

Until the sixteenth century, the Mirokuji-Usa Jingu complex managed a network of twenty-four agricultural estates known as *shoen*. These estates helped maintain stability in the region by producing rice for the shrine-temple and its followers. One of these eleventh-century *shoen*, Tashibunoshō, still operates today. Nestled within a valley in Bungotakada, this intricately designed expanse of terraced rice fields gently curves around various land features to match the topography of the area. While other fields designed in this way have been made square to facilitate modern agriculture, Tashibunoshō has maintained the organic curves of each field. Additionally, these rice paddies are still farmed by hand rather than with machines. Before the introduction of a Western-style calendar, farmers used the position of the sun relative to the peaks of the surrounding mountains to determine when to plant and when to harvest their rice.