

The Inandori Highway in Kazusa-Koku (Chiba)

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Two major highways ran south on the Boso peninsula in Chiba prefecture in the Edo period (17th to 19th centuries). One was the Boso Highway running south along the inner, bay side of the peninsula, and the other was the Sotobo Highway running south along the outer, Pacific side. These two highways were connected by a number of other highways. Of all of these, the Boso Highway most represented Boso, and public traffic on it was abundant and its traffic system was comparatively well organized. But the connecting highways were the ones that really supported the economy and culture of Boso.

A brief look at these connecting highways shows quite a contrast in function depending on location. The highways in the north served as a close links to the Tone river. And rather than transporting local products, the bulk of the commerce on it was goods moving from other countries to the capital at Edo. On the other hand, the connecting highways in the center and south of the peninsula functioned as transport routes for local products.

The Inandori highway discussed in this report connected the area around the Hamano and Yawata way stations with the Mobara way station, passing through the Uruido and Rokujizo way stations along the 25.7 km of its route. Rice to pay taxes was one of the primary goods to move along this highway. Other goods of importance were the products from the east coast of Kazusa and Awa (mostly products of the fisheries), lumber and charcoal from the mountains of Nagara, Habu, Yamabe, Ichihara, and Isumi, and cereal grains and vegetables from the villages of these same places.

The overall traffic system of central and southern Boso consisted of (1) the main reception centers at Nobuto, Samugawa and Sogano in Shimosa, and at Yawata, Goi, Anesaki, Narawa and Kisarazu in Kazusa, all located on the banks of rivers flowing into the bay on the inner side of the peninsula, (2) the various villages on the outer side of the peninsula, some of which should be called transfer centers, and (3) the cooperative linkages between these, which brought goods

smoothly from the villages to the main centers on the bay. The Inandori highway connected the collection centers at Mobarra and Takashi on the Pacific side of the peninsula with Yawata on the inner side facing the bay. From Yawata the goods were transported by boat to Edo.

In other words, there were a number of clusters of villages on the Pacific side of the Boso peninsula, centered around transfer centers, which in turn were connected to specific reception centers on the bay side of the peninsula. The Inandori Highway was the main artery of the "Inandori circulation group."