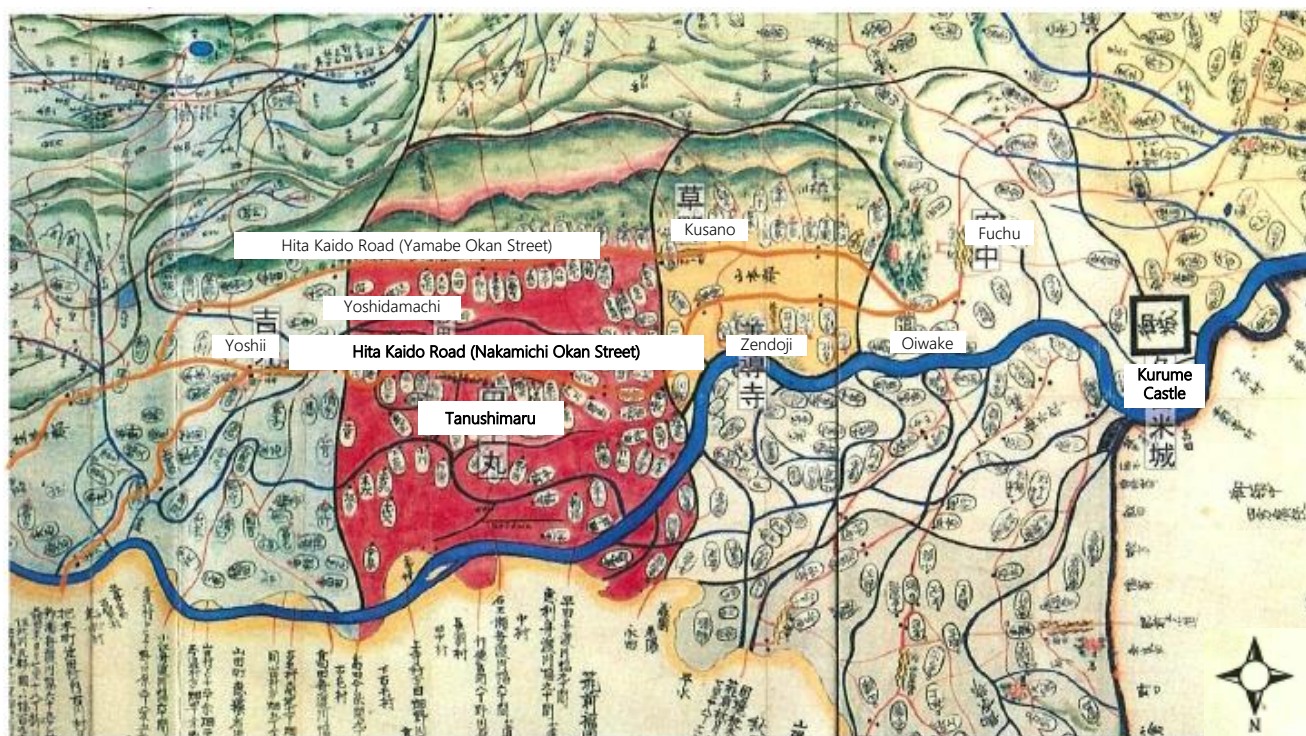


Kurume History Walks

No.36 Hita Kaido Road and Tanushimaru Town 日田街道（豊後街道）中道往還と在方町「田主丸」



Hita Kaido Road around Kurume (Painting of Chikugo Province)

Kurume is located on a plain, then can be said to extend topographically on all sides. Since ancient times, it was developed as an important point of traffic. In the early modern times, the lords of Kurume Domain built and improved its roads, post stations, and country towns.

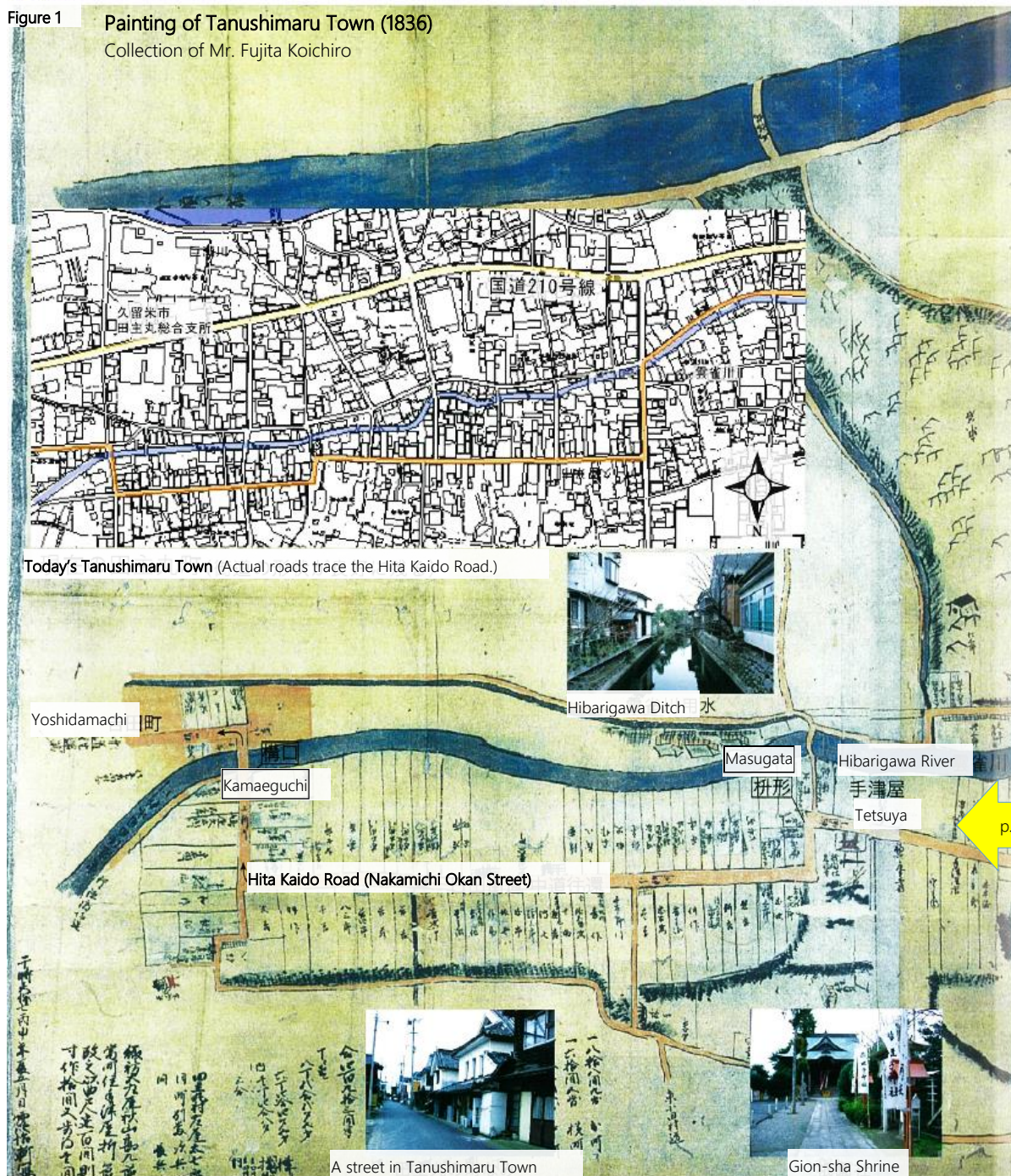
Fuchu, a post station town near a Torii gate of the Kora-taisha Shrine, was located at a junction of two roads. The lords from other provinces, with their warriors and servants, had used a road running north and south in Kyushu when they went up to Edo under a policy of the shogunate, and stayed at Fuchu during their travel.

The towns altered a lot since then, however, some traces of that time remain in Tanushimaru.

Hita Kaido Road

From Hita, which was one of the lands directly controlled by the shogun, there were several roads, which were collectively called Hita Kaido Roads, and there were some different roads to the Kurume castle town.

Figure 1 Painting of Tanushimaru Town (1836)
Collection of Mr. Fujita Koichiro



Tanushimaru is a county town which was developed along Nakamichi Okan Street, a branch line of Hita Kaido Road. This town is said to have been constructed around the Keicho era (1596-1615).

On the painting above, many long residential lots were drawn on both sides of the Nakamichi Okan Street. If looking it along the street from the left side in Figure 1, the street comes from Yoshidamachi, passes the river and an entrance (*kamaeguchi* 構口), goes down, and turns to the right. Curving twice in right angle (*masugata* 枳形 which means square, originally constructed for preventing the enemy's advance), it passes among some merchandise, a place for official information boards (*kosatsuba* 高札場). Furthermore, it goes up again and passes the other gate, *kamaeguchi*, and the Hibarigawa River, which runs along the street, is an irrigation ditch after the renovation of an existing drain in 1664.

Figure 2



Tanushimaru Town has been a center of regional industry and commerce. There used to be some breweries of sake and soy sauce, Kimono fabric dealers, wax makers, etc. Among them, “*Tetsuya* 手津屋” was one of the wealthy merchants in the Kurume Domain. It had the head office in the center of Tanushimaru Town. They expanded their commercial activities by obtaining the privilege of water transport on the Chikugo River from Tanushimaru to the estuary. They established even marine transport and opened a branch in Osaka.



A street with buildings of the Edo period



Hibarigawa Ditch



A street with buildings of the 20th Century



Tanushimaru Town was changed as much as the others today. However, some structures between the 17th and 20th century remain such as the form of roads, the Hibarigawa Ditch, narrow paths, a sake cave of Wakatakeya Brewery, which appears on the map (in Figure 2 on the opposite bank of the *Kamaeguchi*), some Western-style building of the early 20th century, some other old building and so on.

Besides, there are several places with the atmosphere of that time on Nakamichi Okan Street in other towns of Kurume.



Ishiura Ohashi Bridge



Nakamichi Okan Street (around Tarobaru)

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