

A Study of “Kyukemono-hyakusyou” Ancestor’s Features in "Shinpen Musashi Fudoki kou" and "Shinpen Sagami-no-kuni Fudoki kou"

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"Shinpen Musashi Fudoki kou" and "Shinpen Sagami-no-kuni Fudoki kou" (hereinafter referred to as “Shinpen Fudoki kou”) comprise a series of topographical texts produced during the shogunate in the first half of the 19th century. Both texts contain information on the family and many of its family heads (“Kyukemono-hyakusyou”) that have survived in their ancestral village at least since the Sengoku period.

Previous studies fail to fully consider the characteristics of the “Kyukemono-hyakusyou” and its ancestors after 1590, the year that marks the beginning of early modern village society formation. In this paper, I will clarify the "Kyukemono-hyakusyou" ancestor’s activities (village development etc.) in the early modern period and the development of the family after this period.

The defeat of the Hojo clan in 1590 allowed "Kyukemono-hyakusyou" ancestors to settle in the village. A period of improvements to infrastructure, both inside and outside of the village, soon followed, thus improving the living environment. In the mountainous areas, they produced limestone or wood for the construction of the Edo Castle. They also expanded transportation networks to connect villages to the highway system. In addition, they opened and built a temple shrine, which served as a public facility in the village. As a result of these accomplishments, some "Kyukemono-hyakusyou" ancestors received privileges in the form of exemption from paying land tax from rulers. Many also served as village officials, including the headman. Their descendants would often inherit the status of headman.

Before the formation of early modern village society, they maintained and developed their own governing body and living environment. As a result, there were clear differences between them and the other villagers, such as possess vast areas of land and retain prestigious status.

The leaders of villages and provinces who enjoyed a unique social status as well as land privileges can be evaluated as "Dogou.” In other words, “Kyukemono-hyakusyou” ancestors are "Dogou.” According to “Shinpen Fudoki kou," many "Dogou" lived throughout the Musashi and Sagami Provinces in the early modern period.