

Mapping the Awa Tokushima Domain

Maps of Kamikatsu dating back to the 1800s show that the community's layout has changed little over the years, and still offers a taste of what the nineteenth century landscape was like.

Between 1797 and 1845, surveyor Okazaki Sanzo and later his son Fuzaemon mapped the territories of the Awa Tokushima domain at 1:1800 scale. The detailed maps display farms, houses, shrines, roads, and rivers, and were remarkably accurate for the era, with a margin of error of around three to five percent. The father and son used the most advanced measurement technologies of the day, including magnetic compasses, plummets, measuring poles, and measuring rope. Only about 30 percent of the maps now remain due to loss or damage during World War II, but the maps of Yaeji, Tanono, Kashiara, Kubo-Nojiri, Sezu, and Fukuhara have survived. The terraced landscapes remaining today are comparable to those shown in the maps, giving them considerable value as cultural heritage.