

The *shoen*-based foundation of the Ashikaga Shogun Family: A reexamination of “Goryosho”

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Goryosho 御料所, which are thought to have been the feudal estates under the direct jurisdiction of the Muromachi Bakufu shoguns, have been the focus of historians interested in medieval affairs beginning from regime of Ashikaga Yoshimasa on and have been characterized as being placed in the charge of the Bakufu’s direct military vassals (*hokoshu* 奉公衆) and managed by its Bureau of Household Affairs (Mandokoro 政所). Due to this rather unbalanced image, it has become difficult to proactively evaluate various important aspects of Goryosho, such as its fiscal revenues.

To begin with, if we focus on Goryosho during the Muromachi period as estates entirely prioritized as feudal holdings totally exempt from taxes and duties, the conventional characterization of them all having been placed in the hands of *hokoshu* becomes too limited, for such holdings had also been bestowed on kinsfolk of the Muromachi Shogunate Family, the patriarch of which the author of this paper refers to as Muromachi-dono 室町殿. Moreover, not only the Bakufu’s *hokoshu*, but also its military provincial governors (*shugo* 守護) were the recipients of Goryosho holdings; and when we consider the Bakufu’s golden age from the regime of Ashikaga Yoshimitsu, through that of Yoshinori, focusing exclusively on the estates managed by the Mandokoro becomes very problematic.

Bringing into view such inconsistencies in the research to date, the author of this article attempts to reexamine what is known factually about Goryosho during the Bakufu’s Yoshimatsu-Yoshi-nori golden age, in order to show that among Goryosho, there existed estates that were huge in terms of both capacity and the revenue they generated. The author also argues that the importance of Goryosho among the provinces should be reevaluated, indicating that the large

scale revenues from its estates (*shoen* 荘園) were also generated in even the remotest regions, making the Ashikaga Shogun Family one of the elite among all *shoen* proprietors. Finally, turning to the fact that Goryosho estates were also bestowed upon kinsfolk of the Ashikaga Family, and often replaced and redistributed by each Muromachi-dono, the author again points to the importance of the Ashikaga Shogunate Family as a full-fledged *shoen* proprietor, a characteristic that has not been given sufficient attention in the research to date.