

## The standard of levying tribute in Aizu under the Toyotomi regime's chastisement of Mutsu and Dewa Provinces

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This article examines the peculiar characteristics of cadasters conducted during the Toyotomi Hideyoshi regime by focusing on why the currency described as “*eirakusen*” 永楽銭 (originally denoting copper coins minted during the Ming Dynasty's Yongle 永楽 era) was adopted in 1590 as the standard for taxation (*kandaka* 貫高) in Aizu, which was part of the territory under the feudal lords of Mutsu and Dewa Provinces chastised by Hideyoshi in the Ou Shioki 奥羽仕置 of 1590. The reason for basing land taxes on “*eirakusen*” instead of rice output (*kokudaka* 石高) in the Aizu fief was because 1) the *kandaka* system was already functioning in Aizu prior to the Shioki and 2) it was deemed necessary to secure and occupy the territory as quickly as possible.

Upon his arrival in Aizu, Gamo Ujisato, to whom Hideyoshi had granted the fief under the Shioki's provisions, began collecting tribute. Although the research to date purports that half of the tribute was rendered in rice and the other in money, the author argues that the process was not exactly that straight forward; for payment in money was the rule, and according to the tax ledgers, the denomination was “*eirakusen*”.

Based on this conclusion the author turns to the question of what sort of currency “*eirakusen*” actually was. After comparing the “*eirakusen*” actually levied as tribute with the value of gold during the time in question, the author finds that “*eirakusen*” was worth about the same as the normal currency of the day, leading him to conclude that in this case “*eirakusen*” did not denote Ming Yongle era Chinese coins and had no special value.

Noting the fact that in the feudal territory of the Gohojo Clan immediately before its downfall that the value of Ming Yongle era coins was regarded as more valuable than other coins, the Toyotomi regime mistakenly assumed that this was true throughout Mutsu and Dewa, and accordingly established that currency,

which it called “*eirakusen*”, as the means of tribute payment in the provisions of the Shioki. Since Ming Yongle era coins were in fact not circulating in the region, the “*eirakusen*” unit of tribute set in Aizu did not exist in form, but only as entries on the pages of tax ledgers. Consequently, the “*eirakusen*” ledger entries had to be converted into circulating currency and rice at fixed rates of exchange before tribute could be collected.

Although land policy in territories occupied by the Toyotomi regime often seems to have flexibly responded to what was actually happening on the ground, there were cases in which the process of preparing its system of military vassalage would become so hectic that even local monetary currency circulation practices were not sufficiently understood.