility of designating all types of landscapes as cultural properties.

However, in Japan, landscapes related to agriculture, forestry and fishing were designated first as cultural landscapes. The reason is because those fields were clearly new as cultural properties. However, most of the landscapes related to agriculture, forestry and fishing are private properties and not suitable for protection as public properties. They are also not suitable as tourism resources because they are spread throughout a wide area.

This article clarifies the current situation of this system and the problems by taking “Suigo of Omihachiman” in Omihachiman City, Shiga Prefecture designated first in Japan as an important cultural landscape and “Waterside Landscape in Kaizu, Nishihama, and Chinai in Takashima City” in Takashima City, Shiga Prefecture as the main examples.

Key words: Cultural landscape, Omihachiman City, Takashima City, Lake Biwa