



No.3 Kijimun' s Monologue, June 2017, Papers used for *Komonjo* ~*Kamisuki* in Ryukyu~

Keywords: *Hyakutashi*, *Bashōshi*, Kanagusuku hījā, *Kajinoki*,

Haisai, I'm Kijimun! In this month, I will introduce papers used for *Komonjo*. Do you know how to make a paper? In ancient Egypt and ancient China, a technique of papermaking was secrets of the state. In the Kingdom of Ryukyu, papers were very valuable.

It was in 1694 when a technique of *Kamisuki** was introduced in Ryukyu. It is said that Ōmitake Hyōbu had learned the technique to make *Sugiharagami** and *Hyakutashi** in Satsuma and then he passed on the skills to Ryukyuan people. In Ryukyu, *Kajinoki**, *Itobashō** and *Aogampi** were used as materials of paper. *Aogampi* grows wild on shore, but it has been disappearing because of reclamation works in our days.

There were many types of papers in Ryukyu, like *Hyakutashi* and *Bashōshi**. *Hyakutashi* (in Okinawan dialect, *Mundagami*) is the Japanese paper made from the bark of *Kōzo**. That paper was used for official documents to Shuri Ōfu. And in 1840, *Hyakutashi* was made in *Kamisukijo* (a papermaking workshop) at Takaraguchi, Shuri Gibo village, that *Kamisukijo* was directly controlled by Shuri Ōfu.

Bashōshi is made from fiber of *Itobashō*, and it was developed in 1717 in Ryukyu. The technical succession for making *Bashōshi* ceased once, however Mr. Katsu Tadahiko revived the technique in 1978, and it is succeeded until now. There were also *Tsūsōshi** which was made from *Kamiyatsude**, but unfortunately, the technique for making *Tsūsōshi* has been already lost. It needs pure water to make a paper. In Ryukyu, *Kanagusuku hījā*, *Yamagawa hījā* and *Takaraguchi hījā* are famous wells from which pure water could be drawn.

**Kamisuki*: It is a traditional technique of making Japanese paper.

**Sugiharagami*, *Hyakutashi*, *Bashōshi* and *Tsūsōshi* are names of papers.

**Kajinoki*, *Kōzo*, *Itobashō*, *Aogampi* and *Kamiyatsude* are names of plants.

When you read *Komonjo*, please pay attention not only to its contents but also to its materials. It is also interesting to compare the papers of *Komonjo* at Digital Archive of the web site of University of the Ryukyus Library.



Itobashō