

Future Preservation of Old Maps and documents (the Higemaru village case)

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Higemaru, a small village along the bank of the river Ibigawa, was located in Kaizu-cho, part of Gifu Province in central Japan. It was 302,000 square meters and its population was only 145 in 1885. It is now at the bottom of the river Ibigawa due to a large scale flood control project.

Higemaru and its neighboring villages were almost at sea level and were surrounded by river banks. This is called "Wajyu" and is similar to Polder in the Netherlands. Rice agriculture was the main industry there.

These areas were often assaulted by floods. For this reason Edo Shogun Government often carried out civil engineering projects to protect these areas from flooding. Unfortunately they were unsuccessful.

The Meiji Revolution brought about major advances in both politics and the economy.

In 1878, Danish civil engineer Johannis de Rijke (1842-1913) was appointed by Meiji government chief of flood control project in Kiso, Nagara and Ibi Rivers in 1878.

One of his plans was to straighten the course of the river Ibigawa to facilitate the discharge of floods to the sea. It was as a result of this work that Higemaru was sunk to the bottom of the river.

This was the first case in Japan where all the villagers were forced to leave by order of the local government in order to prevent these areas from flooding.

After completion of this project in 1900 large scale floods in this area decreased in number and output of rice in the area rose dramatically.

	1890--1899	1900--1909 (*1)
Dead and Injured by flood	1048	26
Houses destroyed	15346	314
Output of rice by are (kg)	173.25	199.95

The village of Higemaru also made old maps and its documents concerned were mainly made or kept by Shoya (village mayor).

Two interesting questions arise.

- 1 What types of maps and documents were made ?
- 2 How have these kept and lost ?

After the survey comparing with other maps and documents of neighbouring village "Honnamishinden" which kept these perfectly since 17th century, various problems of preservation are presented

1 Definition of maps of Higemaru village

- 1 Old maps drawn in that village before 1900 when it closed due to the flood control project.
- 2 Old maps kept mostly by the descendants of the village mayor and partly by the local entities.
- 3 Most of the old maps were drawn by hand but some maps were made by modern method.
- 4 Type A : Surrounding area and Village
Type B : Village and parts of the village

2 Classification of maps

The people who drew and those who used maps changed dramatically after the Meiji Revolution (1868).

Purpose of maps	Drawn by	To	
		Edo era	Meiji era
Administration Control	Hanshu	Hanshu	Takasu-machi
Field inspection for taxation	Shoya	Hanshu	Takasu-machi
Administration	Shoya	Shoya	Takasu-machi
Border dispute	Shoya	Shoya of other concerned village	Takasu-machi
Water control of the river	Shoya	Kasamatsu Authorities	Gifu Province
Water control of the creek	Shoya	Shoya of the concerned village	Takasu-machi
Industry	Shoya		
Transportation	Map publisher		
Society , Culture	Map publisher		

Hanshu=Governor/Shoya=village mayor/Takasu-machi=Town office

2 Relation of maps and documents

- Old maps were usually drawn to explain the document of both villages.

	Higemaru (*2)		Honnami-Shinden (*3)	
	Map	Map + Document	Map	Map+Document
Administration	11	25	4	73
Inspection for taxation	19	72	316	1901
Newly developed field	0	1	34	49
Maps for irrigation,rental and propriety	4	111	97	1547
Border dispute	1	1	3	3
Water control of the big river	10	42	26	284
Water control of the creek	0	22	70	640
Industry except farming	0	93	0	260
Transportation	0	16	3	63
Society/ Culture	1	42	9	571
Total	46	425	562	5391

	Higemaru	Honnami-shinden
maps/ maps+documents	10.6%	10.4%

These figures are counted on the basis of documents not by pages. If counted on pages, they would be below 1%. Maps were inserted between the pages.

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	Higemaru	Honnami-shinden
Existence of signature of drawer or time of issue	32.6%	17.7%

Most old maps were not easily defined in terms of the date of issue or the cartographer. Through careful study of the documents however it may be possible to find this information out.

3 Preservation of maps and documents of both villages

3-1 Background

The two villages had been extremely conscientious in making efforts to preserve the maps and documents for centuries. Some of these are shown at poster presentation in ICC2001. The reason is as follows:

- The low lands just above sea level were under the leadership of the village mayor. The villages used these maps and documents as evidence of the accomplishments in order to appeal to the local lord or Hanshu who changed frequently.
- Maps of before and after the floods were necessary to appeal for exemption of tax or for the confirmation of property..
- These area had not been affected by urbanization which limit to preserve the maps and documents physically
- Existence of the landowner succession system until 1945.

3-2 Preservation process of both villages

- Higemaru

Most maps and documents kept in the warehouse were lost or destroyed by a flooding disaster in 1896.

Some of the important maps and documents had been kept near by at the Buddhist altar of the Shoya (village mayor).

Descendants of the Shoya were told to keep these documents and preserved them in the small house even at war time.

On the other hand when all villagers decided to move to other area, they moved their Hachimangu (patronage shrine) and the monument of Higemaru to the other village (Iwato in Gifu city) 30 km far away.

Iwato's descendants were told about this history.

Later some of descendant of Higemaru became wealthy and donated a large sum of money to renovate Iwato's shrine area in 1933-35.

Both sets of descendants celebrated centennial anniversary in 1997 to worship their ancestor's efforts, prosperity, and the construction of new monument. (Photo)

A database of the maps, documents and monuments of Higemaru were made by descendants of

Higemaru for this event.

• Honnami-shinden

It is located 4 kms south of Higemaru in the same "Wajyu".

The local Shoya reclaimed swamp to create rice field in 1649. It was 2286000 square meters, 7.5 times bigger than Higemaru area at first, but was decreased to 8 % by flooding.

Later it recovered to 598000 square meters as a result of new cultivation (Horita).

In 1860 population was 145. The Shoya (village mayor) built a high mound to help village people remain safe during floods.

Furthermore he preserved the old maps and documents in a trunk at the top of warehouse.

All the maps and documents were preserved in perfect condition for 350 years, not suffering from book worms.

562 maps and 4829 documents were classified. (in total 20 000 have not yet been classified)

3 What was kept and lost ?

Purpose of maps	Higemaru	Honnami-shinden
Administration	11	4
Inspection for taxation	19 *A	316
Newly developed field		34
Maps for irrigation, rental, and propriety	4 *B	97
Border dispute	1	3
Water control of the big river	10	26
Water control of the creek	0 *C	70
Transportation	0	3
Society/ Culture	1	9
	46 *D	562

*A Higemaru probably lost maps and documents related with inspection for taxation because of keeping at low place in the warehouse by flood.

*B Most maps for above purposes seemed to flow away

*C Higemaru lacked maps and documents related with water control of the river due to the branch of the big village.

*D Maps and documents concerned with border disputes, family history, status of mayor, debt and credit, big change of taxation and large water control projects were perfectly preserved in Higemaru.

As explained before, both tried to preserve. Shoya (village mayor) of Higemaru seemed to preserve with best efforts maps and documents concerned with his family most effectively.

4 Preservation of maps and documents by users.

These two villages are good examples to preserve their own maps.

Except for inner control of the village most of these were presented to the Hanshu (lord)

or water control authorities to make bigger large scale maps including other villages. Unfortunately most of them were destroyed or not found. A few however were kept well and remain today. (Kasamatsu water control authorities)
The reason is as follows.

- Office

- 1 Flood disaster
- 2 Old maps and documents were destroyed by change of administration system
- 3 No regulation related with preservation
- 4 Lack of space and equipment for preservation.

Recently most towns and villages have improved their methods of preservation especially those for villages lost to the water control projects.

- Descendant

- 1 Flood disaster
- 2 Indifference

Many maps and documents were thrown away as waste paper, or used as decorations such as in sliding doors, tea boxes and fireworks..

- Researcher

Often the maps were separated from documents by researchers.

- 5 Problem after survey

- Old maps and concerned documents are able to preserve but the relationship of both is not clear.
- As descendants moved to other area they were apt to be indifferent to the preservation of the maps and documents,
- After adoption of new letters, people cannot easily read older documents and maps.
- Old maps and documents are separated
- Old maps and documents are not easy to access to foreigners.

- 6 Solution

- 6-1 Digital Archive

- Old maps and related documents should be visible easily on a computer.
- All should be written in multi language including contemporary ones.

Demonstration of Higemaru historical event through multi language is shown.

- Huang (Famous Chinese Emperor who controled flood of Huang He River) was worshiped by Higemaru in 1840. (in Chinese)
- Yoshimasa Okada , chief of authorities of water control in this area, was son of Korean mother who got married with Japanese chief of flood control authorities He made a remarkable contribution to protect these areas from flooding in 17th century. (in Korean)
- Danish civil engineer Johannes de Rijke, chief of the flood control project in this area, played significant role in improving living standard (in Dutch)

- 6-2 Preservation system

- Rules should be laid down with regard to the responsibility of preservation and classification of the maps and documents.
 - Second home town or village at heart for sunk village should be decided from the view point of less disaster, less change of economy and politics
- 6-3 Education of the descendants of the sunk villages about the village history should be encouraged.

These will bring village historical map and information to everyone all over the world. Also we are able to compare the social system in the similar area like Suzhou creek where great research was made by studying original map and documents. (*4)

- (*1) History of river improvement in Gifu Province (1981.10): P372-375
Wajyu and flood control (1998.6) P22
- (*2) Nagata's library
- (*3) Sano's list of documents and maps (1997.3)
- (*4) A documentary study of Chinese landlordism in the late Ch'ing and the early Republican.
(Yuji MURAMATSU) 1970.8

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