

The general view of “cultural landscape of the Uji tea”

Each Maccha, Sencha and Gyokuro which becomes the source of the Japanese green tea all originated in Yamashiro area in southern Kyoto Prefecture. In this area, having the topography full of ups and downs, scenery of various tea production surprisingly spreads to cope with the kinds and tastes of Uji tea. The production scene of the Uji tea seems to exist independently along some valleys and paths of rivers and the each scenery is also individual. However, although the scenery of each district shows various expressions, it has mutually deep relevance.

From natural conditions, such as climate peculiar to each district, geographical feature and geology, the scene of these tea production is drawn inevitably and formed. This area consists of the valleys and hills of big and small sizes which mountains and ponds up to about altitude 500m were washed and reduced by Kidu River, Uji River and its tributaries. The tea production place is located on a lot in this valley line and riverbed and has mutually relations through the water system. The difference in climatic conditions and the difference in the ground by the geological feature by the altitude and the topography produce a scenery of production and diversity of tea taste.

In addition, the areal spread of the tea production scenery corresponds as the innovation accompanying the origin of Maccha, Sencha and Gyokuro and development of the markets of the tea. The Ohishita tea field for the powdered green tea cultivation used as green tea materials originated in the Warring States period in Naka-Uji, and was developed along Kidu River with invention of Gyokuro after highest-quality green tea. Sencha started in Ujitawara-cho Yuyadani, and it spread with the invention of the Uji process method (Aosei Sencha Seiho) and to Edo market to Minami-yamashiro at the end of Edo period with the start of export of Wazuka-cho, and also tea wholesale stores were formed in Kamikoma. For the increase in production period after World War II, mountain area tea plantation of Wazuka-cho, Minamiyamashiro suddenly expanded it under the transition period of the progress of rationalization and the mechanization of the production.

Such historical changes are also expressed as diversity of the cultural landscape of the Uji tea.

*Ohishita tea field (tea field covered with shade to harvest good leaves)

To Shiga

宇治市 Uji city

The tea wholesale district and Ohishita tea field in Nakauji spread at the place out of which Uji River flows from the hill part and comes to the flat ground. There is also Ohishita tea field in Shirakawa along valleys of a hill part at the back.

宇治田原町 Ujitawara-cho

The small-scale and simple bare ground tea plantation and tea farmhouses which these areas trace back to medieval times are spread. There are tea wholesale stores in Gonokuchi which is the key point of traffic, and the Ohishita tea field spreads out in the outskirts.

To Kyoto

中宇治 Nakauji

宇治川
Uji River

城陽市・八幡市 Joyo city・Yawata city

There is a flow bridge (nagarebashi) and Ohishita tea field of Kouduya which connects both banks of Kizu-gawa show a symbolic scenery.

上津屋 Kouduya

野尻 Nojiri

岩田 Iwata

京田辺市 Kyotanabe city

Ohishita tea field of lioka open to the independent hill shows symbolic scenery.

To Osaka

To Mie

南山城村

Minami-yamashiro village

The tea field represented by vertical furrow which employed the leading altitude in Kyoto Prefecture upstream of the Kizu River efficiently develops on a large scale.

田山 Tayama

今山 Imayama

高尾 Takao

和束町 Waduka-cho

A very large rainbow curved tea field like running up to the top of the hill overwhelms the person who sees.

童仙房 Dosenbo

釜塚 Kamazuka

撰原 Erihara

石寺 Ishidera

To Nara

木津川市

Kidugawa city

The tea wholesale district of Kamikoma which prospered as an accumulation place of export tea is formed in the key point of the land and water traffic.

上狛 Kamikoma

飯岡 lioka

All three kinds of tea which became the source of the Japanese green tea originated in the limited territory of Yamashiro area of South Kyoto Prefecture. The development process of the history of the origin and after that is remembered as diversity of the tea production scene which differs from areas. And the various views have relevance mutually by geographical feature, geology, and a water system. The cultural landscape of the Uji tea has value without an equal as that in which the element of nature, history, and an occupation made as one.